APOLEON BUONAPARTE;

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HIS POLITICAL AND PRIVATE LIFE,

From 1781 to 1798.



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· PREFACE.

THE present work, although printed some time ago, has never been properly and generally introduced to the public, in consequence of the Author's ignorance of the mode of putting it into circulation.

Of the interest of most of the circumstances and anecdotes relating to Buonaparte which it contains, there can be but one opinion:—their gennineness rests on the source from which they are drawn, and on internal evidence.

The Author, who has assumed the name of Dangeais, was a school-fellow of Buonaparte, and at that early period, as well as afterwards, much with him, and much in his confidence;—but the strongest and most unequivocal mark of genuineness is stamped on the original circumstances and anecdotes themselves. They are all decidedly characteristic of Buonaparte, and of no other person. And it may be safely asserted,

that no person, whose mind, feelings, and sentiments, were not cast in the very same mould as his, could invent or imagine what this work unfolds respecting him.

The second volume will continue and conclude his political and private life: and a third volume will be published, entitled "Buonapartiana,"—which, beside a selection of the most interesting anecdotes respecting him, interspersed in a variety of works, will contain a great number never before published,—all illustrative of his views and plans, or unfolding motives and events, connected with the history of Europe, during the most eventful period of his life.

The Register of the Municipality of the Second Division at Paris, under date of the 19th Ventose, 4th year of the French Republic, contains the Act of Napoleon Buonaparte's marriage with Marie Josephine Rose de Tascher, widow Beauharnais, and mentions that he was born on the 5th of February, 1768, of Charles Buonaparte, and of Letitia Ramolini, his wife; and not on the 15th of August, 1769, as mentioned in all the Almanacks.



THE

HISTORICAL AND UNREVEALED

Memoirs

OF

NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE.

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CHAP. I.

IT has been said of Bunnaparte, that he had no friends at Brienne, except two or three idiots on whom he had imposed by the singularity of his manners. To the author, who thus expresses himself so very politely, I must confess I am one of those two or three idiots; indeed one must be very weak in intellect at the age of thirteen, not to observe attentively a lad of twelve years old, who, even at that age, was unlike any of his fellow pupils, to the number of five or six hundred. And yet, what have I gained by my observations? but little, I own: I was, however, convinced at fourteen, that Buonaparte was the most conspicuously jealous and ambitious being that the world had ever produced.

When yet but a lad, his ambition and jealousy were more than proportioned to his years and means. These two passions grew up with him, placed him on the throne of his king, and hurled him from its emi-

nence.

VOL. I.

Where did Buonaparte acquire his jealousy, ambition, taciturnity, and his contempt for mankind? These are things highly necessary to inquire into, and which no one has yet explained.

More fortunate in this respect than my predecessors, having had a better opportunity of studying his character, I shall be able to impart this important secret to

my readers.

Buonaparte is indebted for the vices which first brought him into notice, and afterwards drove him into exile, to the indigence of his family. If this circumstance alone were not the immediate cause, I have often been strongly inclined to suppose it the main

spring of all his crimes.

If Napoleon had been born of richer parents, he would have experienced fewer privations at school. He would not, in that case, have cast his eyes so enviously upon the comforts of his young companions, who were nearly all of very good families. At first it was merely a secret chagrin he felt, which was soon followed by a gloomy reserve, that induced him to despise and shun the company of those he could not imitate.

It was through the interest of Mr. Marbeuf that he was received into the school at Brienne. The report soon spread, that this protector was his father, although it is well known, that young Napoleon was nearly two years old, when Mr. Marbeuf first went to reside in the

island of Corsica.

His fellow pupils, however, were not sparing of their jokes with Buonaparte, which he did not bear very patiently, as the following anecdote will prove:—

Buonaparte had just received a letter and three crown pieces from the Bishop of Autun, brother to Mr. Marbeuf. While he was reading his letter, young Defoulers was imprudent enough to say to him, 'Well!

how does Mamma Marbeuf do? Is she still the jouful* old dame?' The young Corsican, fired at this insult, threw the three crown pieces he had in his hand in Defouler's face; the blow was so violent, that the latter was thrown backwards; his forehead was severely cut, and one of his teeth knocked out: he is still living, and bears the mark of the blow. Napoleon was in consequence confined to his room, but he obtained his liberty the same day, on making the following answer to the head master, who was inquiring into the fray: 'When a son is insulted in the person of a beloved mother, can he command himself in the first transport of his passion?'

Buonaparte had been little more than a month at Brienne, when I arrived there. A week had scarcely elapsed before I entertained a wish to become better acquainted with him, than with my other comrades. Although but a youth, a disposition for war and destruction was visibly predominant in him; on these two powerful means, he, probably, rested all his expec-

tations.

In a retired part of the play-ground he had erected a small fortress, the fortifications of which were rather original, without deviating too far from the plans of the celebrated Vauban. This trifling model seemed to announce some genius, and I complimented him on the subject. To praise him, whether deservedly or not, was the surest way to gain his affection. From that period I became intimate with him, if indeed an intimacy could exist with one who was determined to have always his own way. My cheerfulness and temper of mind insensibly gained an ascendancy over him; for it was in my company alone that he shook off his taciturnity

^{*} Alluding to the Latin word Lætitia, the christian name of Buonaparte's mother.

and reserve; with me only, he laid aside that restraint which he had assumed to acquire the reputation of superior intellect. I was more than once convinced, that his love for solitude and silence was not at that time his real character.

It will naturally cause surprise to my readers, how it happened that I sought acquaintance with one who was so reserved, so gloomy, so subject to fits of passion, and above all so headstrong; for the young Napoleon possessed nothing of that amiableness which endears young persons to each other. To this I can only reply, that whether it was owing to caprice, or to destiny, we became for some time inseparable.

Had I not been already aware that Buonaparte's, dislike to associate with the other students was owing to the privations he endured, when contrasted with their comforts, the following event would have convinced me of it. Among several papers common to us both, I found one day the copy of a letter he had written to his father. The following is an exact counterpart of it.*

"Military School, Brienne, 5th April, 1781.

" Father,

"If I am not to be allowed the means, either by you or my protectors, to keep up a more honourable appearance at the school I am in, send for me home, and that immediately. I am quite disgusted with being looked upon as a pauper, and of seeing my insolent companions, who have only fortune to recommend them, smile at my poverty; there is not one, but who is far inferior to me in those noble sentiments which animate my soul. What, Sir, shall your son

I am not aware how this letter, which was never out of my portfolio, could have appeared in a German work, now very scarce. Most probably one of Buonaparte's family supplied the original copy.

continually be the butt of a few paltry purse-proudfellows, who sneeringly joke upon the privations I experience? No, father, I hope not; if my condition cannot be ameliorated, remove me from Brienne; put me to some mechanical trade, if it must be so; let me but find myself among my equals, and I answer for it, I will soon be their superior. You may judge of my despair by my proposal: once more I repeat it, I would sooner be fore-man in a workshop, than be sneered at in a first-rate academy.

"Do not imagine that this letter is dictated through a vain desire of indulging myself in expensive amusements; they have not the smallest temptation for me: I only experience a wish to show my fellow students, that I have the means of procuring them as well as they.

" BUONAPARTE."

The above letter, at the tender age of Buonaparte, gives a better idea of his disposition than any thing else that could be said of him. I would not, however, on any account, have had him to perceive that I was acquainted with the secret cause of his jealousy. I knew him too well to suppose that he would ever afterwards be on friendly terms with me.

One of Buonaparte's greatest pleasures was, to call himself god-son of the celebrated Paoli, although it was well known to be his brother who had that honour; but he was so firmly persuaded of the truth of it, that the surest way to put him in a passion was to prove the contrary. It may be here remarked, that this same Paoli, whom Buonaparte ranked even above the heroes of antiquity, became, some years after, such an enemy to Napoleon, as to cause him and his family to be banished the island of Corsica. Napoleon, it is true, afterwards took advantage of a favourable oppormity of revenging himself.

The desire I felt to investigate the character of so

extraordinary a young man, attached me to Buonaparte much more strongly than the closest friendship: the influence he had over me is indescribable. His moroseness, and the tone of superiority which he assumed in all places and over every one, were not in the least repulsive to me, because in him I observed none of those faults for which he reproved me. It is true I was deceived in him; but who can upbraid me, when it is now well known that all Europe has been misled

by the same illusions?

If the civilization of Europe has caused dissimulation to be considered as an indispensable qualification, Buonaparte certainly possessed it in an eminent degree. I do not wish to call in question any historical assertions; but I must be allowed to say, that Louis XI., Cromwell, Mazarine, and Alberoni, were upright and ingenuous when compared with Napoleon. From the time of his leaving the school at Brienne to his usurpation, he shewed himself a complete master, both physically and morally in the art of dissembling. His hypocrisy and dissimulation were, however, of that stamp, that one cannot refuse giving a high character to a man, who made it his sole business to impose upon mankind, and place himself upon a throne. It must be allowed, that it was a violation of principle for some purpose.

Of all the ambitious heroes, both in ancient and modern history, Buonaparte will be the most distinguished for a particular turn of character. Alexander had his father's glory to stimulate him, and when but a youth, could even think of conquering the universe. Thamas-Kouli-Khan and Mahomet were already men, when they began to meditate their great projects; but not one of them imposed on himself a hundredth part of the privations to which Napoleon submitted in his youth, in order to distinguish himself from his fellow

students, and afterwards lay down the law to them. He was not yet fourteen years of age, when his ambition taught him to repress his desires: having lived with him at that period, I may be allowed to judge; for notwithstanding his dissembling affectation, I soon perceived that he would willingly have partaken of the pleasures of his comrades had he not wished to arrogate to himself a singularity of behaviour. I observed him one day sitting at a window, and smiling at the amusements of his companions in the play-ground; it could plainly be seen, that he wished to be a partaker of their sport: he suddenly turned round and perceived me observing him. Shame and anger were depicted on his countenance; but, like an experienced man, he endeavoured to turn it off, in which he succeeded for the moment, "I was examining," said he, "that group of young blockheads, who are trifling away the most precious part of their life; and after all, what are their amusements? they are harassing and fatiguing themselves with throwing about a ball, the surface of which, not one of them can explain mathematically; I am well aware that their age requires some relaxation; but can none more noble be found to employ them? For instance, walking, conversation, the aspect of the heavens, and of the planets; these, Dangeais, are recreations worthy of youth, and calculated to cast it in the mould of genius; really they make me smile with pity. Come with me, Dangeais, let us retire into the most shady walk, I will read you Cromwell's He was a man indeed! What genius, what boldness, what resources he possessed! How great, how fortunate, how dreaded he was! Why did he take a part with the assassins of his monarch? Did he not know that a regicide is at all times, and in all countries, considered as infamous, even if he supply the place of his murdered king? If he wished for the

death of his ruler, in order to reign himself, could he not have confided the office to others, and not appear himself as an agent? Time can never efface the giving of his signature for the death of Charles I. Posterity will never forgive him this unfortunate oversight. Notwithstanding, I would willingly limit my existence to half its period, could I but resemble him for only one year! This wish expressed by Buonaparte at the age of fifteen, proves, that even at that age, he spoke differently from what he thought. No doubt the fame and good fortune of the English Usurper flattered Napoleon's ambition; but as to his sacrificing a part of his existence to the acquirement of either, is a thing of which, I am sure, he was absolutely incapable.

CHAP. II.

THE haughty temper of young Napoleon, and the disdain with which he treated most of his companions, had drawn upon him many enemies. They vied with each other, in seeking some opportunity to vex him. As he paid but little attention to their scoffs, they directed their sarcasms principally against his indigence and origin. The following anecdote will

prove that these were often but trivial.

It is well known that Napoleon's father, Charles Buonaparte, was assessor at the royal court of Ajaccio. His comrades pretending not to know the meaning of the word assessor, gave out that it meant a bailiff. The report soon spread in the school, that Buonaparte was a bailiff's son. Any one else would have despised these falsities, but they were taken sadly to heart by our young scholar, who was, it is true, at times, most cruelly treated by them. One day, while speaking of his father in the presence of a pupil, whose name was Pougin-des-Ilets, the latter, after a dispute they had together, said to him, "Why, your father is only a bumbailiff!" to which he added a parody on a couple of lines of Racine,* which caused fits of laughter among the by-standers. As for Buonaparte he could not contain himself for rage; he stood for some time dumb and motionless; then suddenly starting from his lethargy, he ran to his chamber. So rapid was his departure, that the boys, who but a minute before, were in fits of laughter, now stood in

^{*} _____ "Et si dans la province, On distribue en tout vingt coups de nerf de bœuf, Votre père à lui seul en embourse dix neuf."

consternation, fearing the consequences of this affair for their companion, whom they advised to conceal himself. On my way to Napoleon's room, to which I was hastening, in order to appease his anger, I met him on the stair-case with a note in his hand; I wished to reason with him, which he prevented by telling me to leave him alone. He then rushed down the staircase; I followed him; Pougin-des-Ilets was gone; he sought him in the school-room, the play-ground, but could find him no where. "You know that fellow," said he, to one of the boys, "who insulted me just now; have the goodness to give him this note; his life is at stake!" I knew my friend well, he was a Corsican, and I really trembled for the aggressor. Not knowing how to settle the matter, I prevailed on the lad to take the note to one of the undermasters; he followed my advice, and the master read these words:-

"You beggarly fellow, if you have but the smallest spark of honour within you, you will give me satisfaction for the outrage you offered me. Let the consequences be what they may, I shall provide myself with pistols: if we cannot go out, any place will suit me, either your room or mine, or a corner of the play-

ground, so that I may be revenged."

The master was highly incensed at this note; the style and expressions compelled him to punish severely the writer, in the presence of his comrades. All the boys were assembled in the examination-room, "Was it you, Sir," said the master to Buonaparte, "who wrote this note?"---"Yes, Sir," replied, sternly, Napoleon, "and if Pougin gave it you, his cowardice deserves a further chastisement."---"Have the goodness, if you please, to recollect to whom you are speaking; your letter is infamous and proves a base disposition: you have been insulted, I know; but

have you no superiors?"---" Superiors! No: such insults cannot be revenged by a third person!"--"You persist, then, I see, in your resentment: you wish to give your comrades an example of revenge and insubordination. Well, Sir, you must go immediately to the lock-up room."---" To hell, for what I care, provided my enemy partake of my tortures!"

These last words left the prefect and his pupils in an utter astonishment, which did not bear too hard on Napoleon. Pougin was severely reprimanded, and ordered to be confined to his room. I visited my friend the same day in his confinement; to my great surprise he did not murmur in the least. I recommended him to apologize to the master. "What! would you have me own myself guilty? No: I would sooner rot here; I wish, besides, to see how far men can act unjustly. Be so good as to wafer this letter, and to put it yourself in the post for me."

With any other comrade I should certainly have sealed the letter without looking into it; but whatever came from Napoleon could not escape my curiosity. His letter was addressed to Count Marbeuf, who was then at Sens, at Madame d'Espinal's. After relating what had passed between Pougin-des-Ilets and himself,

he thus concluded:-

"Now, Sir, if I am guilty, if I am justly deprived of my liberty, have the goodness to add to the obligations I owe you, that of taking me away from Brienne, and withdrawing your protection. It would be an injustice on my part to wish to merit that protection any longer; as I flatter myself never to have been more worthy of it. Never should I deem that, an imprudent act of impetuosity, which I feel myself compelled to, by the most sacred motives. By whatever interest I might be influenced, I could never calmly stand by, and see my father, a man of honour, my

respectable father, trodden under foot! No, Sir; my feelings would be too acute, in such a case, to complain to my superiors; for, I am too well persuaded, that a good son would not entrust to any other person the charge of avenging a similar insult. As for the bounties you have showered upon me, be assured, Sir, they will ever be gratefully remembered; I shall have only to regret, that having acquired so honourable a protection, I was deficient in those virtues which heaven refused me.

"Generous protector, be pleased to consider the present letter as descriptive of the sentiments of a young man who considers his own fortune not worthy to be put into competition with that sweetest of satisfactions, the wish never to cause sorrow to his respected benefactor.

" NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE."

" Brienne, 8th October, 1783."

Mr. Marbeuf, as it has been said above, was at Sens, at the house of Madame d'Espinal, in company with Raynal, the Marquis of Saillant, and the Prior of Chambonas. They were all in the drawing-room when a servant gave him a letter from Brienne. He had not finished reading it, before he exclaimed that it was an injustice. The letter was handed successively to each of the company present, who all were of opinion that Napoleon had only obeyed the two first impulses of nature, honour, and filial duty; they even recommended Mr. Marbeuf to set off immediately for Brienne, where his presence might put an end to the persecutions exercised against his protegee. He arrived in fact the very next day, and had a conference with the president of the academy. I am ignorant of

their conversation, but, in an hour after his arrival, Napoleon was set at liberty. In the conference he had with his protector, the latter told him, that however allowable his resentment might be, he insisted upon his passing it over, as he was certain that a similar insult would never be offered him again; and, for the future, added he, "do not be so hastily ruffled; for he who puts himself in a passion for a good motive, finishes by growing outrageous for trifles."

This event, trifling in itself, had nevertheless an important result for Buonaparte. His comrades, struck at the energy he had displayed in this affair, no longer ventured to torment him; some even conceived a high opinion of his courage and personal qualities.

The evening he was released from his confinement, I met him in the garden. "Well," said I, "I am happy this affair has terminated so well. I was afraid it would have been otherwise. You had reason to complain, I know; but that cursed note, the violence of the expressions, your replies to the master, your determined manner, all these rendered me very uneasy on your account."-" It must be confessed," answered he, with a disdainful smile, "that you are very shortsighted! Will you for ever judge things by appearances? Before we give our opinion on any thing, Dangeais, we ought to be able to read the human heart, and dive into circumstances. You were, you say, uneasy on my account. Well, now, I was quite the reverse; Pougin-des-Ilets had grossly insulted me; you perceived that I was for a moment absorbed in thought; you supposed, no doubt, that excessive rage was the cause of my silence, not in the least: I was considering within myself what advantage I could take of the insult just offered me. I thought I perceived a chance of never again receiving a similar one; it struck me immediately. I knew the violence of my expressions in the note, I even wished it had been worded more strongly, more vehemently, and more likely to cause a reprimand; but such as it was, it has answered my purpose. I figured to myself, that with passion depicted on my countenance, and forcibly described in my note, I should excite the attention of my companions; the master would be informed of it; I shall be sent for, thought I, and reprimanded; my answers shall be laconic, but determined; I will persist in my projects of revenge; I shall be punished, that is what I aim at; without that my object would have failed, cause is good, and my protector powerful. He is but at a few leagues' distance; I will write to him, and my letter shall be worded differently from what any other person would write; it will interest him in my favour, by flattering his self love; I shall then gain my point, and the impression it will leave, will shelter me for ever from the insults of my companions. Has it not turned out just as I foresaw? No one here, be assured of it, will hereafter think proper to insult me. I am certain, moreover, that if I wished for their friendship I could easily obtain it. Now then, tell me, whether you do not think that I wisely calculated on the consequences and the result. I have gained what ten years would never have obtained for me, a reputation of audacity and intrepidity. You, Dangeais, who know that the education I receive here and Mr. Marbeuf's protection, are my only resource and expectation; could you suppose that I would sacrifice these advantages to the pleasure of revenging myself of a giddy boy? If you imagine it, you know but little of my disposition; for, if my plan had not been so well concerted, I should certainly have lost both my station at school, and the support of my generous

protector. Away with such revenge as would only injure myself! thanks to heaven, that has not been my error this time, and the success has exceeded my expectation. In the conversation I had with the Count, I plainly pointed out to him, that the indigence of my family exposed me to the contempt of my companions, by refusing me the smallest trifle to partake of their amusements; my generous patron strongly interested in my behalf, owing to what he was totally unacquainted with, made me a present of a considerable sum which will enable me for some time to shield invself from the contempt of my comrades; depend upon it, policy far surpasses both knowledge and prudence." I could not recover from my surprise at what I had just heard. What! said I, to myself his silence, his hasty retreat, his note, his expressions, his rage, his answers, his audacity, was all that planned, calculated, and determined on beforehand? Oh! my friend Buonaparte, you are both sly and judicious, I see; you would be a match for the ablest politician; but I assure you, whatever you may say or do for the future, I will place no reliance on either, till time has unravelled your purpose. In fact, this conversation with Buonaparte, made a lasting impression on me. Incapable of being ever after led away by his fair and plausible actions, as every thing he said or did, appeared doubtful, I succeeded in diving into his character; and, in that respect, there are only two men in France who could have an equal opportunity of knowing it, namely, Maret and Berthier.

It was in the beginning of 1784 that we were both named to the Military College at Paris. When Buonaparte received orders to prepare for his journey to the capital, Mr. Marbeuf was dangerously ill; this circumstance prevented Napoleon's corresponding with

his protector, and obtaining the necessary means for his removal. He had already written to his father, but had not received any answer. His vexation and illhumour were more than ever visible in all his actions, and I fancied I had discovered the cause of it: " If you are in want," said I to him, " of a few Louis-d'ors, I can lend them to you."-" How came you to know that I wanted money?" answered he rather petulantly: then placing his hand on his forehead, "Excuse me, Dangeais; I do, indeed, want money; my parents neglect me: I wish I were dead. But it shall not last long; I am determined to write to them. How much can you lend me? I will give you my note. If in a month, you are not repaid, I will give you my watch, some of my linen, forty or fifty volumes that belong to me; and then I will turn truant and go on board the first vessel I meet with; I will leave Europe and bid an eternal farewell to my ungrateful parents."

I knew how useless it would be for me to endeavour to reason with him; I therefore promised to bring him twenty pistoles in a couple of days; a promise

which I faithfully fulfilled.

Never was a loan received so willingly and yet with so ill a grace. Napoleon, instead of thanking me amicably, merely said: "You shall have your money again in less than a month."—"Why fix upon a time," said I, "Ought we not always to assist one another, if in our power? Are you hurt at fortune favouring me just now, more than she does you?"—"Yes," answered my unsociable friend in an abrupt manner, "I would give forty pistoles, Dangeais, not to be reduced to borrow twenty of you, it gives you a claim, a preeminence over me."—"What! do you think me capable . . ."—"I know you are a man, and consequently susceptible of taking whatever advantages might

offer; If in the course of a month, any difference should happen between us, you would say to yourself, if not publicly, "He may think himself lucky, that I lent him twenty pistoles."—"You judge mankind rather severely,"—"Nevertheless, my judgment is correct. See how my parents behave towards me: like egotists and unfeeling beings; but if they forget me, I will give them reason to think of me in no pleasing manner." So saying, he left me and hastened to his room, for the purpose of writing to his father, as I supposed. In fact, in the afternoon, he gave a letter to the porter, with orders to have it put in the post immediately.

The temper my young friend was in, when he left me, was a convincing proof that his letter would be dictated in rather strong terms. I was young, curious, and above all, determined to let no opportunity slip of knowing every thing relating to my fellow-student. It must be owned I was not very nice in the means I took to succeed—reproach me who will: the most important point for me, is that I succeeded tolerably well in studying a being who had not an equal.

I longed to know what the young Napoleon wrote to his parents: after some consideration, I was convinced that nothing was more easy than to satisfy myself. Buonaparte, who never wrote a letter, without making a rough copy, put all those of his correspondence in a clasped portfolio; to this I had recourse to satisfy my curiosity of knowing the style in which my friend wrote to his parents.

Mr. Marbeuf had in his last visit to Brienne, brought several plans of fortifications for his protegee; these Buonaparte permitted me to examine; for this purpose I sometimes remained in his room, whilst he was in the play-ground or elsewhere. I took advantage

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of one of these opportunities to rummage over his letters deposited in his portfolio: my expectations were not disappointed; the first thing I laid my hands on, was the copy of the letter he had lately sent to the post-office. No sooner was I possessed of it, than I transcribed it: I will give it here, exactly as it was taken from the original. It is entirely different from the one printed at Padua, of the same date, and purporting to be from the same original.

"Military School, Brienne, 23d April, 1784.

" Dear Father,

" Since the period when Mr. Marbeuf got me, through his interest, into the Royal School at Brienne, you have probably imagined you had nothing further to do with your son: if such has been your idea, I have only to say, that I am grieved both for your sake as well as mine. You will thereby lose the pleasure of seeing me happy, and I, that of acknowledging your kindness. Imagine to yourself, the dilemma I am reduced to, and then, justify, if possible, in your own mind the silence you keep with respect to the urgent requests I have made you. Absolute necessity, be assured, impelled me to make them. How fortunate is he, who can do without the assistance of others, who has nothing to ask even of his relations! Who compelled you to place me here? Why did you not consult your means? He who cannot afford to make a lawyer of his son, makes him a carpenter. Besides, ought not your pride to be wounded, by knowing the ignoble figure I cut among the high-born youths that surround me? Your son in actual want in the midst of young persons who want for nothing!

Father, this way of proceeding cannot last long. You have a house at Sartene, sell it. Let my brothers' education be less expensive; let my sisters work, to maintain themselves; one word for all, support me honourably in the station you have placed me in. I am on the point of setting off for the capital: the journey cannot be undertaken without expence. I have been compelled to borrow twenty pistoles on my own note at a month. I flatter myself, that on the receipt of this, you will forthwith remit me the amount to discharge it. If I should fail repaying this loan, I shall be completely dishonoured and perhaps lost with regard to you. As to the style of this letter, you will, I trust, excuse the harshness of it, when you call to mind the humiliations I secretly experience, and above all the noble ardour of my sentiments. Your son, Sa, is but sixteen years of age, but his ideas are equal in extent to those of a man of fifty. While honouring you as the author of my existence, I cannot, it is true, express to you a puerile affection. If you can foresee the result that may ensue from my possessing so strong and masculine a character, you will readily perceive that, one day or other, your son will compensate you, a hundred-fold, for the sacrifices you will have made for him. Should you hasten to reply to the present in proportion to the urgency of the motives which dictate it, I shall hear from you before my departure for the Military College. Remember me kindly to all my friends and acquaintance.

" BUONAPARTE."

A dozen volumes on Buonaparte's character at the early age of sixteen, would not be so descriptive as this letter! What audacity! what disrespect! what self-

pride! Compare this style with that which he made use of, twenty years after, when writing to Joseph, Louis, and Jerome, whom he had encumbered with crowns, and you will be torced to acknowledge, that it is the production of the same pen and the same person.

It has been thought, and some even still think that Maret, Duke of Bassano, was the principal agent, in every thing that was transacted in Buonaparte's cabinet; the supposition is erroneous. The Ex-Emperor either wrote or dictated all his domestic correspondence himself, particularly when he addressed his fulminating letters either to his brothers, sisters, or petty princes.

Had Napoleon's father received the letter he addressed to him, he would most probably have treated the writer as he deserved; but it happened otherwise. Mr. Buonaparte was at Bastia, when this letter was given to his wife; she was probably incensed at the style; for, forgetting the excessive fondness she bore Napoleon, in preference to her other children, she returned him the following answer:

"I received your letter, my Son, and had not your writing and signature proved it, I could never have believed that it could have come from you. You, Napoleon, are of all my children the one I cherish the most; but if ever I receive a similar epistle, I have

done with you for ever.

"Where did you ever learn, young man, that a son, in whatever station he may be, should thus address a father? You may thank heaven, yours was absent from home. Had he seen your letter, he would, as an insulted father, have gone immediately to Brienne, to punish an insolent and guilty son. I will however, conceal from him this disgraceful letter, in the hopes that you will be sorry and repent that you ever wrote it. As to your necessities, if it were your duty res-

pectfully, to acquaint us with them, it was, moreover incumbent on you to be convinced that an absolute impossibility prevented us from complying with your wishes.

" I am neither induced, by the misplaced advice you have rashly given us, nor by the threat you make us, to remit you a draft of three hundred francs on the banker Bahic. Be convinced, in receiving this sum, of the

affection we bear our children.

"Napoleon, I trust, that by your more respectful and more discreet conduct for the future, you will never give me occasion to write again in this manner to you. I shall, then, as heretofore, subscribe myself.

" Your affectionate Mother,

" LETITIA BUONAPARTE.

" Ajaccio, 2d June, 1784."

When this letter arrived, I happened to be with him: all the time he was reading it, he had a smile on his countenance. "You have received undoubtedly very agreeable news," said I to him. "I have indeed," replied he, "nor could my dear mother have penned me a more pleasing letter; here, read it, you shall

judge for yourself."

I read it over twice, without discovering what there was so very agreeable in it for my friend. "This," said I, "is rather a sharp epistle; I suppose it was with anger I saw you just now smiling."—"Not in the least; had the letter been written under my dictation, I could not have worded it more to my mind."—"I cannot say I see it in that light."—"Why, you must be blind; read these words: a draft of three hundred france on

the banker Bahic. This is a sentence, my dear friend. of more value than all the harmonic expressions of maternal affection."-" And what think you of the reproaches that are made you?"-" Mere words; and a draft, you know, is money."-" And yet, without my knowing how you wrote to your parents, I am certain you are very sorry at having caused them any trouble."-" What, should I be sorry to obtain wherewith to discharge my debt to you? Indeed, my friend, at times, you don't appear to be in your senses; listen to me, and I will justify myself in a very few words. was rather short of money, I wrote a very polite letter to request some; I was not even answered. Provoked at such neglect, I wrote a second; but with the energy of a young man, worn out with imploring in vain. My last letter, to be sure, was not very expressive of filial respect; what matter, it had the desired effect, it extorted the required sacrifice. What was my aim? To get the money. Here it is; I am in your debt; I can repay you. Now, none but a blockhead would condemn the means I made use of to succeed. especially when he is informed that I had tried every other to no purpose. Words, be assured are not deeds. My letter is not a blow; it may have hurt the feelings of her who opened it. Well! she will burn it; whilst I, having gained my point, will write henceforth with respect and submission. I will get on rapidly in my studies; my progress will give delight to my parents, and all will be right again. This is, my friend, how the case really stands, unless from weakness or prejudice, people choose to view it in a contrary light."

CHAP III.

BUONAPARTE was no sooner arrived at the Military College, than he became remarkable for the moroseness of his disposition. His reserve, the forbidding cast of his expression, and his love for solitude, soon caused him to be discarded by his companions. Yet it was not absolute contempt that he inspired: his taciturnity had something in it that counteracted such a sentiment. If he passed by his comrades, he bowed rather coolly without ever addressing himself to them. When he had gone by, the youths often turned round to look at him, and formed groups to discourse about him: it was then that each gave his opinion; the general result of which was, that he was looked upon as an oddity, worth becoming acquainted with.

The young Napoleon, knew perfectly well what his companions thought of him. Not one of their gestures escaped his prying eyes, and his ear attentive without appearing to be so, caught the least word that related to his proceedings. Contrary to my expectation, he seemed pleased with the sentiments with which he had inspired them. To be a subject of their notice

seemed to be his only aim.

Having told him once that a fellow student had called him a Corsican Bear: "I should be nicely revenged," said he, "if I compel him, some of these

days, to call me the Corsican Eagle."

If any thing can prove that the military art was the favourite passion of young Napoleon, and that he placed this art above all other human acquirements, it was the decided preference he gave to the study of mathematics and geography. He was particularly fond also of Cesar's Commentaries, Polybius, Plutarch, and the History of Charles XII. I once asked him the reason of his preferring those books to any other. "It is not," said he, "exactly the truth of the relation that I seek in these books; what attaches me to these important writings, is the political knowledge they contain. Let the lofty deeds attributed to these illustrious men be true or false, that is nothing to me; I find in them great models to copy, if fortune and events should favour me. What is it to me, whether the portraits of an Alexander, a Sylla, a Cesar, a Charles the Twelfth, or a Cromwell be imaginary, or that the painter has flattered them ? Are they not magnificent compositions, which a young man, full of courage and ambition, cannot sufficiently study? Whatever these giants of the human species may have been, I wish to be as mighty as history paints them; and, if it were possible, that fortune would at this present moment, place at my disposal the circumstances and means to imitate them, be assured, my friend, I would endeavour to give myself their gigantic appearance, and even endeavour to surpass it. "But are you aware, Buonaparte, that the immensity of your desires gives them a romantic appearance, especially when compared with your age, and means of putting them into execution."-"My ambition may indeed, at present, appear to have a tinge of the romantic about it; but let me alone for that; I shall be very unfortunate, or die very young, if I do not verify it."-"Could you not make yourself happy by moderating your desires ?"-"I have already told you I cannot; I pant after fame and notoriety."-" Look before you leap, Napoleon, it is not always in a bustling sphere we find the pleasures of life, or the calmest conclusion of it."-"Are not those

celebrated men, you have spoken off, terrible examples of what I maintain?"

" Alexander murdered his dearest friend. In the prime of his life, an act of imprudence caused his death, far from the spot where he was born; and the immense empire he had founded over heaps of slain, was immediately demolished. Sylla was the murderer of his fellow citizens, and died execrated. The conqueror of Antony perished by the daggers of a slaughtering Senate. The impetuous Charles XII. lost in one single day, his army and the fruit of ten years' victories; fleeing then to a stranger who took him prisoner, he recovered his states, without becoming the wiser for his success; a musket shot reached him while in the trenches; he died, and obtained from posterity only the nick name of the Northern Don Quixote. Cromwell murdered his king, lived in continual alarm, died disconsolate, and his body having been refused burial, rotted on the gibbet. You must own, Buonaparte, that destinies like these ought to be powerful correctors."-" Never will they be such, except for groveling minds: Dangeais, you do not feel the glow of heroism and noble ambition. The man actuated by these two great passions, does not even consider whether those who preceded him in the same career, expired on a bed of down, or by the dagger of an assassin. In the destinies of those heroes who no longer exist, and in the existence he anticipates for himself, he only sees and reckons on the glorious moments. The dangers to which those great men were exposed, and those of which he himself may be the victim, do not even enter his imagination. Such at least would I be, if fortune, forgetting who I am, would assist me to become what I desire."

If even I had desired to bring Napoleon into more

CHARAMA BENFOULD BY

peaceable and moderate sentiments, his last sentence would have shown me the impossibility of my attempts. Hurried away by a whirl-pool of ambitious expectations, which were directed by no motive whatsoever, this young man could no longer listen to the voice of wisdom and reason. He became, however, from this circumstance, a being more worthy of observation, and had any occurrence separated me from him at this period, I should have certainly lost an interesting sub-

ject of mental distraction.

Mr. Marbeuf's protegee had not been at the Military Academy above eighteen months, when the professors thought they should no longer consider him in the same light as the other pupils. His steadiness, and reserved manners, together with his concise and pithy style, gave him in reality every appearance of a grown-up man. How could it be otherwise with a being who was incessantly occupied with forming for himself a mask capable of imposing on all the world? His system of hypocrisy did not display itself only in matters of consequence, but was made use of in the most trifling occurrences: witness the following trait.

I was one afternoon reading in his room, whilst he was writing to Brienne. On a sudden a coach entered the court-yard, and we saw Mr. Marbeuf alight from it. I expected Napoleon would run out to meet his protector; I even recommended him to do so. "Go on with your book," said he to me, "and leave me alone." He immediately sat down to his table, put before him several algebraical treatises, and began pencilling on paper several of the problems. One of the servants then came to require his attendance below, without naming the person who was waiting for him. "I cannot come yet," answered he abruptly, pushing to the door. The man immediately went to

acquaint Mr. Marbeuf of the reception he had met with. This generous patron, anxious to know what very important reason detained his protegée, did not hesitate to go up to him. He rapped at the door, "Come in," said Napoleon. Mr. Marbeuf entered. The young Corsican kept in his place, and with his eyes fixed on his books, did not even get up to his benefactor; but merely, with his left hand, made a sign for him to wait till he had finished. Mr. Marbeuf, greatly astonished at such a reception, said to him, "Well! Sir, is it thus " The cunning rogue, looking up at his benefactor, and pretending to start from a deep meditation, rose with vivacity, and cried out, "Ah! Sir, excuse, I beg of you, the situation you found me in! completely lost in the solution of a problem, which had embarrassed me for some time, I neither saw nor heard any thing; the universe was absolutely lost to me: it must have been so, since I could for a moment fail observing my benefactor, the generous protector of my youth! What will be my grief, if this involuntary want of respect should deprive me "-" No, young man," replied Mr. Marbeuf, charmed with the event, "your forgetfulness, far from injuring you in my opinion, proves on the contrary, that I have rightly placed my protection. One who is so totally absorbed in his studies, cannot fail to pursue them properly. Continue, my friend, and I shall ever feel a delight in your interest." I thought proper then to leave Napoleon and his protector together.

Mr. Marbeuf, after having conversed about an hour with Napoleon, took him out in his carriage. He kept him probably till evening; for I saw no more of Buonaparte that day. "Well," said I to him the next morning, "how do you find yourself after your yester-

day's visit?"—"Well enough!" answered he, "well enough! indeed I did not expect, when I got up, such a windfal. Why, Mr. Marbeuf, by his generosity, has given me a substantial proof that the most trifling circumstancemay produce a very fortunate result."

Some time after, the president of the college received orders to make out a list of those candidates who appeared to have a turn for entering into the corps of artillery and engineers. The making out of these lists required that, annexed to the name of each candidate, should be written a note specifying his manners, customs, character, acquaintance, and the expectations that might be reasonably formed of him. Every one has seen, in the records of the military college, the character that was written and kept next to Buonaparte's name. But very few persons know the one first destined for him, except M. Mallet-du-Pan, who, I believe, took a copy of it at Madame de Staël's. The following is the original and the first sketch:

"Napoleon Buonaparte, a Corsican by birth, reserved and studious, neglectful of all pleasure for study; delights in important and judicious readings; extremely attentive to methodical sciences; moderately so, as to others; well versed in mathematics and geography; silent, a lover of solitude, whimsical, haughty, excessively prone to egotism, speaking but little, pithy in his answers, quick and severe in repartee, possessed of much self-love, ambitious, and high in expectation. This young man is worthy of protection."*.

Mr. Marbeuf, to whom the note was communicated,

^{*} This interesting piece, well written, and very little known, was never printed till 1800, at Leyden, in Holland, in a work which was afterwards withdrawn, for fear of irritating the First Consul.

had however interest enough to get the above suppressed, and the following one was substituted, which certain authors have sadly disfigured.

"Corsican by birth, studious, pensive, quick, and obstinate: this young man will do well, if circum-

stances should favour him."

Five weeks after the making out of the lists, twoand-twenty of the candidates were chosen to complete the ranks of the artillery officers. Buonaparte and I were of the number as under-lieutenants. Of the whole number raised to this rank, not one was so completely satisfied as the protegée of Mr. Marbeuf. However gloomy and reserved the son of Madam Lætitia might have previously been, he could not then conceal his delight; and the manner in which he expressed it to me, had in it something puerile and giddy. This forgetfulness on his part appeared to me so extraordinary, that I expressed my surprise to him. "What," said I to him, "can it be Napoleon that is so smitten with the sight of a mere epaulette? Is it possible that you can be that stern philosopher, who weighs all his actions in the scale of reserve and severity? Strange alteration! If he is in extacles at acquiring an underlieutenancy, I suppose he must have a strait-waistcoat on when a captain. Napoleon, your ambition is not so unbounded as you wished to make me believe. You are more easily satisfied than I should have thought. I congratulate you on your change; for one who aims at too much, generally loses all: well, I have long wished you to acquire this moderation."-"That is right, Dangeais, give yourself full scope. I am in such a good humour, that I am disposed to bear with any sarcasms you may throw out; this is a day of permission and favours I grant. Unfortunately for you, your jokes convince me more than ever, that:

you are but a short-sighted observer of men and circumstances. If it were otherwise, you must confess that my joy ought to be a hundred times greater than yours, since we are both raised to the same rank."—"Why so, pray?"—"Why so? if you wish to know, I will acquaint you: listen to me. After your underlicutenancy, how do you wish to be promoted, to be a lieutenant, a captain, a colonel? If you should reach this rank, then, indeed, you would fancy yourself the happiest mortal breathing. Well, suppose me colonel, with a certainty of never rising higher, I would blow my brains out."—"Indeed, Napoleon, now you are talking like a madman; what the deuce do you wish to be?"—"I know not myself; but I aspire to more than a mere colonelship.

We began our preparations for our departure. Whilst my father supplied me with every thing I stood in need of, Mr. Marbeuf was occupied with the necessary arrangements for Napoleon; and, indeed, his generosity was unbounded. These were, I believe, the last services he rendered him, for his death happened soon after. We were in short both in a condition to make a respectable appearance among the officers we were about to associate with, when we received orders to join our corps, then garrisoned at La Fere, where

we arrived the next day.

Buonaparte had been, most probably, recommended by Mr. Marbeuf to the colonel of the regiment, as he was extremely well received by him in the presence of all the officers. Without being too intimate with his new comrades, our under-lieutenant lived very comfortably with them. Once only he had a trifling dispute with Lieutenant Delorges on the following account.

Buonaparte, who carried every thing to the extreme,

idolized the rock on which he was born. Corsica, according to his account, was the nursery for great men. If he were speaking of the two Paolis', both ancient and modern heroes were obliged to yield. One day, at a mess-table, while he was extolling to the skies the Paolis' and his countrymen, Delorges, most likely, tired with these repeated exaggerations, said to him, rather inconsiderately, "With all these mighty deeds and your heroes, you would have been slaves to the Genoese, had you not been tributary to us."-" Tributary to you!" fiercely replied the impetuous underlieutenant, "Say rather, Sir, your companions in arms and glory; and, indeed, we should not have had that fatal honour, if the French had not been ten to one against the Corsicans!" This dispute would probably have been attended with unpleasant consequences, had not the colonel, astonished at the inconsiderateness of the two young officers, imposed silence

Buonaparte, during the six months we remained at La Fere, was continually occupied, and yet I could not observe any of his actions likely to realize the high pretensions he had so long manifested. What proportion, indeed, could exist between a mere under-lieutenant, confined in a very small and inactive garrison, and his unbounded desires. In short, I began to be convinced, that it was the mountain in labour, forgetful that he was yet but young; I was on the point of joking him in private on his expectations, when my father sent me word that one of my uncles, to whom I was heir, had just died at Martinico. This uncle had left me a considerable property, and it was therefore agreed that I should undertake a voyage to America with my father.

If travelling to take possession of a rich inheritance

necessarily be a pleasure that every one would enjoy, how must this pleasure have been felt by a young man! My joy, however, was rather damped, by being obliged to part with my friend and companion in arms. Although I plainly saw the distance there was between him and his extended views, I felt a secret assurance, that my young friend would not remain unnoticed in a regiment of artillery. I shall seek no further into the causes of this secret forethought; the reader may reasonably imagine it for himself, by the impression which the discourses and the character of my companion had left on my mind. Whatever it might be, it was not without regret that I announced my departure to him. "The orders of a father," said I, "and the interest of my own fortune, are about to deprive me of your society. Brought up together, as we have been, and at present under the same standard, I should have felt a pleasure in our advancement in the career of honour and fortune, and of seeing you realize a part of your expectations; but as fate orders it otherwise, our separation will be less painful to me, if you consent to a mutual correspondence from one hemisphere to the other."

Did I presume too much when I imagined that these friendly words would have awakened the sensibility of the companion of my youth? Might I not have expected that his answer would correspond to my expressions of regret? Any other person, as well as myself, would have thought so; however, he would have been disappointed. Napoleon, instead of partaking of my feelings, merely answered, "How fortunate you fellows are, to have rich relations leaving you such inheritances; as for me, if four-fifths of the human race were to die, I should not inherit a

sixpence, and every thing would remain in its place on this spot of earth! Or, perhaps, every thing on it would be insupportable for certain individuals, had not nature formed them in such a manner as to make up for the unjust distribution of the good things of this world." This emotion of jealousy, added to the tone of chagrin with which it was expressed, ought to have stifled every wish on my part to have any communication with Napoleon; but probably this breaking off was never written in the book of fate; for after a few minutes' reflection: "Well, be it so, we will correspond; in fact, I expect to have much information to impart to you; only swear to me, by every thing you hold most dear, that my correspondence shall never be made public before my death; but, hold, take no oaths, for I put no trust in them; merely promise me to be discreet, by the tender interest you have always expressed for me. My letters shall be for you, the history of my political and moral life, however short may be your stay in America." Had Buonaparte promised me less, I should still have been curious to have corresponded with him. Could I, in short, be otherwise than desirous to know how fortune would treat a man, who, from his earliest years, had flattered himself to hold her hereafter in chains? Entirely to forget this singular being, would have been to lose the fruit of nine or ten years' observations, which often cost me a great deal of patience and discontent. I consequently agreed to every thing Buonaparte wished, and on the 5th of September, 1788, I left him to repair to Martinico, where I arrived safely on the 8th of December following.



CHAP. IV.

NOW, as it may be well presumed, these memoirs will experience an interruption which will be necessarily occasioned by my absence, a space of six years, namely from the 5th of September, 1788, the day of my departure for Martinico, till September 1794, the period of my return to France. This interval, however, would be imperceptible, if I could give the public all Buonaparte's correspondence during my residence in America; but thanks to the minister of police, and consequently to the first consul, this satisfaction is no longer in my power. The event which deprives me of it, I shall account for in its due place. I must content myself therefore with what I miraculously saved from this correspondence: although it were of a nature greatly to expose Napoleon, by causing him to be well known, it is probable that these letters were not immediately burnt, after they were forced from me; for Murat, who perhaps suspected me of keeping back some of them, after a long conversation on the subject, said to me, "had I possessed such a correspondence, I would have hidden it in my skin." A circumstance no less surprising, and which evidently proves that these letters were forced from me by superior orders, is, that the famous Mont-gaillard saw two of them in the hands of the printer Hénée, belonging to the ancient firm of Knapen. Mont-gaillard astonished at seeing Napoleon's writing, with which he was acquainted better than any other person, asked the printer how he came by those letters. The latter, after much intreaty, told him he had bought

them of a brigadier in the Gendarmerie, since dead. Mont-gaillard lost no time, but went immediately to Fouché, to inform him of the discovery he had made. On the same day, the letters were withdrawn from the printer's hands, who it is reported, received a compensation. What inference can be drawn from this? No other but that they were Gendarmes in disguise, who stripped me of my papers, and that one of them had appropriated to himself the two letters purchased by

the printer.

Among the correspondence forced from me, were the copies of my answers to Buonaparte. This loss, however, does not affect me, as the trifling interest they could convey, would prevent my publishing them. As to what I possess of this correspondence, the public will, I trust, be pleased to receive it as it was written: I have not thought proper to change a single word. These letters are in fact, if I may be allowed the expression, the physical and moral substance of Napoleon; they will moreover, give an insight into the difficulty Maret, Duke of Bassano, was afterwards to experience, when he was charged with the duty of softening the style of his impetuous lord and master.

Buonaparte had but one method of thinking and acting. In all his letters, the subject alone is varied; but as to the thoughts, the style, and the practical part, one may observe the same impetuosity, and the same digressions. Let not the extreme neglect apparent in his letters, be attributed to the friendship he had for me: for if he revealed every secret of his heart to me, the reason is evident, that he could not restrain himself. Buonaparte, was of all men the most discreet, but at times, one from whom a secret escaped the most easily; for the truth of my assertion, I need only refer to those who have been most constantly near him. Once given

up to the impetuosity of his character, or to a subject in the least interesting to himself, he was no longer master of himself, forgetful even of the persons who surrounded him. His soliloquies, and menacing speeches, discovered his most secret thoughts; without addressing a single word to any one, every sentiment burst forth from his heart. Had it not been for these abstractions on his part, Napoleon would have been ten times more dangerous than he was.

I have already stated, that I set out for Martinico on the 10th of February, 1788. It was not till the 9th of November, 1789, that I received the following

letter from Buonaparte.

" De Guise, 3 September, 1789.

" Eighteen months have elapsed, Sir, since your departure, and yet this is the first dispatch you have received from me: I call it a dispatch, for that term suits me better than the word letter. This delay is not owing to negligence; I wished to write facts and not words. I have advanced one step; I am lieutenant; is not that something? Well it had but little effect upon me. To tell you the truth, the more decorated my uniform becomes, the higher my wishes aspire. I can neither comprehend nor fathom myself, such an abyss do I appear. From a lieutenancy to the object of my secret ambition, the distance is, in comparison, as the glimmer of a taper is to the glare of the solar ray. The lowly plant aiming to reach the height of the cedar, would give you a faint idea of my future expectations and of my secret thoughts. Have I any foundation for my hopes? Yes, I answer, though if the whole universe were asked the question it would reply no. Which of the two will be right? Time must unravel, and that

time, my friend, no longer exists in imagination. Already do I see the career, nothing is wanting but an opportunity, years, and the right balancing of myself to enter on the race-course. The first will spring up for me, years I am acquiring, and the other I will take on myself to obtain. What wonderful events have transpired since your departure! Men and affairs, master and servant, subject and prince, are no longer the same, nor in the same place. What, you will ask, is the king doing? Alas! he is acting the part of a good man, and of an excellent father of a family; he speaks with mildness and goodnature to men who deserve to run the gauntlet. I would have made any sacrifice to have been his minister only for a month. I am only one-and-twenty, my friend, but I would have handled the innovators rather roughly. The prince, no doubt, would have been afflicted at my severity, for his fault is, that he is too indulgent; but his family, his faithful servants, and every honest man in France, would have thanked me in their hearts. The very dregs of the people, whom I would, for the moment, have opposed, would now be under an obligation to me; for in the manner they are proceeding, it may yet cost them the last drop of their blood by their opposition; and yet, to stop the first inroads of an inundation, which will perhaps overwhelm the whole of Europe, the plan to be pursued was but trifling. I would have commissioned six regiments of cavalry, or more if necessary, to bring before me the haughty innovators, and thus would I have addressed them: 'Gentlemen, if it be within your jurisdiction to remonstrate with your sovereign, surely it was not becoming your duty, I will even say your dignity, to imitate those ballad-singers, and place yourselves at the corner of every street to carol forth couplets to the

populace, which the king alone ought to have been acquainted with.* You have not only committed an error, but even a crime. Be it as it may, the king, my master, as just as he is indulgent, will take your complaints into consideration, and forgive you, on condition, that you will no longer secretly tamper with the people. If you counteract this order, you may expect to be sent to Toulon or Marseilles, to ply the oar as galley slaves.' A threat, by the bye, which I would quickly and strenuously have put into execution, if the delinquents had swerved in the least from their duty. This remonstrance, given in private, which I would have backed by that which causes every undertaking to succeed, an imposing force, ready for action, would, without fail, have repressed the indiscreet, or rather interested zeal of these remonstrance-makers: the consequences would have been, that the people would not have even thought of complaining. This is, my dear friend, the first spark of a conflagration which has kindled, and is gradually increasing; a conflagration, smouldering in the embers, from which I may hope to realize part of my expectations. Alas! why is our king so virtuous, so humane, and so mild? Why does he always show himself a good father, while his ungrateful and rebellious children are constantly plotting his ruin? Why did he not take up the lash of Louis XIV.? Why did he not rush into the tennis-court at the head of his guards, and drive out its new guests? An act of determined boldness like this, supported by strenuous preparations, and a few executions, would have stopped the evil at its very source; but the vir-

^{*} The Napoleon of 1789 was of the same opinion as the Napoleon of 1813, where he said to the legislative body, "These affairs ought to be treated only as family matters."

tuous Louis XVI. wishes to be a father rather than a king; and yet, at this present moment, he ought to show that he is a king, if he wishes to be a father.

" 5 September.

"He who first advised the king to assemble the States-General, would well deserve the name and fateof Prometheus. The latter encroached on celestial power, by animating a mortal; the former gave a stab to royalty, by animating the monster, whose offspring were to devour him. All the elements of the revolution were then in existence, it is said, and the convocation of the States-General was indispensable. The former assertion is true, the latter utterly false. The events, it is true, existed; but the regal authority strenuously displayed in every sense of the word, the effervescence restrained in its very beginning would have prevented them from bursting forth, and for the time have destroyed the greatest part. A wise reform after that, a better plan of finance, sacrifices made on the part of privileged classes who should be compelled to make them, the interests of all orders nicely balanced, these different subjects discussed in a select committee, and rapidly put into execution, would have calmed the minds, insensibly restored order, disconcerted all the hopes of the ambitious, and afforded time to strengthen the weak sides of the monarchy, or reconstruct it on a foundation more appropriate to the manners, the intelligence, and the necessities of the people.

"To bring about all this, I have no hesitation in saying, but that violent measures must have been used; there must have been some victims, some exemplary punishments; perhaps even, one might have

passed for a month or two, as a harsh, inhuman, and unfeeling ruler. What is all that, compared with the abyss which has just opened under the throne and the nation? The good effects brought about by the reform, the restoration of peace, the popularity aimed at by the sovereign, would certainly have caused all the past to be forgotten. So true it is, that a king, who would choose it, might murder half his subjects, and make himself idolized by the other; the only difficulty is to know how to go about it. This assertion, Dangeais, may appear bold to you; but weigh it in the balance of reflection, and you will be convinced that there never was a more fundamental truism; besides, we are so constructed that it cannot be otherwise. happy people, who see their riches and their happiness daily increase, are incapable of condemning the means employed for both, by the author of their prosperity. They are in possession of them, enjoy them, and they require nothing more. This is a picture of man and society of every climate and of every age.

"What I predicted respecting the States-General, was realized much sooner than I had imagined. That impolitic and dangerous measure of convoking a large assembly of men in times of public effervescence, puts every passion on the alert. One who never thought of taking a part in the legislation of the state, makes use of a thousand stratagems to get his name enrolled among the actors of the political drama about to be represented. Another, who, through despair, was preparing the deadly poison to put an end to his existence, his infamy, and his debts, lays it aside, realizes some property, and comes and establishes himself in the capital, determined to take advantage of the first event that can extricate him from embarrassment.

"This first assembly was, however, composed of

men of the first merit, and whose political education was by no means ignoble; these enlightened subjects will probably be the ruin of France, and undermine the throne. This assertion may, at first sight, appear hazardous; and yet, in my opinion, time will discover that it is well founded. This self-constituted assembly will not be the first to erect scaffolds, nor to insult the sovereign power; but it will pave the way for these atrocities; those luminous discussions on political problems, the solution of which ought to be confined to a few, will stir up thousands of factious demagogues of every species. From these will spring other assemblies whose talents and principles will be in inverse ratio with the principles and the talents of their predecessors, and into which ambitious delegates will insinuate themselves, ready to stab, weaken, or pervert their colleagues. The lower class will then assume the principles of their superiors, and every thing will be destroyed. This self-constituted assembly will not indeed demolish the edifice of the monarchy, but will first point out the way to its destruction.

" 8 September.

"I resume my pen, Dangeais, and cannot help expressing my regret at your not being on the spot. Each day would produce some new event for your consideration. That country which you have left, and the countrymen you have abandoned, are no longer morally in existence: there are absolutely new laws, new people, new manners. Armies have sprung from the earth, as if by enchantment. What a rich mine this France will present for the skilful man, who will know how to investigate it, after thousands of investigators both good and bad will have perished, by

discovering to him the different veins. You would smile, my friend, at the fanaticism of the present French population; a man who has not even bread to eat, spends his time in assisting at the fine speeches of a political forum. A word has been thrown in among the people, of which they do not even comprehend the meaning, that has been however picked up by them, in order to hang up at the first lamp-post, or cut into pieces any person they may suppose hostile to their measures; this is the word, aristocrat; a term implying sentence of immediate death, which is put into execution, without inquiring whether the unfortunate accused is deserving of it. The counsellor of state, Foulon and Berthier, the inspector of Paris were assassinated the 22nd of last July, in virtue of this term, to which you may give the epithet of incivic or diabolic, just as you think most proper.

"This patriotic mob does not confine itself, however, to such trifling exploits as these. The romance of the dungeons of the Bastile, was no sooner related to them, than they marched in a body to this state prison. The governor, N. Delaunay, who should either have opened the gates to them peaceably, or fired upon them at once, has been beheaded by the citizen Denot, cook of his department; and Flesselles, a sheriff, ended his days by command of Sieur Moraire, a silver-smith of Charleville. In short, my friend, I could send you about thirty little dramatic pieces all in this style, represented in a patriotic manner, in every lane and alley of the extensive metropolis, which are imitated in every

other province.

"This statement, although lightly drawn, of the situation in which the French nation is placed, will no doubt create sorrow in you, who are the heir of an extremely rich uncle; nothing can be more natural:

he who loves to live peaceably, and whom fortune loads with her gifts, will never look with a placid countenance on political convulsions. If every one of those who now take a share in the revolution, had like you, Dangeais, acquired a rich inheritance, depend upon it, that the revolution would never have taken place, that the monarch would be revered, and his subjects happy

and quiet.

"Many reasons have been assigned for revolutions in a state; but, in my opinion, the principal and primitive cause, is the physical or moral perplexity of one class in particular, or of several combined. Wherever a revolution breaks out, it is certain that there exists a suffering people; for, an individual who grieves not, who is not ambitious (for ambition is grievous) who sees his affairs and his family prosper, is a decided enemy to all revolutions, and wisely so; but that is no reason why every one else should be of his opinion, or that I should.

"You have already seen that I pitied the monarch, and did justice to his virtues; you have heard me wish that he possessed energy, firmness, and even insensibit lity, a quality he certainly needs at present, in order to repress the unwarrantable audacity of some of his subjects. Well, if I thus expressed myself, feeling for his interest, it was, that I identified myself to his title, to that authority which he ought necessarily to possess in all its fullness, and which he allows himself to be deprived of through his goodnature. In short, I placed myself on his throne, and with regret saw that he acted not in the manner in which I should have acted in a similar situation. But, laying aside this sentiment, I see with inexpressible pleasure both the too great indulgence of the monarch, and the too insolent audacity of the subject. Such is likewise the opinion I have of

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the labours of those directors convoked by the king; still the same want of energy, productive of the most outrageous violence on the part of the people; and yet I should despond, if all these atrocities did not exist, for it is only an explosion that seems most likely to raise me from the imperceptible enimence, on which I grovel—an explosion that will bring me into notoriety, and afford me the means of realizing those expectations I have cherished from my earliest infancy.

"However dark the political clouds may appear, as they are settling over the French horizon, you would scarcely credit, when informed, my friend, that it is only the foreboding of the most dreadful storm. Yes, Dangeais, the vessel of the state is threatened with hurricanes and multiplied destruction: I do not think it in the power of mortals to stem the raging winds that roar around it: a divinity alone can safely guide it into

harbour.

"This penetration into the convulsions our country must necessarily undergo, makes me six feet higher than I was: I fancy to myself that fortune wishes to realize the truth of the note, placed by my name, on the list of candidates in the Military College. Yes, I aspire at an eminence, and circumstances will favour me, we can no longer doubt it. You will then, Dangeais, recollect the conversations of our youth, my first desires, my expectations, and the sentiments I confide to you in this dispatch. You will say to yourself, he cherished every future hope by present anticipation, and my friend was not indulging in idle fancies. May my first sheets be a convincing proof to you that I am insensibly approaching the goal."*

^{*} This long letter of Buonaparte's was not signed by him.

How much more strongly would the details, conveyed in this voluminous epistle of Buonaparte, have interested me, had not the impetuous writer intermingled them with his gloomy reflections! However curious I might be to know how far he might entangle himself in the maze of ambition, his projects, his principles, the wish he expressed to see the misfortunes of his country multiplied, all these things, I say, inspired me with a certain aversion for him, which certainly would have induced me to break off every connexion, had I not reflected that his means would never be in proportion to his desires. This conviction, however, prevented me not from implying in my answer, a formal disapprobation both of his principles, and the wishes he manifested.

CHAP. V.

IF the police had not deprived me of my papers, the public would here find the second letter, that Napoleon wrote to me, in which it would be seen how unwelcome to him were the observations I made on the absurdity of his ambitious projects. There would follow also the three dispatches he afterwards addressed to me, and in which he gave me his account of the principal events that happened consecutively in France from 1790, to the 26th of July, 1793, the day when Petion, the Mayor of Paris gave a grand dinner to the Marseillois. The following dispatch would be a continuation and nothing would be found missing. It is true the events he describes are to be found in numerous books, and known to every one; but the original manner in which he relates them, belongs to him alone; the ideas he fixes, and the opinion he forms of them, give them an air of novelty, which makes us believe that we read them for the first time. Add to the great interest this inspires, the no less interesting circumstance of seeing Napoleon Buonaparte, who at a later period usurped the throne of Henry IV. judge the abettors of a revolution, which was the very cause of his acquiring that throne. Thus I say, if the historical importance of these stolen and lost papers is deeply felt, Fouché will feel the weight of a still greater national resentment.

"Toulou, 17 December, 1793.

"From Napoleon Buonaparte, General of Artillery, to M. Dangeais.

"This is, I think, Sir, an attestation of some rank, some superiority and hopes of preferment. So much received on account from Fortune for the delightful promises with which she has ever buoyed me up.

"Well, Dangeais, now say, Buonaparte, you do not reflect; your brain is certainly cracked, your means will never be proportioned to your desires.' What a pitiful case is yours, my friend, to be acquainted with a mad-man, who is rather an original one by the bye: you must at least confess that this proportion of means is not badly sketched out; yes, sketched out, that is the very word. And yet, if this were the completion of my destiny, I would place myself on the first mortarpiece pointed at the enemy. Are not moreover my pretensions allowable, since now-a-days, the meanest individual sets himself up for a legislator and governor? Ah! my friend, what an abyss does our revolution present! How many victims will fall into it! How many have already fallen! Thanks to heaven, I have the hope of being preserved; but in speaking to you of this abyss. I am silent about those persons and events that are daily rendering it deeper. These details are due to you; mark well where I left off in my last dispatch. Do not, however, expect a regular series of facts. I will give you a sketch of the principal subjects of this vast and gloomy picture, not so much to lay them in judgment before you, as to convince you of my character, and impress you with the idea that my aim is not too lofty, when I think myself worthy of aspiring at every thing.

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"If, perchance, the happiness of your country should be your favourite illusion, if you are not fully persuaded that, in a revolution, the good are daily exposed to fall by the dagger of the ambitious, quit the perusal of these dispatches. In them you will find no common narration: the subject is new, terrible, and such as is seldom to be met with in the annals of civilized nations. If, however, you continue to peruse them, be not astonished if I mark with an indelible seal, certain persons and actions. In deeds so unnatural, so outrageous, it will be out of my power to use a natural and a placid style; my language will necessarily deserve a part of the reproaches belonging to the actions it will describe. Forewarned, therefore, be not surprised at my extrayagance.

"From Besançon, I arrived at Paris on the 10th of September, 1792. This was a new modelled city, a nursery for mean shufflers, seekers after preferment, cut-throats, and weak petty-citizens driven headlong from crime to crime, and who after having proceeded so far, find it difficult to retreat: such a gang, collected in this gulph of perdition, was perfectly conformable to my aim. On the 22nd of the same month, royalty was abolished, and the republic ordained: it was then that I chuckled with expectation, and not without a mo-

tive: brutes alone have no foresight.

"In the month of December, I was still at Paris to solicit promotion: during all the time not given up to my solicitations, I was employed in sifting into men and motives; nor could I occupy myself more profitably. I frequented assiduously the sittings of the convention; there I learned that the philosopher and the observer are one and the same person, and that, at times, each may acquire more knowledge in fathoming a volcano than in investigating a bed of plants. Half a

been printed, could not have instilled the hundredth part of those valuable notions which I acquired in the bosom of this representative chaos. All the elements of moral evil were, I believe, there in fermentation. If fear still kept within it a few honest individuals (a circumstance probable enough) I am certain they must have been upon thorns.

"The 9th of December, the pleader Target informed me, that the virtuous Louis XVI. would be brought to the Bar of the Convention on the 11th. At this information one half of my frame sprang with hope, and the other half shuddered with horror. Frenchmen! from Pharamond until this day, what have ye witnessed? Nothing, in comparison to the great events

reserved by fortune for this period.

"A just and benevolent king, who has nothing wherewith to reproach himself, but his unbounded clemency, brought on a sudden before his subjects, who have constituted themselves his judges, to be hereafter his executioners: such a man, I say, compelled to lay aside his name, his title, and his rank, is one of those terrible spectacles, that rend the heart of the good man and faithful subject; that are awful and painful to the philosopher; that are rapturous and sublime to the ambitious. How blunted soever may be the feelings of a man, he would purchase, even at the price of his blood, the right of assisting at such a meeting.

"I arrived at the Convention; I seated myself; the monarch enters. Oh, nature! Who ordered thee to imprint on the foreheads of legitimate sovereigns so much grandeur and dignity? Why am I not gifted with the same majestic appearance? How well would it suit my projects! But, no: indiscreetly liberal to this thy favourite class, thou art a rigid step-mother to

others. Such were the jealous reflections that assailed me, Dangeais, I must confess it, at the sight of the King of France; reflections, which, on an attentive consideration, were succeeded by milder sentiments. Nature, said I, is in the right, in having distinguished these privileged classes. Who will captivate by favour and benevolence, if it be not the man who governs his equals? This title alone, whether acquired justly or not, is sufficient to conciliate to us

the protection of supernatural and divine beings.

"My looks were again turned towards the accused monarch. The serenity of his soul could be traced on his calm and dignified countenance; his innocence was manifest in his least motions; and the bench of criminals, on which he had been placed by crime and ambition, appeared to me a splendid throne of glory and majesty. Excuse me, my friend, if to display these noble scenes to you, I make use of an heroic style; but you know, that every thing that strikes my mind, assumes the height of a cedar. My thoughts are lofty, therefore my expressions are so; and that which would be ridiculous in another, in me is only the effect of nature.

"The king spoke; he was at once concise and sublime. I expected, at one time, that his judges would fall down at his feet; but I was deceived: they possessed the audacity and energy of wickedness. Silent, they looked upon the king and shuddered not. Neither the rank of the accused; his innocence, which no person present doubted; the serenity of his countenance, nor the august appearance of his whole person, had any effect on the *iron* hearts of these men, determined to brave both celestial anger and human revenge. Such audacity on their part raised them in my estimation. At least, said I, they act their part

admirably; and their criminal insensibility is some recommendation: 'For if virtue has its heroes, so has

guilt.'

"Shall I, Dangeais, entrust you with a secret? Well then, these guilty wretches made so deep an impression on me, that had it depended on myself to have been either a mere witness of the solemn condemnation they were about to pronounce, or one of those who condemned him, I should not have hesitated in my choice: as a subject of the prince, I would have taken my place among his judges. But there my ambition would have known where to stop; I would have boldly spoken in favour of the monarch, and probably have saved him. If I am mistaken, it is an idea that has often possessed me. Learn, Dangeais, how I would have steered my course in this impetuous ocean; I would, in the first place, have secured a method for escaping; for he is only half a hero who falls. a victim to his laurels. This important precaution being first taken, I would have rushed forward into the assembly, not to refute the accusation brought against the King of France, whose death was already secretly planned; and who was merely led forth for form sake. but to cut short all deceitful decorum and proclaim the secret intentions of the guilty directors. Thus would I have addressed them :-

"'Representatives, what has the King of France to do here? Why act a prelude to his death by judiciary forms? Why impose on yourselves the unpleasant task of supporting the majesty of his looks, the serenity of his countenance, the sublime self-consciousness of his innocence? Why torment yourselves to find out charges against him? Why require him to justify himself, when the irrevocable decree of his condemnation is written on your hearts? What you, who

have trampled under foot all decorum; you who have broken through every tie, and destroyed every privilege, do you lower your tone now in order to feign, to ape justice? Gentlemen, you are out in your parts. On the footing you are now, your sovereign can no longer exist; you know it yourselves, but dare not proclaim it, as if afraid of withstanding the indignation of other nations. In the name of your formidable renown, be not mollified; be great and sincere in this illustrious murder; let one of you, like a sublime regicide thus address Louis XVI.:—Successor of Henry IV. henceforth France will no longer obey one king alone; we impose on it seven hundred sovereigns, consequently you can no longer live; prepare for death.'

"Do not you think, my friend, that such a speech would have changed the appearance of things? Would the assembly have listened to it with indifference? Would it not, in short, have roused the energy of those, who, in the convention, were secretly inclined towards the prince? I am convinced, that the numerous sensations produced, would have brought on a better order of things. As to myself, wisely making my escape after the meeting, I would have taken refuge with the French princes, and trusted to them for my safety and advancement.

"These were, my friend, the aërial castles my imagination formed in the midst of this popular vortex. The monarch is at last directed to provide himself with a counsel, and his guards reconduct him to the

temple.

"Next day I was informed, that the pleader Target had refused his assistance to his sovereign. This was, in the full force of the term, blotting his own name from the annals of immortality. But this cow-

ard, out of prudence, replied to this: By risking my own life, I should not save his. In that respect he was right, and had I been in his place, I should perhaps have acted in the same manner; for to tell you the truth, I love my own life. Malesherbes, Tronchet, and Deseze, devoted subjects whom I could not imitate, but whom I would place on my right hand if I were a king, united themselves to defend the grandson of Saint Louis. Should they survive this courageous act, I will never pass by them without a respectful bow.

" 20 December.

"Having gone to Versailles on some private business, I did not return to Paris before the 16th of January. I lost, consequently three or four scenes of this ambitious tragedy; but I was present on the 18th at the Convention. Ah! Dangeais, in spite of all that may have been advanced by the furies of the revolution, a king is not a mere man. His head falls, it is true, like that of a peasant; but he who commist the murder, inwardly shudders at the deed; and if superior motives which direct him, did not benumb his senses, he would not dare to utter the fatal condemnation.

"I eagerly contemplated the determined wretches who were about to pronounce sentence, on their virtuous sovereign; I watched every motion of their countenance, I probed into their very hearts. The magnitude and importance of the crime alone supported them: the name and rank of their victim secretly alarmed them, and had they hesitated, the prince would have been saved. Unfortunately, they had said to each other: 'If this head do not fall to day,

ours must hereafter drop under the axe of the execu-This thought more than any thing else, influenced the votes. What pen would be sufficiently skilful to depict the situation of the assembly? Pensive, mute, hardly daring to breathe, their eyes were fixed alternately on the accused, the judge and the counsel. Unparalleled circumstance! D'Orleans exclaims: I vote for death! Electricity itself could not produce a more instantaneous effect. Directors and judges rose dismayed, and the court re-echoed with a murmur of horror. One man alone, immoveable as a rock, remained seated. I was that man! The reason I gave myself for this insensibility, was found in my ambition; and as an ambitious man, the Duke of Orleans' action appeared to me perfectly natural. He aimed at a throne which belonged not to him, and certainly such an acquisition could not be made by a possessor of virtue and general esteem.

"Now, my friend, I must be brief; dismal subjects are not to my taste. The king was condemned to death; and on the 21st of the same month, if the French name was stained with an odious epithet, the martyrology was augmented with an illustrious name.

"What a city, Dangeais, Paris presented on this conspicuous day! The populace was no longer furious, but horror struck; some looked pensive, others, as if struck dumb. The streets were deserted, and the whole population remained inactive. Houses and palaces were changed into sepulchres: the very air smelt rank with slaughter. At last, the grandson of Saint Louis was led to the scaffold, between two files of mournful automata, lately his subjects.

"If any person should be present, were it even your father, when you are reading this dispatch, conceal carefully from him what follows, my dear friend, it is a stain on my character. Napoleon Buonaparte, deeply affected at the destruction of a mere man, and compelled to take to his bed, in consequence of this impression, is an incredible fact although a true one; so extraordinary an event, that I cannot own it without a blush and a despicable opinion of myself. Yes, Dangeais, I had that weakness, glorious to any other, but disgraceful to me, who already wished to have nothing in common with the tenderness of the human heart.

"The night before the 21st of January, it was impossible for me to close my eyes, nor could I account for it. I rose early and visited all the quarters where the soldiers were drawn out; I wondered at, or rather I despised the silly complaisance of forty thousand national guards, of whom nine-tenths were mechanically acting the parts of under-executioners. I met Santerre at the Gate St. Denis: a numerous retinue attended him. I would willingly have cut both his ears off; but as that was out of my power, I contented myself with casting a disdainful look on him. a wretch appeared to me unworthy of his mission. The Duke d'Orleans would have suited me in this station: he at least would have dishonoured himself; his aim was a crown, and we are all aware that such a motive causes many things to be overlooked.

"I crossed the boulevards and arrived at the Place de la Revolution. I had not till then seen the fatal invention of Doctor Guillotin: a cold perspiration seized me the moment I fixed my eyes on it. A stranger, who was next to me, attributing my paleness to the interest I took in the fate of the king of France, said to me: 'D'ont be alarmed, he will not fall; the Convention only wish to prove the power they possess: his

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pardon awaits him at the foot of the scaffold,"- 'If that be the case,' replied I, 'the conventionalists are little aware that the gibbet awaits them; for never did rogues deserve it more. He who attacks a lion and does not wish to be torn into pieces, ought not to wound him, but kill him on the spot.' A mournful and sepulchral sound was heard: it was the august victim. I pressed forward; I pushed and was pushed; at last I approached as near as it was possible; but in vain, the scaffold was concealed by the armed force. A beating of drums suddenly disturbed the mournful silence of an immense crowd. 'It is the signal of his pardon, said the stranger to me.'- 'So then,' rejoined I, 'his condemnation was only intended as an insult by the Convention. If so, committing a crime by halves is a triple offence.' A momentary silence ensued: suddenly something fell heavy on the scaffold. This noise struck to my heart: I asked a gendarme what it was. 'Tis the fall of the knife, answered he.'-'Then the king is not saved ?- He is dead! ... He is dead!' A dozen times I pronounced these words, he is dead! For a few moments I was bereft of my senses, and not knowing who had extricated me from the crowd, I found myself on the Quai des Theatins. There I recovered in some degree my senses; but could articulate nothing but: He is dead! ... I returned home in a melancholy state, and an hour elapsed before I completely recovered. So much weakness and pusillanimity appeared ominous to my future projects. I gave myself such a lecture as I would not have easily borne from any other person.

"In order to dissipate my melancholy thoughts, I went to pay a visit to the Deputy Barbaroux, on whom I frequently called. But, alas! what an unexpected

spectacle, his family were in tears, and I found that unhappy man, completely distracted, in consequence of the remorse he felt, at having given his fatal vote against his sovereign. In the same manner as a Roman Emperor once cried out for the restoration of his legions, so did the deputy cry out for the restoration of Louis XVI. Such imbecillity on his part provoked me against him; I had forgotten that I who had not the same cause to reproach myself, had been nearly in the same situation as he. What, said I to myself, is it such feeble-minded beings as these, who rush into the gulph of heinous atrocities? Why did not the unhappy wretch remain peaceably in the bosom of his family concerns? I was on the point of returning home, when Fouché and Carnot entered. These were at least, men, determined regicides! No impulse foreign to their ambitious projects, had induced them to vote for death: they had reasoned well on their crime. In their actions as well as in their words, could be constantly traced the tenacity of their opinions. If these men, thought I, have sinned, it was certainly upon mature reflection and for some purpose.

"Both of them shrugged up their shoulders at the sight of their delirious colleague. It was the first time I had seen Fouché, but by his appearance and discourse I could easily see he would go great lengths. I left Barbaroux's house, determined in my own mind never again to see a man, ambitious enough to commit a heinous crime, and cowardly enough to repent of it. Whoever, in a similar case, cannot free himself from an accusing recollection, ought to kill himself, and not lament like a woman. Barbaroux, however, did not think proper to take this resolution, for he soon re-

appeared on the political theatre, from which the executioner, with the stroke of an axe drove him some

time after.

"Excuse, my friend, the rapid view I have taken of this terrible catastrophe. It is not my intention to give you a detailed history of our revolution; I merely wish to particularize the principal facts, to enable you to judge of the events, and, what flatters me the most, to express to you with sincerity what I myself am, and my opinion of these political convulsions. You may easily collect the scattered out-lines in these dispatches, and compose a total, which will give you the measure and proportion of my ideas. If some of my propositions appear bold paradoxes, I forewarn you that you may expect many similar ones; I will, however, add that these apparent paradoxes cease to be such, as soon as we see things as they really are. Examine thoroughly what follows, you will be convinced it is so.

"If the ambition of power and the love of riches, in certain individuals, have brought the king to the scaffold, both these passions have stirred up avengers in his cause, in his very executioners. Thousands of factions sprang from the grand national faction, and successively butchered each other. I mean not to fix your attention on this slaughter; my object is, to fix it on something nobler and greater, and that is on myself. How great, indeed, I appeared in my own eyes! France streaming in blood, and groaning under her wounds, while I was secretly intoxicated with joy: a delight so much the less deserving of censure, as it was involuntary. Yes, Dangeais, your friend felt happy in spite of himself. He did not reason on the cause of his joy, but welcomed it. Each faction, as it fell under the axe of another factious body, appeared

to him to remove another obstacle to the high expectations raised in his breast by ambition. I hurl contempt at him who would condemn sentiments, which could

not be replaced by others.

"Had I not been ambitious, my want of fortune and the disorders of my country would have impelled me to take advantage of circumstances; and yet, when the royal cause was completely ruined, I was undecided as to the choice of the faction to which I should devote myself. Here, Dangeais, I must place one of the most painful circumstances of my life; a circumstance which I should certainly have related before the death of the king, but which I have only kept back through the shame of owning it.

"What could, in fact, afflict me more sensibly, at that epoch, than the indifference, or the contempt of any man? What! for me to condescend to write, and not to receive a reply!... You know me, Dangeais; you are aware what an exalted opinion I have of myself. Need I after that, tell you how I resented the treatment of M. Montmorin? But this circumstance must be more amply detailed: history will necessarily

gain by the knowledge.

"Having ever appreciated men, whatever they might be, in proportion to the rank they occupy in society, and the power they exercise over their equals; it is certain, that in the beginning of the revolution, I would have preferred the cause of the sovereign to that of his subjects. But how many obstacles acted against this natural inclination. Without interest, without birth or fortune to recommend me, a stranger to the court, totally unknown to the monarch, and too ambitious to serve him as a subaltern, what means could I employ to be introduced to him? Misfortune itself

and necessity do not render the great, quicker of apprehension; and how many of them are there, who fall as victims by the side of a mere individual, whose arm or counsels might support them, or cause them to conquer! Consequently, the more I reflected on the means to be employed, in order to serve the court in an exalted station, the less did these means appear attainable. This obstacle once known as insurmountable, I placed all my expectations in the pretended cause of the people, or rather in the excesses to which they would, I was well aware, be driven. I would not, however, deliver myself up entirely to this party. without endeavouring to make myself known to the ministers, and induce them to profit by the enthusiasm of my youth and ambition, in order to bring about a new order of things.

"It was then the beginning of 1792; I was captain, and had reached my twenty-fourth year. The French monarch saw daily his power diminishing, and the assembly increasing theirs. Much less afflicted at the misfortunes of the king, than jealous of the colossal power of his oppressors, who, from the height of their ephemeral grandeur, scarcely deigned to look on a simple officer; jealous, I say, of the distance that these audacious upstarts set between themselves and my equals, I formed the project of hurling them headlong from their curule chairs. Was this the project of a wise man, or an impetuous madman? Was the plan good or bad? Would it have failed or succeeded? These are queries, the solution of which embarrass me but little at present. Suffice it to say, that this design was conceived.

My first idea was to write to the king himself; but considering that he tenderly loved his people, that his indulgence and piety had always rendered him averse to rigour, I was convinced that the severity of the measures I should propose, would not only make him reject them; but would most probably create in him a bad opinion of my principles. I determined, therefore, to present my memorial to one of his ministers; the only difficulty was, to know to which of these

gentlemen I should address it.

"Clavière, a systematic financier, and yet not a statesman, would have treated me as a madman. Roland, a republican of his lady's fabrication, might have made me suffer for my interference. M. de Narbonne, half republican and half royalist, had two strings at that time to his bow; besides, this minister was too inveterate against M. Bertrand de Molleville, whom he railed at and opposed in every thing and in all places. Bertrand de Molleville, a harsh and severe man, and above all, inclined to great measures, was certainly the very minister to suit me; but by some information gained concerning him, I was assured that he was strongly selfopinionated, and neither valued nor sanctioned any thing but what emanated from himself. There only remained M. Montmorin, and several reasons determined me in his favour. He was sincerely devoted to the king, possessed his confidence, and was convinced more than any other of the perils that threatened the royal family; and yet who would believe, that notwithstanding these favourable circumstances, he would not enter into my designs? Who would imagine that he, who possessed too much humanity, but not enough firmness to constitute a statesman, would not even take into consideration a plan, the execution of which, I am convinced, would have brought on a better order of things, and have saved the monarch and his friends?

This, however, happened; for the minister did not even answer my memorial: perhaps even he despised the author of it. I may at least presume it to be the case, after his silence towards me; but the conventioners, by condemning to death the most virtuous of kings, have sufficiently avenged me for the indifference

shown me by his minister.

"You will appeal to yourself, my friend, whether self-love blinded me, and whether M. Montmorin did not commit a grievous fault, by not taking into consideration the plan I proposed to him. It is useless to tell me that the king would not have acquiesced in it. To this I reply, without fear of being contradicted, that the dangers of the monarch had increased to such a degree, that there were no longer any precautionary measures to be taken; that he, who would wish to serve the king efficaciously, should assume authority himself, and even disobey the monarch for his preservation. Such conduct, I know, might ruin its author. Well! in that, precisely, consisted the glory and merit M. Montmorin might acquire. He who will deny these truths, cannot be acquainted with the period I am alluding to. Was not, moreover, M. Montmorin prepared for great sacrifices, since he said to the Duke of Lessart, when accepting the ministry, 'Sir, I make a renunciation of my life, since I am convinced, that to serve the king effectually, it is necessary at present to expose oneself to death.' Why then, with such a conviction, did he not try the experiment of my energy and projects? My opinion is, that there could not have happened greater misfortunes than those we have witnessed.

"Now, Dangeais, of all the political projects you have as yet had of me, the following one is the most

important; be pleased to preserve it carefully. If M. Montmorin has not destroyed the original, and that it should still exist in some portfolio, the copy you will possess will serve to compare with the original, if it should happen to be published. I have great reasons, that, in such a case, it should not be mutilated: reserve then for yourself the only means of being able to contradict any person who would allow the least expression to be changed. It is not, precisely speaking, a memorial that enters into details; a volume would have been scarcely sufficient, and I always preferred actions to words. I have no hesitation in thinking, that the system and its principles will displease you; such would be the effects on most of its readers, if it were destined to become public. And yet, I am confident, that such would not be the case, if one could have a just idea of the dreadful circumstances during which it was written; and, above all, that no half measures must be taken when all is nearly But perhaps I have a false idea of the judgment which the public would pass on my memorial. May not the reader, in dwelling on the king's death, and the other atrocities which acccompanied it, exclaim, 'He was certainly right in wishing to proceed beyond the ordinary limits! He was well aware that there are certain occasions, when prudence, circumspection, and irresolution are errors, especially in politics!' However, whether the public would approve or condemn the project I had conceived, and the means I wished to employ to insure the fulfilling of them, I am convinced that every real friend of the unfortunate Louis XVI. will regret that my advice was despised.

"My ultimate plan being unknown, may cause

this repreach to be made me, that I have not sufficiently developed my ideas, nor specified all the chances of my project. To this I answer, that I reserved for myself the pleasure of explaining them to the minister, and entering with him into the minutest details. As to the style, it is entirely my own, and its colouring in this memorial is not without a purpose. Every painter has his peculiar colouring and method; the unskilful alone copies the style of another.

CHAP. VI.

A Statement of the Dangers that threaten the Throne and the Sovereign, together with the only means of preserving both.

" To M. Montmorin, Minister of State, &c. &c.

"SIR,

"By addressing the present letter to you, I am rendering justice to the sincere attachment you bear to the interests and person of His Majesty. Had I been aware that he possessed a more faithful subject, and a more devoted minister, I should have destined the following observations for him. Deign, therefore, to grant me all your attention; for if the subject on which I treat, appear to you of the utmost importance, the manner of my treating it will not seem

to you less singular.

"The kindness, indulgence, moderation, and piety of the monarch have destroyed his happiness, and increased the torrent of slanders against his legitimate authority. Thence it follows, that the minister, who sincerely wishes to save the throne and France, ought instantaneously to be deaf to all moderation, to repulse all half-way measures, strike a tremendous and decisive blow, were he to ruin both himself and others. This proposal, at any other period, ill-judged and terrible, is at this moment conformable to reason; for let us no longer dissemble, all is lost, the throne, the sovereign, his partisans, and perhaps even France itself.

To doubt it, is weakness; to deny it, is a crime towards the monarch. Excuse, Sir, the harshness of the expressions, as I think, and as I see things, so do I express myself; and, under that idea, I think and see rightly. Is the evil without remedy ?- No.-What is the remedy ?-Great, extraordinary, and terrible !-Is it infallible?—Yes, if unlimited devotedness, courage, intrepidity, patience, firmness, vigilance, severity, weapons of iron and death undertake to administer it. Let the opposers at times find clemency, but only at the moment when they are no longer to be dreaded; let prudence guide the blow, but let it seldom stop the infliction. For the last three years, the monarch has been uselessly forming a bed of roses for his enemies; let us induce him to allow us to strew a bed of thorns for them; let us do more, let us take upon ourselves to go beyond his orders and even disobey him, to save him from certain destruction. Now is the time, there is not a moment to be lost; let us collect like thunder, and like a thunder-bolt, let us fall, crash, and disperse.

"This opening, Sir, is but in reference to the situation in which the monarch and monarchy are at this present time, and from the idea of the dispatch and energy necessary for the operations. I now pass to the resources and means of insuring both. With energy, firmness, sacrifices, and the king's consent, these resources will be numerous, and possibly the result may be fortunate: with feebleness, and the continued indulgence of the sovereign, they will be of no avail, and both prince and subjects will be utterly ruined. I will now analyze these resources, and point

out the means of taking advantage of them.

"Gold is, at this time, more than ever the great requisite: in the bands of a king, it may re-establish his

tottering throne; in those of his enemies, it is the principal instrument they make use of to undermine it, Consequently, let the king, before any thing else be done, acquire a considerable sum of money.-Impossible, I shall be told, his coffers are empty, and the new laws scarcely allow him wherewith to subsist.-This would be a proper reply, if my project were merely an appeal to common efforts; but those I point out, are as vast and as extraordinary as the evils they are called upon to remedy. Let a commission, secretly authorized by the king, be immediately formed, to make loans in his name in France, in foreign countries, throughout the whole universe if necessary. Louis XVI. possesses faithful subjects and true friends in the three classes of the state. Let them come forward and prove themselves such, by each advancing to the utmost for him. Let each lender receive as security for his loan, an acknowledgment signed by the king himself, and something flattering written by way of postscript. What Frenchman, if he be not a revolutionist, would not make great sacrifices to possess such an acknowledgment? Thousands would never reclaim what they advanced in order not to lose that precious signature; thousands would preserve it as a family title to transmit it to their grand-children. This measure would operate more efficaciously upon that part of the people devoted to the sovereign. The clergy and nobility, more interested than any other class in the preservation of the throne, should be in particular invited to pay their share in favour of the unfortunate prince. Kind words, and promises on his part, should be given to all. The queen should seek all opportunities to welcome every one who should approach her; she should introduce her young son, and communicate on their common misfortunes. I know what a Frenchman is; easily subdued by royal-ty in tears, willing to impart its misfortunes; he would think himself fortunate in the confidence placed in him; in such a case he would even shed his blood in its cause. The lover would with pleasure give up her trinkets; the wife her diamonds; the officer would replace the golden hilt of his sword for a steel one; in short, the riches that would flow from various channels to the monarch, would enable him to re-assume the reins of government, now on the point of being wrested from his hands.

"The assertions contained in the above paragraph may appear chimerical to the minds of some persons, and particularly to those who feel incapable of making the smallest sacrifice. But let these assertions be well weighed, and it will be easily conceived how these suppositions may be realized. Certainly such measures, and several others which I do not immediately point out, would soon furnish an immense treasure to the sovereign. And with gold, what may not be done, and especially in the hands of a king?

"If therefore Louis XVI, possesses treasures deposited in safe hands, let us now calculate the forces he

ean muster, and on whose fidelity he may rely.

"The Swiss, his body guards, certain national guards, entirely devoted to him, the officers of his household, volunteers in the service of those attached to the court, and others who could be easily bought over with gold, would form the principal force. Added to these, some intrepid royalists, scattered in the departments, might be induced to come under divers pretences, and settle in Paris or the suburbs. These several classes united, might amount to 20,000 men, ready to assemble at the first signal, and upon whose fidelity the commander may rely. This troop of men,

close embodied, will provisionally remain inactive. Let us now pass on to the grand counterpoises of the revolution; of these there are four on which the greatest expectations may be placed: these are La Vendee, Le Vivarois, the favourable dispositions of Lyons, and a part of the south. As to the fourth, I shall speak of it afterwards.

" La Vendee is in a flame, the republican armies are closely hemmed in, and often beaten, and by whom? By miserable inhabitants, badly armed, without artillery, undisciplined, often without ammunition, cloaths, and bread, led on by chiefs who are brave, it must be allowed, but constantly disunited, operating without any concerted plan, and envious of each other. Le Vivarais, less formidable, may become as much, and perhaps more so, if properly seconded. Lyons harbours all the elements of a powerful insurrection; if it should but perceive the smallest re-action it will immediately burst forth.

"What then is wanting to these several insurgents, or departments ready to become so? I answer commanders; and this is the fourth counterpoise which I have alluded to, and of which I will now speak.

"If the Vendeans, badly armed, undisciplined, led on by chiefs disunited among themselves, envious of each others' successes, and chiefly of plebeian origin, if I say, the Vendeans, in spite of these great obstacles, threaten the existence of the Convention, harass its troops, and even disperse them, what will they not be able to do, should they have one of Louis's brothers at their head, and the princes of the blood, and all the French nobility in their ranks! Probably then, their successes would be incalculable.

"Let then Monsieur be ordered to remain alone in Germany, to keep up the negociations entered upon,

with foreign courts, to have an eye upon the policy adopted by them, and accelerate the succours he may be able to obtain. Let him then, take every necessary precaution, that the Count d'Artois, his sons, the Prince de Condé, and other princes of the blood, be accompanied, for the royal armies of La Vendee, by all the French emigrants without exception. It would be better that this order be strictly adhered to by the princes, and the emigrant noblesse, as they cannot but perceive the indifference of the foreign powers, and the little energy they show in assisting them.

"An active clever man must go to England to ob-

tain arms and ammunition.

"As soon as the princes are armed in La Vendee, a large sum of money should be remitted to them. They must immediately take the command of the troops, and in the king's name, invite the disunited chiefs to a reconciliation. Should they be unsuccessful in this latter point, they must watch their dissensions, so that they have no influence on the military operations. Numerous agents must be stationed on the confines of the departments, to make it publicly known that the Count d'Artois, his sons, Condé, D'Enghien, and all the French nobility are at the head of the royalists.

"An appeal must be made to all subjects, faithful to their sovereign, to flock to his standard. The prince commanding the army, must immediately form them into companies and battalions, without, however, subjecting them to the same laws as regular troops. He must not either endeavour to train them to the use of arms. I particularly urge these two points; for, to act otherwise, would be uselessly fatiguing, and disgusting simple inhabitants, whose intention is not to remain

soldiers for any length of time, and whose principal

merit is the being good shots.

"The prince, in the mean time, must make an appeal to all the citizens who have served in the line, and who are skilful in manœuvres and management of arms, to act as volunteers. He will form of them two compact bodies, among which should be placed his noblesse and young adventurers who may wish to join them. He must take the command of one, with his sons under him; the Prince de Condé and the Duke D'Enghien must head the other. These two corps will form the sacred battalions. As real troops of the line, they will regularly manœuvre before the disciplined troops of the republicans, according to the situation, occasions, and the method of the enemy's attack. They must be present wherever the greatest danger is; must protect, lead to combat, and give the example. These two bodies, in short, which will undoubtedly increase every day, will be the chief of the whole army; and whosoever knows how to employ them, and make a proper use of the resources they present, may depend upon great success.

"The cavalry must next become the object of the general's care. He must form as great a number as

circumstances will permit.

"It now remains to speak of the artillery. This part of the effective, more particularly than any other, demands the attention of the prince in the warfare he is entering upon, and against the soldiers he has to withstand.

"The two concentrated bodies, which I have before mentioned, possessing each, in their centre, ten pieces of cannon and two howitzers, and marching abreast in open plains against the republican columns, would soon drive the latter into the capital. The king, therefore,

should use his utmost endeavours to furnish his brother with the necessary means of procuring artillery; either

in France, or from foreign countries.

"Now we must turn our thoughts to the Vivarois. two-thirds of the inhabitants of which are staunch royalists: they are nearly all sportsmen, and the mountaineers are excellent marksmen. The country rich and abundant, interspersed with mountains and valleys, may be advantageously defended by a small number of men against superior troops. A prince of the blood, in these countries, would soon find himself at the head of a formidable force: he might extend his intercourse to the south, and induce the royalists of Lyons to second him. He would find in the authorities of these provinces, the most favourable dispositions towards the royal cause, being nearly all of them composed of persons secretly hostile to the revolution; especially those of Privas and Aubenas. A great number of private gentlemen and notables, who conspicuousy figured in the camp of Jales, might also be found who would gladly join the royal cause.

"The arrangements being made, in La Vendee and Le Vivarais, the prince, at the head of the Vendeans, must form to himself a plan of military operations; all the parts of which must have a common centre. He must keep up a correspondence with the army of Le Vivarais, which, as much as possible, must act with the same views and at the same time. The Count d'Artois must manœuvre only in one direction on Paris. The first feat of arms of this grand operation ought to be like a thunderbolt, a decisive battle, the success of which must be secured by every precaution that can be taken. Nothing ought to be left to fortune, which prudence can take away by force. The army should be led on to this great expedition by general

tle words, brilliant promises, and some small distributions. The glory which awaits the soldier if he be conqueror, and the punishments destined for him by the republicans if he be conquered, must be represented to each division, and to every man. Let both officers and private men be informed, there is no retreating; and, that either to inflict death or to receive it, are the only two objects he has to regard. When once this conviction is imprinted on the minds of the royalists, the Count d'Artois may rely on the destruction of his enemies; my assertion needs not be doubted. The troops being thus predisposed, the prince must lay aside for a time, that humanity which characterizes the Bourbons, he must give the signal and quickly march up to the enemy; not so much to attack, as to fall . upon them suddenly. Let every stroke tell, and let every man, except a few of the rifle corps, fire his shot close to the enemy. Above all, let there be no skirmishes, no random shots, let them approach in a body, rapidly and without regard to the numbers that fall; the prince may divide each of his regular phalanxes into two separate corps, which he must head with all the artillery he can dispose of. These two impetuous forces must rush like a thunderbolt on all the weak points, and must boldly charge the opposers; the prince himself, in the mean time, placed in reserve with his other phalanx, must direct it wherever the victory appears doubtful; in short, Sir, upon ten charges thus combined, and above all, thus impetuously put into execution, nine of them at least will be complete victories. I can safely affirm, that if the Vendeans, in the first engagement, strictly follow this form of battle, they will be at Etampes in a fortnight, and the monarchy will be saved. Such a result as this, I think, would be a triumphant answer to those

who would wish to set up the rights of humanity, merely laid aside for the moment, in order to put an end to the multiplied outrages committed against it. An engagement like this, would be the shedding of some little blood, to prevent hereafter torrents from

flowing.

"But the prince must not limit himself merely to this: without remaining an instant on the field of battle, he must pursue the enemy, and not allow them any respite, lest they should rally again. The enemy thus beaten and in disorder, would necessarily carry consternation into the battalions sent to their assistance. Who can calculate upon the result of this latter

circumstance?.

" As soon as such an advantage is gained, France, and all Europe should be informed of it. Foreign powers, encouraged by these successes, would instantly order their generals to redouble their efforts against the republican army; the consequence would be, that the Convention would not be able to spare a single regiment to oppose the Vendeans. The Vivarois, stimulated by the appearance of things, would act much in the same manner as the Vendeans, and would meet with the same success. Lyons would then declare itself, and the royal armies, resembling a ball of snow rolling from a mountain into the plain, would increase in their march; as those persons who had been deterred through fear from declaring for the sovereign, would joyfully join the royal cause.

I am now arrived at what concerns me in particular. It is here, Sir, that I stand most in need of your confidence; for if I do not obtain it, my project and my means of executing it, will not be comprehended.

"I have already said and proved that the king might secretly assemble a body of twenty thousand men, partly concealed in Paris or in the suburbs; these twenty thousand men are consequently disposable. It is more than probable, that the rapid success of the Count d'Artois will have made a change on the people's minds. The Convention may yet be able to keep them in awe; but the multitude will be no longer so ready to serve them. Fear among some, and affection for the king amongst others, will mark the decline of its power. The Convention may even show itself less rigorous towards the monarch; but without regarding this deceifful appearance, on the approach of the Vendean army, the king in person should go out to meet them; for when once the conventionalists perceive their approaching downfal, they may, if the king be in their power, strike a desperate blow.

"To succeed in getting the king and his family out of the capital, must undoubtedly be considered a masterly action: the execution of such a project ought to be confided only to a man who would insure the success of it with his own life. I will even say more, such a man ought to possess great means to execute it, and have foreseen all the chances against him: he ought to be more certain of success in his plan, than he is of daylight at noon. In short, what a charge does he not take upon himself? The King of France, his consort, his son, the presumptive heir to the crown! This is ten times more than needful to submit to the severest scrutiny the being who would boldly pronounce himself capable of conducting such a project with success, and who would stake his life for the favourable result

"There are still, with the king, some intrepid men who are devoted to his person; near him are, undoubtedly, still excellent officers, skilful in management, and able to resist obstacles. No doubt but the ministers will cast their eyes on these persons for this great undertaking, if, in the mean time, the plan I have traced be not disregarded. Be it so; yet I will be bold enough to maintain, that amongst these intrepid and devoted men, amongst these officers who have grown old in service, there will not be found the man capable of insuring the success of this important project. To him only who has conceived it, who has thoroughly examined it, belongs this difficult task; a task impossible to any other. He alone is in possession of the secret means to be used, to insure this safe retreat. The secrecy of those means is such, that were he even disposed, he could not communicate them to others; they would neither be comprehended in the total, nor in detail; he, and he alone, in short, possesses the tactical skill that must be used in this nice point of time; and a tactical skill, moreover, which, were he to be assaulted by the populace, would repel it, even were it twice as numerous. This, Sir, is telling you, that as author of the project, I name myself the director of it Here, Sir, I have no doubt, you lay down my memorial, indignant at my audacity and presumption. Who, you naturally exclaim, is this self-conceited, opinionative being, who thus dares to encroach upon the rights of the ancient defenders of the monarch? What is his age, his name, his rank, his titles, his honourary scars? I will satisfy you, Sir, as to these interrogatories; this self-conceited, opinionative being, is a young man four-and-twenty years of age; a mere officer, totally unknown, of no note, no family, and without titles You get enraged, Sir, no doubt: but calm yourself. This mere officer is Napoleon Buonaparte, a being capable of undertaking, and of succeeding in every thing, because all that he undertakes will be prepared, meditated, and deeply re-

flected on. Consequently, whoever will behold him at the head of an enterprize, may rely upon a successful result. Excuse, Sir, this boasting style. If from the pen of any other person it might appear turgid; from mine it is only what it ought to be. My person and name are unknown to you; therefore I have only my first onset to allure your attention. I wish to astonish in order to induce you to listen to me, reserving for myself to prove by my successes, that you were in the right to listen to me, and induced to it not without good cause. If you despise my offers, and compelme to throw myself into another party, you will then say of me what Louis XIV. once said of the Abbé de Savoie: Alas, what a heavy loss we have experienced! For this abbé afterwards became Prince Eugene. Immortal example! terrible lesson given to monarchs and to ministers.

" As to the means I shall put in execution to remove the king and his family with safety out of the capital, allow me to be silent on them here, as I intend to detail them in full length to you in a private conference. I will merely at present state, that with the twenty thousand men which will form the escort of the king and his family, and the extraordinary. means at my disposal, I will conduct them safely to the frontiers.

"Were it only to render justice to my good intentions, I flatter myself, Sir, that you will not leave unanswered, an officer who wishes to do his duty, and who particularly subscribes himself,

Sir.

Your very humble Servant.

NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE."

" Paris, 2d April, 1792."

CHAP. VII.

"I SUPPOSE, Dangeais, you have read my memorial, and I think I have a right to affirm, that those persons must be bold indeed who will condemn it without reserve. You will, no doubt, say, that in some points it transgresses, that it would have occasioned some bloodshed, and have compromised, for the time, the royal family and their most faithful servants. What do these assertions prove, but that the execution of my projects would not have rendered things worse? What greater atrocities could have been committed? What events could have caused more bloodshed? The 10th of August has witnessed the overthrow of the king's body guards, the Swiss, the ancient friends of the monarch, his faithful servants, brave men whom I would have conducted to victory, and led on to trample upon a populace, dangerous only when listened to, or when they can shelter themselves behind a wall and confine themselves within a building from which they are attacked or defend themselves. I will moreover say, that I should not have found it necessary even to use energy against them. I should have left Paris in the night time, during the darkness of which they would not have ventured to assail me. If they had, a brisk discharge of muskets and soon they would have seen their error. Twenty thousand men well disciplined, skilful in manœuvres, certain of being slaughtered unless they conquer, stimulated by the presence of a king, a queen, and the presumptive heir, an illustrious and unfortunate family, who place

their lives under the ægis of their bravery; twenty thousand men, I say, in such a position, at liberty to extend themselves, and commanded by a man of skill, and who does not value a few lives lost, will easily fight their way through an undisciplined populace, badly armed, and led on in disorder. For the truth of my assertion, I appeal to masters of the military art. To this I add, that the king, under the escort of these twenty thousand men, would have directed his course towards the victorious army of the Count d'Artois, with which he would soon have fallen in. If I needed any more to convince me how very wrong it was not to try the plan which I had conceived and traced, I will add, that the axe of the regicides, delivered into the hands of the executioner, has brought the king, the queen, and her beloved sister to an untimely end. Their son, their young son, the presumptive heir, languishes in a prison, and is put to torture each successive day, by a wretch who ought to die on the scaffold.* Madame, like an angel of sweetness, sufferance, and compassion, groans under pangs and painful recollections on a pallet in a dungeon. The unfortunate and elegant Princess de Lamballe, the valuable and virtuous friend of a queen, vet more unfortunate, has been torn piece-meal, and her limbs, dripping with blood, were borne on the heads of her assassins, who paraded them through the capital. At Versailles, Brissac, Lessart, and thousands of others, have fallen slashed and bleeding into the tomb. I shall proceed no further; the noise of the revolutionary hatchets, falling on the surface of this fair country, loudly condemns the rejection of my me-

^{*} Simon, the shoemaker.

morial, and compels me to repeat, what worse could

have happened?

"Convinced as I was, Dangeais, of the misfortunes ready to fall upon the monarch and his family, conceive if possible what must have been my indignation, when I saw the only means that could shield the royal family from so many calamities, and procure me so much glory, treated with contempt, for I say once again, my ambition entered for much more into my projects, than the interest I felt for the victims I wished to

preserve.

"How much, my friend, did I take this affront to heart! What reflections did it not excite! If hereafter you should be asked what motives principally induced me to follow the revolutionary party, you may point out two causes: the rejection of my memorial, and the disgrace inflicted upon me by the haughty Paoli, a man whom I had ever honoured and respected, and had always placed above the heroes of antiquity. I wished, however, Dangeais, to conceal from you this latter painful circumstance; but it would be too great a chasm in the chain of my existence. I should fear likewise lest posterity might one day or other attribute my silence, either to my culpability or my weakness, I will therefore give you a detail but no I cannot; I will no more plunge a dagger into the wound scarcely healed. Have I not suffered enough? Have I not sufficiently drank of the cup of humiliation.? And yet . . . I find I have gone already too far, Dangeais, to break off here. I consent then to relate this fact to you, as briefly as possible.

"A few months ago I took a journey to Corsica, to take advantage of any circumstances that might offer. I found peoples' minds there, as well disposed as I could wish: the effervescence was general: meetings

were forming, the members of which were composed of ambitious villains, and petty citizens. On all sides, were bandied about the words liberty and equality. The opportunity was favourable; I entered into the sport as others did, although I cordially despised my companions. My fellow citizens were ensured by my fair pretences, and named me commander of the

national guard.

"Paoli, in the mean time, was forming very different plans. His fortune and reputation being made, he wished for a peaceable and steady revolution. Two parties were formed; we became enemies. I kept an equal balance with him for some time; but his name, his exploits, his intrigues gained an ascendancy, and my family with myself were banished from Corsica. Never did I so much regret knowing the value of existence: I could have blown my brains out; but convinced that, of all acts of cowardice, suicide was the greatest, I determined to live. Madam Buonaparte, said to me one day, 'Why do you give yourself up to such transports of rage? It is so noble so great to show oneself superior to a reverse of fortune! and what is it after all? a contrariety, a mere petty vexation. What would you think, if I were to tell you that it is perhaps a fortunate circumstance; that the decree which proscribes you, may become the diploma of the most brilliant dignities, and the brevet of a high renown: Napoleon, Corsica is but an uncultivated rock, an imperceptible and miserable speck of land; France on the contrary, is extensive, rich, populous, and in flames. This, my son, is a noble conflagration, worth risking being scorched at.'

"Never did a mother receive so cordial an embrace from a son, as Madam Buonaparte received, in return for the observations she had just made. How did her



words vibrate in my ears! Corsica is but an uncultivated rock, a speck of land; France on the contrary is extensive, rich, populous, &c. This was enough to bring me back to milder sentiments, and render my exile much less painful to support. This, Dangeais, is what happened to me in Corsica; this is what I wished to conceal, and which I now briefly relate to

you, without comments and reflections.

"This first slight, received in Corsica, and my memorial at court unanswered, irrevocably threw me into the revolutionary party. To what cause could I then devote myself, since the minister actually removed me from that of the sovereign? I was without fortune, without birth, and without recommendation: I could not therefore join the princes, who besides, were beginning to become the victims of the ingratitude and policy of foreign powers. How opposite to this was my determination, when the assassins of 1793 had doomed to death the principal members of the royal family; when these same assassins, divided into different factions, were mutually dragging each other to the scaffold! Could I then inwardly consent to remain a subaltern, under the hideous sceptre of this butchering set. Would I have accepted of an employment under a Carriere, a Marat, or a Robespierre, had I not been convinced that the globe would not long bear such infamous wretches? A Robespierre, to summon me with his laws; a Robespierre obtain my respect, my esteem perhaps, in the condition in which France is at present, he may have that influence; but over me ... never, no never: I am too well aware of the portion of filth he is composed of. His ambition partakes too much of the vile and contemptible, even in spite of the blood he sheds, unrestrained by his stupid and timid colleagues.

"A Robespierre if there be a cruel reproach to be made the French, it will be to call to their recollection that such a being ever glutted himself in the purest of blood, and ever imposed laws on them. * Such men as Tiberius, Sylla, or Cromwell, might have pretended to place a nation in such a degree of base subjection. Under such men as these, at least it may be excusable

if the nation tamely submitted to the yoke.

"Would you credit it, I have so far debased myself as to have written twice to this same Robespierre. He is a cowardly reptile whose turpitude and immorality I have need to appreciate, in order to knew to what extent such a one can proceed, without genius and with audacity only, in tormenting a nation, and disposing of its treasures. Political villains furnish the best subjects of study for the statesman, and the ambitious; they supply active precepts, good or bad.

"You perceive, dear Dangeais, that each day shortens the distance you have ever supposed necessary to exist between me and a lofty destiny. Each event for these last two years, has insensibly embellished the character I have assumed in the political drama. I see not as yet, it is true, the point where I am to

stop, but I feel I am gently approaching it.

"Having entered the army merely as captain, and being named commander at Olioulles, after the resignation of Mr. Dutheil, who was dangerously wounded,

^{*} By inveighing so bitterly against Robespierre, Napoleon little imagined that ten years after, Madame de Staël, surnamed him the Robespierre on horseback. It was no doubt, this epithet, deserved or not, which caused such an aversion in him for this lady. One day that one of her writings had more than usually irritated him, he said to Savary: 'Why does not this pedantess wear the breeches? If she were in the Mogul empire, I would order her to be arrested and sent to row in the galleys.

I received orders to proceed to Toulon. There, I was compelled, as well as several others, to undergo many vexations, by manœuvring as directed by men entirely ignorant of the military art; I allude to those representatives sent by the Convention to head the armies, by

which they were universally despised.

"I was directed to cannonade the forts of La Malgue and Malboquet, to drive the enemy from their Barras and Fréron, commissioned to direct the siege, assumed the men of experience, and regulated my batteries; I left them to do as they chose, being well aware they were acting wrong. Ten days in short passed, and I had merely wasted powder and shot. It was then time I thought for me to prove to the representatives, that if they knew how to make fine speeches, and gibbet their antagonists, they knew nothing about destroying a fortress. I said not a word to them of my plan, for fear of engaging in a dispute with them; in the night I fixed, to the eastward of my other redoubts, a plain battery of eight pieces of twelve pounders and two howitzers; the work was carrying on, when they appeared. 'What is this battery for ?' said they to the captain employed ?-'A new one ordered by the commander.' I was within three yards of them, and heard every thing, but said not a word. Fréron viewed with his telescope, and desired them to leave off, that the battery was useless, I immediately came up: 'This battery shall remain.' said I, 'I answer with my life it will succeed: follow your employment, and leave me to follow mine.' Astonished at such boldness, the commissaries were silent for a moment. Barras placed himself in the angle desimed for the howitzers, examined for some time their supposed direction, and retired at a little distance, taking Fréron by the arm. I know not what he said

to him, but returning to me, 'Well, go on, we shall see

whether you do not presume too much.'

" No, I did not presume too much; I had discovered the weak side of the two forts; I took them at half-flank; by this means three-fourths of the defenders were exposed to my fire. The day after, I made my first assault; the success trebled my expectations. My balls completely swept away the ramparts, and the forts were a few days after taken. What will, no doubt, surprise you, my friend, is, that I had the idea of this battery before the representatives had ordered those which only served to lengthen the attack and waste ammunition. I might certainly have made the observation to the commissaries, and pointed out its utility; but that would only have been rendering a service to the state, and what I most feared, to the deputies, who probably would have arrogated to themselves all the honour. How much wiser did I act! None but a blockhead can deny me this consequence. The representatives, with whom I had acted bluntly, and whom perhaps I had inwardly humbled, were prudent enough not to resent it. Pleased at having gained possession of so fine a harbour, they recompensed me for the part I had taken in the acquisition, by naming me brigadier-general: I am waiting for the commission to sign in that quality. Not that I am prevented from so doing at present through modesty, but that I fear the Convention may not ratify the determination of the representatives, as their power is subject to so many variations. Be it as it may, I trust that this dispatch, which has been taken up at different times, will furnish you matter for reflection, not only on the great catastrophes, of which your country is the witness and the victim, but also on the expectations I form for myself. Your approbation, I am well aware, will not VOL. I.

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extend to all the circumstances of my life, but I owe you no ill-will for that; you shall, nevertheless, be my confidant and friend, as much as one man can be so towards another. I am moreover persuaded, that I alone can appreciate and approve myself. This conviction is one of my greatest satisfactions. Why have I any thing in common with other mortals? I would wish to be completely a man apart. I possess, however, the sole approbation that I aspire after—that is my own.

"I conclude for the present, my dear Dangeais, happy in the expectation that these sheets will convince you, that I am making hasty strides towards the object of my wishes, which you may rest assured, should I ever reach, the friend of my youth and the confidant of my most secret thoughts shall not be forgotten. Then will be the time, my friend, when I shall be able to give you proofs of the inviolable attachment, with which I subscribe myself yours,

Napoleon Buonaparte."

This long dispatch which I had the greatest trouble imaginable during three days to decipher, did not reach me at Martinico, but at St. Domingo, whither I was unfortunately obliged to repair on the following account. My father had contracted for me a rich matrimonial alliance in St. Domingo; and after realizing at Martinico all our property, we embarked for that island, where we purchased other settlements, which were completely devastated during the atrocities committed on the 4th of August, 1793, and the following days; but of all the griefs I experienced, the loss of my future spouse, of her father, and my own, who all perished by the hands of the barbarians, afflicted me the most severely. For my part, preserved as by a miracle, thanks to the solicitude of Mr. Tertre Péan,

I was waiting, in the deepest affliction, for an opportunity to return to Europe, when the packet from Buonaparte was remitted to me. With what anxiety and eagerness did I read its contents! The sufferings of the royal family and the other atrocities contained in this dispatch, re-opened all my wounds, by calling to my recollection the losses I had experienced. How culpable did the revolutionists appear to me! Alas! were not they the authors of the sanguinary catastrophes felt at the Cape? Was it not their principles which had first roused the slumber of crime, and placed the dagger in the hands of all the blacks?

This aversion, the fruit of my misfortunes and experience, necessarily influenced my sentiments with respect to Napoleon. In fact, his conduct appeared to me reprehensible, his ambition less brilliant, in short, certain circumstances of his life had, in my opinion,

proceeded beyond due bounds.

I could not forbear, however, acknowledging that his ambition, his politics, and the grand secret he possessed of taking advantage of the most trifling circumstances, would carry him far on the ocean of public misfortunes. I should have bitterly felt for my country, had not individuals, still more cruel, strewed it at that period with carcases and scaffolds. May he prosper, said I within myself, let him be what he may, the calamities of the country cannot increase.

I remained seven months longer at the Cape, whence I was compelled to depart, not to be entirely burdensome to the generous friend who had sheltered me and preserved my life. I embarked on the 6th of August, and arrived at Paris the 2d of September, 1794, with a few thousand francs, the trifling remains

of the immense fortune I had acquired.

CHAP. VIII.

MY uncle and some other relations, who might have rendered me some service on my arrival in France, had emigrated. My little stock of money, already greatly reduced, compelled me to seek some employment. The government, at this period, had just undergone a great change. Robespierre and his accomplices had suffered the punishment due to their numerous atrocities. The blood of Frenchmen no more flowed in torrents, and my country no longer presented so melanoholy an aspect.

The military profession being most to my choice, I wished to procure myself a commission in the army. I sincerely confess that I placed great reliance on Buonaparte, whom I imagined more than ever inclined and able to obtain it for me. I went immediately to the war office to make inquiries in what regiment he

served.

How great was my surprise, when I was informed that he had been cashiered, as a revolutionist and a furious jacobin. My astonishment would have been less, had I been informed of this respecting any other person; but to hear that Napoleon was cashiered ... to be informed that the ambitious young man, who considered the epaulette of a brigadier-general, as a nanor step towards the brilliant promotion he promised lumself; to hear, that he was without employment, was a piece of information capable of startling me, and

greatly exciting my curiosity. I wished, at any rate, to know what had become of him. For this purpose, I made numerous inquiries of the chiefs of division and others employed under the ministry; but all in vain, I merely learned that he was in Paris. For a whole fortnight, I vainly traversed the capital, and the public places to meet with him. My whole fortune amounted only to six thousand francs; and yet I confess I would willingly have given a quarter of, it to succeed in my researches; but notwithstanding my inquiries and perambulations, which were useless, I was convinced that

he no longer lived in Paris.

Buonaparte's misfortune was as prejudicial to my personal interests, as to my curiosity. I had rested greatly on his influence; and by his downfal, all my hopes vanished. I was in fact much embarrassed, when I met General Legrand, who had been intimate with my father, and whose family was under some obligation to mine. I informed him of my critical He took the most lively interest in my beposition. half and promised that he would obtain a lieutenancy for me in a brigade of the company he belonged to. In fact, he visited the representative Aubry, who at that time was at the head of the war department. He made good my pretensions, by informing him of my misfortunes, losses, and political conduct. The success of these proceedings by far exceeded my expectations. A few days afterwards, he presented me with a commission of captain in the 94th Brigade, then with the army of Sambre et Meuse. A month was allowed me to arrange my affairs, and prepare for my equipment.

My new employment rendered my grief the more acute at not being able to discover Napoleon. Where was he? What was he doing? Probably he was dead, or had left the country? The latter idea prevailed, and I left it to time to gain information concerning him.

I had now only a fortnight to remain at Paris, when passing through the Rue Saint Nicaise, I perceived on the opposite side of the street, a young officer. It was Buonaparte—my emotion was so great, that on my crossing over to him, I could only pronounce these words, "My friend," Surprised, he looked at me. Still more surprised to see me in a captain's uniform; he eyed me from head to foot, and merely articulated this unconnected sentence: "You, Dangeais, here, a captain come along with me" . . . and seizing hold of my arm, he dragged me along withhim to the Jardin des Thuileries.

Although the distance was but short, I had time enough to examine my impetuous friend. He was in an undress uniform, with a sword by his side, and his appearance altogether announced neither necessity nor competence. His first words convinced me he was still the same. Without inquiring either about my health, or the motives which had induced me to leave Martinico; he said to me, " What uniform is this? How long have you been in the service? How have you been made captain?" When I told him that the deputy Aubry, at the solicitation of General Legrand, had promoted me to this rank; I thought a venomous insect had stung him. He drew back, and letting go my arm, " What! that wretch Aubry," he exclaimed, " is he that has promoted you to this rank? And I, who have been soliciting an audience these six months, have not been able to obtain one! . . . What have you done to obtain this rank? Who are you? Whence do you come? You have fallen from the clouds. Ah! cursed depository of employments, is it

thus you distribute them? Ephemeral minister, upstart of a faction which has not, perhaps, forty-eight hours to exist, is it thus you recompense merit? Dangeais, the villains have cashiered me . . robbed me of my rank . . my labours . . my bread . . my fortune . . my future hopes . . my immortality. said I was a revolutionist: yes, scoundrels, I am; but not in the sense you mean. You are revolutionists to destroy, to proscribe, to murder. But, if I possess the power, I shall be much more revolutionary . . my revolution shall be to revolutionize all of you, to give you a model of a revolution . . Come, Dangeais, to the Café de la Republique, I will introduce you to my friend -; I wish this very day to think of the means of abandoning my country altogether." On our arrival at the coffee-house, we found his English friend -: he was a young man of genteel appearance, and who spoke French fluently. Buonaparte was extremely dejected; his chagrin and discontent were strongly depicted on his countenance: he broke out into invectives against the government, in terms so little restrained, that I was obliged, both for his safety and my own, to tell him that he would draw the attention of every body upon us. He then took me under one arm, and Mr. — under the other. and led us into the garden of the Palais Royal, where he continued to give vent to his anger against several of the authorities and persons in place: he finished by imparting to us his project of leaving the country. I asked him whither he thought of going, and suggested England. "The English," said he, "are mariners, I am not; they are, besides, an established people, who have no occasion for any body—a foreigner will never make his fortune among them. In Germany there are

too many competitors: Spain would perhaps suit me; there is not a single warrior in that country -." During this conversation, the Englishman appeared very attentive, but said not a word; as it was cold, however, he proposed our going into the Café de Foy. There Buonaparte launched out very much on the subject of Spain; many of the reasons be gave for preferring that country were specious, some were even solid; but the whole scheme was romantic, and in fact far beyond the means of the projector. young Englishman who perceived this, said, " My friend, Spain will not do for you: since you think that in France, justice is not done you, let me mention a country, where your knowledge may be of value. Repair to Constantinople; I will recommend you to a relation of mine, established there; one who occasionally gains access to many persons belonging to the seraglio. I will engage, that at my solicitation, he will soon bring you into notice, and perhaps you will soon become a second Comte de Bonneval. Answer me: if you like the idea, tomorrow I will write, and by the way of England I can speedily have an answer." Buonaparte, always in extremes, could not restrain his joy at the proposal made by his friend; what he said on the occasion will never be effaced from my memory. " My dear ____," he exclaimed with transport, " you are in the right-yes, you are in the right, Constantinople is the place. How silly I was not to think of that-alas! I am so unhappy, that I can no longer think-" then taking his hand, " It is a real and important service indeed that you render me, ____, I will go to Turkey. The Turks are the most ignorant of all nations in military affairs; for the little knowledge they have of them they are indebted to Frenchmen, persecuted and unfortunate like myself. Well, a Franco Corsican shall unbrutalize them, shall espouse them (this was his expression); with the European tactics I will teach them to pass over three centuries at once, and place them on a level with other nations: their mutinous spirit dismays me not. I will empale ten regiments, if necessary, to reduce one to obedience. Their ignorance will assist my designs; if they were more enlightened, I should have more obstacles to encounter. Yes, my dear ———, to you I owe every thing." He ceased; his countenance beamed with delight and expectation. "I hasten," he said, "to solicit permission to retire to Constantinople."

We left - after a mutual promise to meet again. When I was alone with Buonaparte, " you should reflect," said I to him, " that the chances of the plan that —— has just suggested to you, are extremely doubtful; calculate also the distance of the situation, the character of the people. . . ." "Stop, Dangeais, you do not sufficiently conceive the horror of my situation. You must know that before six months elapse my resources will be exhausted . . . and after that, to whom must I apply? To men no, may a thunderbolt crush me, before I demean myself so much. What use is talking to me of doubtful chances? Can there be any for the intrepid man who has every thing to gain, every thing to hope, and nothing to lose? Does he not always know how to turn them to his advantage? Can I mind also the character of the people? What is it to me who they are; let me but command them, and we will soon see if I cannot make something of them. As to the distance, this is but a small obstacle to me. If the country of the unfortu-

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nate is wherever he can find happiness; that of the ambitious is, where he can lord it over others. I own I should be much better pleased to shine in France, than go and try my fortune among people so little This preference is founded on the interest I bear to the preservation of my individual self. The smiling banks of the Seine are more healthy than those of the Bosphorus, and with a third less advantages, I would prefer dealing with a more civilized nation. So, whilst I am making preparations to correspond with the proposal of Mr. ----, I will urge still more eagerly the demands I have made to our government. If I be ultimately rejected, I will then set out; and France will one day learn what she will have lost."-" Well now, at least that is reasonable, and when you do not give way to the impetuosity of your character, I take pleasure in listening to you. Of what use were those bitter invectives against government, those transports which have placed you in so wretched a condition? Surely these are not the virtues of the ambitious. Stoicism, firmness in adversity, these are, I think, his principal attributes, his distinctive character."-" You are right, Dangeais; but the scoundrels injure me to such a degree, that I sometimes forget myself; however, I knew well enough before whom I vented myself; had it been before any other persons, I would have borne my troubles silently."

"You have only a fortnight, you tell me, Dangeais, to remain in Paris, here is my direction. Come and see me: perhaps I shall have some good news to tell you." We took a few more turns round the walk; and Napoleon entertained me with an account of the government, and its defects, and concluded by predicting that its fall was more than probable. We

parted at the corner of the Rue Grenelle, both very well satisfied at having seen each other.

A crowd of reflections assailed me on my return home. I sincerely deplored the condition of a young man, who, had he been more steady in his desires, less impetuous in his reasonings, and less a partisan of sophism, might have glided gently down the stream of life, with the assistance of the means that nature had bestowed on him. His dismissal, his premeditated errantry, the distress which threatened him in France, the misfortunes that might befal him in a foreign country, all these things, I say, were as effectual to me as a treatise on morality and proved to me that happiness can only be found in upright and open views, and in projects suitable to our age, means, and opportunities.

Two days after this rencounter, I paid Buonaparte a visit, who then lodged in a furnished hotel, in the Rue des Fossés Montmartre. He was living there, as any other officer would, without employnent, who is soliciting one, and does not intend to remain in the capital; and yet it would have been difficult to imagine that the inmate of this humble abode would one

day mount the throne of Henry IV.

There was no alteration in Napoleon's fate. He merely told me that the day before, a certain noted personage, whom he would not name, had held with him the following discourse: Have patience, the mine is sapping daily. The explosion will soon be felt: be sure to take advantage of it.* This assurance seemed to have re-animated him, and have unwrinkled his brow. "Oh! how I will rush in," said he to me,

^{*} He has since assured me that it was the Abbé Sieyes that spoke this to him.

"if I can see a breach made! I shall not forget the abstinence I have undergone. I long to be able to do

something."

During the fortnight I continued to visit him, the same complaints were repeated over and over again. He took delight in giving scope to his ambitious projects. At last I fixed upon the day of my departure, and after having mutually promised to correspond, I left him to join my corps then in garrison at Cologne.



CHAP. IX.

Ir Napoleon vegetated without employment, I found myself nearly in the same condition on my arrival at Cologne, although bearer of a commission. Some mistake had arisen, and the number of officers in the corps was complete. The favour was done me, however, of putting my name on the list. I remained three mouths in complete inaction; after which time I gave in my resignation in order to return to Paris, where I arrived on the 24th of September.

I went the very next day to the Rue des Fossés Montmartre. Buonaparte, I was told, no longer lived there; he lodged in Rue du Mont Blanc. I went thither immediately. At an hotel I inquired for Mr. Buonaparte. "Do you mean the General?" said the porter, "please to go up into the drawing-room. went up, and traversed two rooms elegantly furnished; in the third I perceived Napoleon in the midst of four or five conventionalists: of the number were Letourneur and Barras. The conversation was animated; but when they perceived me, the silence became general, and all withdrew, after having said to Napoleon, "Don't fail to meet to-morrow where we said." Buonaparte was in full uniform and ready to mount his horse. " If we must trust to appearances," said I to him," I suppose you are just returned from Constantinople. It must be owned, that the wind has been favourable for you." He replied, "Come, no more of that; my situation is indescribable. You arrive very seasonably, I am overwhelmed with thoughts and VOL. I.

projects: had you not returned, I intended to send for you. The few confidential things I have to impart, are so replete with futurity, that they oppress me. During the last fortnight, I have bounded over an immeasurable space. If events turn out as I wish, I shall be somebody-I shall even believe myself to be something more than the most distinguished personages of the state. Ah! what means they place in my power without being aware of it I will let them know . . . never fear, I will get on famously . . . it must be so . . . it shall be so, Dangeais, you will see . . . it is a scheme that must . . . succeed . . . cannot fail" I leave the reader to judge what surprise this gibberish, worthy an inmate of a madhouse excited in me. Tired of not comprehending him, I took very coolly a chair and sat down. "No, no;" said Buonaparte to me, pulling me off the chair, and taking me by the arm, come along with me, I will tell you all about it."-" You will do right, for until now I comprehend not a word of what you have said to me."-" Well, likely enough . . . I will relate the whole matter to you. -, that good-natured Englishman, died three weeks after your departure. I remained without hope and nearly without resources. One better organized than myself would have gone mad. Ten days ago, I was thundering against the heavens and against men, when a servant knocked, and presented me with a note thus worded:-

"Mr. Buonaparte is requested to call upon me this evening about ten o'clock. I have something important to communicate to him.

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" Yours,

BARRAS."

same at the form of the

What can Barras want with me? said I to myself; Citizen is now the universal name, and he addresses me Mr. and signs Yours too; and yet he is a haughty politician! Oh! he wants me . . . poor miserable me . . . no matter, he wants me; when will ten o'clock strike.* At last the hour arrived. I flew to Barras' house. He was alone in his closet. "How does Mr. Buonaparte do?"-" Well, very well, citizen representative." __ " Citizen . . . come let us drop that. What are you doing?"-" Nothing."-" So I have been told. That Aubry . . . those double-milled legis-lators . . . Mr. Buonaparte, we are left to shift for ourselves, but I have been thinking of you. A project for a counter revolution is in agitation; the national Convention is threatened. The Sections, stirred up by a few bold individuals, intend to march against the troops that defend this Convention. The troops themselves are excellent, but want a chief that may render them more than intrepid. I immediately thought of you. You must head them instantly. The command suits you in every respect. I know you well; you will soon send these gentry to their homes. Danican is no longer able to connect his operations; everything is against him. There is no doubt but that your success will be certain, and the country will be once more preserved. You may rely that you shall not be forgotten. We have, it is true, colleagues that curb us; but no matter, once victorious over the plots they have framed, we will handle them in such a manner as to perform our duty in a becoming manner towards the people, whose interests we undertake, and whom a few factious demagogues have succeeded in leading astray.

^{*} This conversation, or rather solilogny, which took place on the 27th of September, 1795, lasted above an hour, and was put to paper ten minutes afterwards.

I listened attentively to Barras; and his offers had transported me into another world; to such a degree had ambition immerged me into futurity. "Since the preservation of the state is in question," said I to the representative, "you may rely upon my displaying in this affair all the energy and means in my power."—
"In that case," said Barras, "to-morrow, here, and at the same hour, I will introduce you to a few of my colleagues."

The next day, in fact, I found at Barras' house, the Abbé Sieyes, Rewbel, Letourneur, Roger-Ducos, Merlin, and General Moulins. Had I come down from the moon, these six personages could not have stared at me with more astonishment. Moulins, especially,

eved me from head to foot.

" Citizens," said Barras to them, "I introduce General Buonaparte to you, an officer but little known, but deserving. I have made him some proposals which he accepts, and I will answer for him. He will proceed as he thinks proper, and will be the very man to head the troops." All present could not recover from their surprise; they eyed me with insolence; for my part I began to feel enraged at such behaviour, when Moulins addressed me thus: "Know, that it is only through the powerful recommendation of Citizen Barras, that we are induced to confide so important a post to you."-" I did not solicit it," replied I dryly, " if I accepted it, it was not before I had well considered whether I was capable of the undertaking; for, different from some men, I only undertake that which I am certain of accomplishing." Figure to yourself, Dangeais, my six revolutionary veterans, biting their lips, and each taking to himself his share of the little epigram I had just uttered. They distorted a smile of approbation, which had quite a different appearance

from what was intended. Rewbel immediately made me this remark, " Do you know that it may turn out a very serious affair! That the Sections " I interrupted him, "Well! I will make a serious display, I will bluster, and the Sections will calm themselves." This sally, spoken with much assurance, caused all eyes to be fixed on me, but it was no longer with an insolent surprise; on the contrary, it was a species of respect they expressed. "That is the very thing;" said Letourneur to Merlin, and turning to me, "General, to-morrow you shall receive your commission; and on Tuesday you shall make yourself known to the troops." Some time after this they withdrew. I remained alone with Barras, who said to me, "Tomorrow you will go to Perregaux, who will pay you down a thousand crowns; he has his orders. Bourdet has engaged a respectable lodging for you in Rue du Mont Blanc, with two horses at your service. Hire a servant, and be ready to review the troops that will be placed under your orders." These instructions being received, I left Barras and went to Perregaux, who received me very friendly, and paid me down the thousand crowns.

How determined soever I might be to take advantage of the opportunity, I thought myself compelled to recapitulate the chances I was about to run; for, notwithstanding my promises to Barras, if the party of the Sections had offered as many advantages and less perils, I was the man to have headed them without hesitation. Any other but myself would have considered Barras as a patron; I did not: I hated him from the time he procured me employment. Why so? you will enquire. Because I had fathomed his heart. I was in his eyes a vile instrument, that he would make use of for the sake of his own ambition, and afterwards.

neglect me. It was under my responsibility that he wished to obtain his ends. He thought I was fully convinced that he was labouring for the happiness of the country, whilst I was persuaded that he only aimed at discarding his rivals, in order to reign sole master: had I not known that such were his thoughts, many of his actions and sayings would have excited this opinion. He had the audacity, do you know, to say to me one day, " Act your part well, and I will take charge of your preferment." The audacious wretch! What does he wish to take upon himself? A task of which I would not, on any consideration. allow another person to partake? Were I silly enough even to listen to his proposals, he would soon show himself ungrateful. Every person appears despicable in the eyes of these revolotionary upstarts; for the man who was but lately crouching in the mire, and all at once sees himself raised to the skies, dares not look below for fear of recognizing himself.* I will take good care, however, not to let

* Napoleon was not mistaken in reasoning thus, as the fol-

lowing note will prove.

The day after Barras introduced Napoleon to his colleagues, the former met Rewbel, who said to him," Where the devil did you pick up that fellow? It is, in my opinion, trusting a precious burden on very weak shoulders. If you would take my advice, you would seek some more eminent person."—" Leave that to me," answered Barras, "had I traversed the universe I could not have found a creature more suitable to our purpose. This Corsican has every requisite quality for what we want. He is subtle, expeditious, and to crown all, is the man who would be bold enough to trample a mob under his feet. In the counter-motion that is preparing, and in which I wish to figure principally, if any thing should be overdone, we may easily lay it on the general, a forlorn hope that no person will justify, because he is not known. We may even rest assured, that the honour of the day will be but feebly imputed to him."

bim perceive I know him so well, this would be depriving myself of the sweet satisfaction of proving to him hereafter, that he has been sadly mistaken. Therefore, Dangeais, I declare to you, that whatever may be the events about to take place, I am working on my own account. And you, my friend, under

whose banners will you range yourself?"

Almost stunned with amazement at what I had just heard, I knew not what answer to make Buonaparte. Detesting, as I did, every thing that relates to civil war, my intention was to wait the result of the event, in order to determine in what manner I should finally act. I informed Buonaparte of this, who exclaimed with a laugh, "Very well; I heartily wish every one would resemble you! I should then soon get a footing where I aspire. However, make my house your home till you have finally determined." The offer suited me in several respects, and I willingly accepted it.

It was full time that this conversation had finished: for I could not have borne it much longer; at such a pace did we both proceed, from one end of the apartment to the other for a full hour. Cambaceres, Montalivet, Champagny, and others, more than once

perspired after such exercise.

Behold me then established in the house of a man, whom future circumstances would necessarily lead to

Rewbel, by yielding to the reasons of Barras, was not always very prudent; and this conversation, which reached Buonaparte's ears, is one of the first causes of the aversion he constantly expressed for his protector. Murat has himself since owned, that on the 18th Brumaire, Napoleon hesitated for a long time whether he ought not to averge himself on the exdirector otherwise than by exile: but domestic considerations mitigated his vengeance.

the scaffold or to brilliant events. As I knew him much better than Barras and his associates, I was persuaded that a first success would carry him far. Never was a spectator better situated than I was: the actors and machinery were placed before me. From the 28th of September to the 2d of October, Napoleon was continually in a bustle. On the night of the 1st of October, his house was continually besieged by persons coming to and fro, incog. and silently. As for him, during five days, he did not address me twice; it would have been wrong in me to have been offended: for aware that his whole thoughts were bent on his meditated project, I knew that no object could withdraw his attention from it. I, however, slightly reproached him for the coolness he shewed towards me. " My friend," said he, " be not hurt; only think on my situation-my head is distracted-I feel, moreover, somewhat more uneasy; that day on which I found the fairest hopes, will, perhaps, never arrive. Those sectionaries are mere milk-sops, they hesitate, they tremble; I am afraid it will turn out a mountain in labour . . . little or nothing will be done,"

If Napoleon, impatient to see the sparks of civil war burst forth, had been for the last four or five days thoughtful and uneasy, he was no longer so in the afternoon of the 3d of October (12th Vendemiaire.) I saw him return about four o'clock, with every appearance of real satisfaction. His servant received orders to saddle his two horses, to prepare his arms, and get himself ready to follow him. I came down in haste and asked him if, without indiscretion on my part, I could inquire the reason of his eagerness to have his horse saddled. "The Sections," answered he, "are beginning to

make a stir, especially the division St. Germain." A servant came in to ask if he would dine at home. " No; and yet I feel a want of something, I will take a glass of wine; get it ready." An officer entered soon after. " Have the troops received their orders?" -" Yes, General, and are assembling on all sides." Napoleon instantly went into the dining-room, and made, hastily and standing, a slight repast; of which Vandame partook. He had not finished, when Bottot, Barras' aid-de-camp arrived full gallop. "General said he to him, "mount immediately; the Section of Luxembourg is already under arms, and in several other quarters, parties are forming." Napoleon, beaming with expectation, left his meal, and turning to me, "W'ont you mount the other horse?"-" Excuse me, General, you know my reasons"-" Oh, the driveler for a revolution! . . ." So saying he went rapidly down, mounted his horse, and followed by the officer, went full gallop towards the Thuileries.

I shall not here repeat what has been already said of the 13th Vendemiaire; the details of that day are to be found in every book. I shall confine myself, therefore, to certain facts peculiar to Napoleon; domestic circumstances to which the pen of the historian could not extend. These details, for the most part unknown, are essentially necessary for whoever may wish to have

a true picture of Napoleon.

Buonaparte was continually in action the whole of the night of the 13th Vendemiaire, 4th of October, and the following. On the 6th he returned home, under an escort of a strong body of cavalry and a numerous staff. It was nearly four in the morning; awakened by the noise occasioned by this troop, I dressed myself and ran down to Napoleon, who, taking me by the hand, said to me, "I am going to lay myself down; I am completely harassed I have many things to tell you . . . we will talk over them" A quarter of an hour afterwards his servant told me he had thrown himself, dressed as he was, on his bed. Any other person, besides myself, would have felt anxious to see him. It was only, however, two days after, that I could get to be alone with him.

"You have heard," said he to me, "what has passed."-" Yes, by the papers and public report."-"Well, Sir, where are those massacres, those murders, those streams of blood? Nothing of all that . . it was a mere pigeon match, the noise alone frightened them. From the corner of Dauphin Lane to St. Roch's Steps, a few volleys . . . some broken windows smashed . . . certain splashings . . . In truth, those poor gentry give up their arms at a very cheap rate. Danican had badly managed his project, or rather the inhabitants could make but a poor stand against a well-disposed and well-conducted line of troops."-" I suppose you are satisfied the affair has thus terminated."-" Yes . . . but we must now see how all this will end for myself; that is the main point. Behold me now patronized by the umpires; it only remains for me to become one. And you Mr. Scruple, what do you intend to do ?"- "Since the Parisians are not to be murdered, I rely greatly on you to enter into active service."-" I have already thought of it. You shall immediately receive a brevet of captain. You shall be attached to my staff; for my confidant, must not, you know, be at a distance from me. You smile, I see, and yet I have spoken but the truth. Sincerely pleased at having one to whom I can confide my secrets, my thoughts, my existence; with you alone I unfold myself. Were it

not for you, I should stifle with what passes in my mind, or I should cease being discreet with others; whilst my disclosures to you constitute my discretion elsewhere. And yet, if I were to lose you, no other person should supply your place. Would it be possible? Who, besides you, would not consider the effusions of my ambition and self-love as so many fits of madness? Who, besides yourself, would believe in my expectations and desires? Who, in short, would submit to the severity of my frankness, to the bluntness of my address, to the harshness of my epithets! For, to be plain, I know myself; I know how roughhewn, how difficult I am."-" You astonish me, General; if you know yourself so well, why do you not endeavour to restrain yourself."-" By no means; I wish to be thus, in order to be something great hereafter. Recollect, Dangeais, that mildness, good-nature, an easy access, a mellow way of expressing oneself, and complaisance, exclude energy, audacity, ambition, and great political means; and you know well enough, whether, without these shining qualities, I can ever reach the point I aim at. Great men, like great fortunes, seldom emanate from a calm; in fact, we find that it is neither with honey in their mouths, nor silk gloves on their hands, that most of the privileged heroes have gained their renown. I must tell you then, that you are necessary to the storms that agitate my existence, and that consequently I feel myself happy in having you near me. You are not guided by ambition; I feel a certain degree of ambition for you. If fortune should smile on me, then it will be for me to labour for yours . . . But what makes you thus stare at me ?"-" Indeed, General, I cannot forbear admiring your air of assurance. Were you the chief man of the state, had you to dispose of its offices

and its finances, your promises could not be more natural; and yet, you are but a general."—" Yes, but I am Napoleon; I commanded on the 13th Vendemiaire: this is a rallying point. The factions will be convinced, that something may be made of me; they will have their eyes on me, will speak of me; imagine the rest. This evening, besides, I shall see Barras:

we have a settling to make."

However immense the distance might be that existed between Buonaparte, a mere general of the troops in the capital, and that which Buonaparte wished to be hereafter, I could not dissemble from myself that every day realized a page of the romance transacted in my presence for the last fifteen years; it is true that circumstances favoured him singularly. The instability of the government; the ambition of the governors; the number of factions; all, in short, made of this epoch, the age of audacity and ambition.

Buonaparte was not a man to content himself with a first reward; and without comprehending exactly what he meant by those words, "I have a settling to make with Barras," I plainly perceived that the general wished to see his services more amply recompensed.

The general had not yet returned home, and already I was buried in a profound sleep, when I was awakened by these words: "Are you asleep, Dangeais?" It was Napoleon.—"What do you want with me?"—"Come down; I have something to say to you." I hastily dressed myself, and was soon with him. He was in a great agitation. "What has happened," asked I? "An abomination... an infamy... What do you think of that Barras, who attributes to himself all the honour of the day on the 13th? There he has been for these two hours in his drawing-room, swallowing down all the praises bestowed on the right dispositions

he had made. I was present; scarcely did they deign to address me a single word. Had I been but his lieutenant, I should have been more kindly received. The coxcomb received it all, without bestowing on me the least share: I was in complete torture. I would have pulverized him, if my looks could have darted lightning; and yet he could look at me without blushing. I came out, for I could not contain myself any longer. Had I remained, I should have vented myself in a furious manner on those sycophants and their paltry and despicable idol; but to-morrow I shall have an explanation; he shall retract; he shall render me justice publicly, or I will publish a relation of the day's action; and depend upon it, his picture shall not be in the fore-ground."

I endeavoured to calm the general by representing to him, that he was not yet powerful enough to wrestle with Barras, whose influence increased prodigiously; that he ought, on the contrary, to give way to him for the moment, in order one day to be enabled to cope with him. "Did you not tell me that patience is the essence of ambition. Now then, if you fall out with Barras, if you make an enemy of him, if you lose a preferment acquired but lately, you oppose your own principles, your own personal happiness, and consequently act against the system you have been continually extolling."-" You are right; I am still but a weasel in comparison with this ambitious porpoise. I must not thunder as yet; but, to forgive him the robbery he has committed against me, never, my friend, never! Ah! if some day . . . Oh! the happy day! it will be a repast of ambrosia and nectar! . . . To-morrow we will pay him a visit. I spoke to him of you and your want of employment. Nothing appeared to him VOL. I. T.

more easy than to procure you some; he wishes to

see you."

We went the following day to Barras. The room was full, and divided into different groups. I was very kindly received by him, and after the first compliments had passed, he said to me, "rely upon me, and that shortly." Then taking Napoleon very familiarly by the arm, they retired to a separate room, where they remained nearly a quarter of an hour. When they returned into the saloon, I plainly perceived that Buonaparte was not quite so dissatisfied with his patron as the day before. "Thank heaven," said he to me as we left the house, "the affair has turned out well, I followed your advice, and restrained myself. I must own indeed, that he spoke to me in such a manner as to make me look over many things. This is nearly what he said. 'Nothing of what passed yesterday, in your mind, escaped me. You were vexed at the praises heaped upon me; praises which were mostly due to you. But let not that affect you; it is a gratuitous gift which circumstances compel me to receive; it is a momentary sacrifice you must make to me. Buonaparte, I appreciate your value. Your conduct, on the 13th, has marked out your qualifications: you cannot remain what you are. I wish to provide for you, and to your satisfaction. But before any thing is done, you must enter into some matrimonial alliance; somebody of rank, some person of distinction; this will give you some stability Now, Dangeais, I appeal to you, whether such a proposal had not wherewith to surprise me, I will even say to humble me? What! I in want of a woman to uphold me? My ambition to be compelled to support itself on the weakest part of the creation? Such an idea could never possess my mind. 'You surely d'ont think so, Sir,' replied I to

Barras, 'for me, to marry! . . . Why, I have not yet drawn my sword. Wait, at least, till I have proceeded a little farther in my career.'- 'That is my very aim to facilitate the means for you. Before you refuse, however, know who it is I destine for you; her dowry is ready, and I presume, that, in your possession, it may become incalculable; yes, General, incalculable.'- 'Well now, Barras, you are proposing enigmas to me.'- 'Allow me to give you a clue to their solution.'- 'I consent, with all my heart, if it be only to amuse myself.'- 'I require no more of you. The consequences will follow. To-morrow, I will call for you; I will take you to the theatre; thence we will call on Tallien, and we will then see whether your sentiments will be the same when you return home.'

"This is, my friend, the substance of my conversation with Barras. You plainly see that it would not have become me to express the resentment I feel towards him. Not that I intend lending myself to his matrimonial projects; but the preponderance he enjoys, that which he may hereafter acquire, and the eagerness he seems to display in my behalf, impose an obligation on me, to becalm myself in his presence, in order to stimulate his benign inclinations."-" General, I perceive your intentions; this is the very system you have traced out for yourself, and from which passion sometimes misleads you. Take my advice; listen to Barras. Weigh well this incalculable dowry in your possesion: do you know that this word is of imposing force ?"-"All that may be very true, my friend, but a marriage, indissoluble ties . . . "-" Agreed . . . but an incalculable dowry . . . nothing greater can be promised. Do you know that this incalculable dowry may realize your ambitious visions, and show how mistaken I was not to credit them? For I will candidly tell you, that I have always ranked your projects and desires among the idle fancies of a disordered brain. Come, determine on seeing Barras; and to use your own expression, becalm yourself, to obtain every thing from him."—
"Be not uneasy on that account, my friend, if the opportunity be favourable, I shall be as exalted as he is."

For the fifteen years I had been acquainted with Buomaparte, never did he appear to me more reasonable. For while he was inveighing against a proposed alliance, he had merely expressed his fears on an indissoluble engagement. Formerly he would have enlarged on the misfortune of a connexion with a companion subject to whims and different inclinations. He would have pointed out to me the troubles which would consequently arise from such a union. But now it was quite otherwise; whence I concluded that Barras and I were completely his dupes; that he disguised his real sentiments from us; and that notwithstanding his apparent refusal, he was ready to consent to any thing, provided he obtained the incalculable downy.

CHAP. X.

IT is of certain men as of certain circumstances, that attach us involuntarily to investigate them. Not that these circumstances possess in themselves any thing excellent, which compel us to contemplate, but merely the astonishing ideas connected with them, insensibly fix our attention. To contest this truth, would be to deny, that thousands of men daily set out from all parts of the world, in order to investigate the Mounts Vesuvius and Etna. These fiery gulphs emitting death and destruction, still excite the traveller's attention, who leave them with regret, anxious as he is to be present at their eruptions.

My attachment to Napoleon had nearly the same principle: I was daily forced to foresee either in him or of him, something extraordinary and tremen-

dous.

Had my own happiness and pleasure been in question, I should have felt less curiosity in knowing what would be the issue of the evening party at Tallien's, where Barras had promised to introduce him. I suspected, not without reason, that it was there he would meet with his intended bride; with the incalculable dowry. If Napoleon had concealed this circumstance from me, I should have felt exceedingly grieved.

I was no sooner with Buonaparte the next morning than I exclaimed: "Well, and have you seen the beautiful intended? Are you to possess the incalculable dowry?"—"Let us have no more," answered he, "of.

the dowry; I know not in what it consists, but were it still more unbounded, I would not partake of it with the doll that Barras intends for me. Imagine to yourself a giddy young girl, talking about every thing and saying nothing; in fits of laughter, and not knowing the reason; interrupting an interesting conversation to talk of a mere bauble; valuing nothing so much as balls, parties, play-houses, and concerts, and you will have the portrait of Miss F * To judge by the care that was taken to place me near her, and by certain hints now and then thrown out, I plainly perceived that this silly girl was intended as the future companion of my life. Had I not been persuaded of the good intentions of Barras, I should have thought he wished to insult me, and I should have insisted on an explanation from him. Miss F . . . often directed her discourse to me. Each word she uttered was an impertinence, supported by a stupidity, and an inconceivable behaviour. I should, I really believe, have turned my back to her, had it not been for the sake of politeness. But if this young person importuned me with her prattle, fortunately I was compensated by an agreeable lady on my left! she was a perfect contrast with Miss F . . . this amiable widow, for so I was informed she was, was nearly of my own age. Candour, gentility, and affability were depicted on her countenance. The least word that escaped her, showed her education and knowledge. Her name is unknown to me, but I will venture to say, that she has been accustomed to high society; her manners, her most trifling actions prove it. In short, my friend, if I could possibly love any other person but myself, this young nidow should be my bosom companion."-" Why,

^{*} A lady now living in Paris, in the greatest splendour.

Napoleon, you appear to be quite smitten with love."

Not in the least, Dangeais . . . never should I be in love with a woman."—" Why so?"—" Why? that is a question I will answer at some future period. Let us at present prepare for breakfast: Barras is to be here. I told him last night that he might freely explain himself before you, and that I had no secrets of which I did not wish you to be a partaker. As he invited himself to breakfast, I presume it is to know what impression Miss F . . . has made on my heart; in that case, my answer is ready, and the hussey shall

have nothing to boast of.

Barras was not long before he made his appearance. We sat down to table almost immediately; but it was not until some time after, that the conversation turned on the main subject. "Well, general," said Barras to Napoleon, "what do you think of Miss F . . . "-" In the first place, Sir, pray tell me whether you are greatly interested in this young lady."-" I must say I should like to see her well married."-" If that be the case, I will not hesitate to tell you, that this lady does not suit me in any respect." --- "That's unfortunate; I should have felt happy too in making a match between you."---" You smile, Barras; what do you mean ?"---"I mean that you have been the dupe of a trick. Could you really imagine for an instant that she was the spouse I destined for you; but no more of this joke, let us speak seriously. Among the ladies you saw last night, did you not remark one that would suit you." -- "That's enough, Sir, I see your aim. I will own, that if I had a choice to make, it would fall on the amiable widow that was on my right. Only tell me whether she was in intelligence with you." -- "On my honour, I assure you, she is ignorant of my design."---"That is sufficient. Pray what is her name ?"-" The widow

of Viscount Beanharnais." I was sitting opposite to Napoleon; I watched him closely. At the name of the lady, he frowned, but suddenly all his features assumed an air of satisfaction. "Madam Beauharnais," said he, "that is a devilish pretty name!" --- "And of a very good family, let me add," said Barras; "this lady was one of the former court. As she has been exceedingly well brought up, she will be a great acquisition to the man who may possess her. In all societies, her acquaintance will be courted; above all, you must know, that she has very powerful friends."---"I can appreciate those great advantages; but the : ffair is serious; allow me a few days reflection."---"Certainly: and yet to hasten your decision, I must now speak to you of that dowry, which, as I told you, may become the source of a most brilliant fortune. Listen to me.

"To-morrow, the first of November, the government will assume a new form. The Convention is to name five of its members, who are to form a directory; in whose hands will be placed the executive power. Under this new legislation, France will acquire a new existence; the military operations will be more strenuously followed up; and the armies better supplied. Our first efforts will be directed towards Italy, and must be vigourously pursued. A strong army is about to assemble in the environs of Nice. Marry Madam Beauharnais, and I will procure you the command of that army which will be the most considerable one under the republic: yes, Sir, this command will be your wife's dowry; and when I told you it was incalculable, was I mistaken? Italy may be a mine where you will enrich yourself abundantly."

Buonaparte, probably lost in the labyrinth of his reflections, could not, for some minutes, utter a word;

when starting suddenly from his reverie, he said to Barras: "What you offer, Sir, is magnificent; truly, such a dowry may be cultivated . . . I had requested a few days for reflection, but to-morrow you

may depend upon a decisive answer."

Barras left us shortly after this conversation. I had no need to wait till the next day to know how Buonaparte would decide with respect to Madam Beauharnais. The very same evening he informed me of his determination. "Yes," said Napoleon to me, "I am irrevocably fixed. Ah! my friend, none but myself can fathom the abyss of expectations I have formed from what I have just heard. Let who chooses, condemn my weakness; but it is so noble, so great, it has so much analogy . . . that it appears to me a prognostication, and the forerunner of a wonderful opportunity that I ought to seize by the forelock. Listen to me, you shall judge.

"After Barras left us this morning, I went in haste to Madam Gohier's; determined in my own mind to turn the conversation on Madam Beauharnais. Without, however, saying a word of my secret intentions, chance favoured me beyond my expectations: there was a small party at Madam Gohier's; and without my mentioning Madam Beauharnais' name, she became the subject of our conversation in the following manner.

"They were joking on the simplicity of those per-

sons who believe in fortune-telling at cards.

"I am nearly of your opinion," said then the lady of the house, "and yet, when I was at Lyons, I was silly enough to have my nativity cast by a reputable astronomer. He was either a sorcerer, or else chance favoured him greatly; for he told me, you will not marry the person whom you love, but you will love him who will marry you. Now, really, this prediction

has been realized to a tittle."—"I know something stilly more extraordinary," said Massena; "you are all acquainted with Madam Beauharnais: well, when she was Miss Tascher de la Pagerie, a kind of gypsey told her, at Martinico: You will marry very young; your marriage will not be the happiest, your husband will die a violent death; you will marry again; you will be a queen, and yet you will not die on the throne.* What are we to think of this prediction, which has partly been realized? As for me, I must confess that these are things not to be be accounted for."

" Every person present began to reason on this singular event: but who, in the circle, could be more deeply interested than myself? I thought that I discovered, in the chance that gave me intelligence of it, a secret warning not to let an opportunity escape of connecting my destiny with that of a woman, who expected a throne. You smile, my friend; you think me superstitious. Do but connect the circumstances; what analogy! what a likelihood! I aim at the first rank in society; I am unacquainted with Madam Beauharnais; chance conducted me to a man who proposed her as my wife, and it is to this wife that a crown has been predicted! Ah! Dangeais, something tells me to make a trial. What would not be my despair hereafter, if now disdaining this young widow, I were to see her destiny accomplished with another husband. I should never survive it, that is certain. I am determined to go immediately to Barras, and inform him that I am ready to consent to the marriage he proposes."

Buonaparte was not a man to hesitate in a design,

^{*} Josephine took great pleasure in relating this extraordinary circumstance; and was only truly affected at it at the time when she saw her unfortunate husband perish on the scaffold.

especially when he had once irrevocably fixed on the execution of it. The same evening he saw Barras, who appointed the following day for an interview with Josephine. This interview took place at Barras' house. The latter having at first laid down the preliminaries, left the two lovers, to allow them an opportunity of explaining themselves more freely.

It would be improper in me, if, taking Napoleon's place, I were myself to relate this interesting and curious scene: will it not be better for me to give it here exactly as I wrote it down, under the dictation of

him who was the principal hero?

"Do you know, Dangeais," said he to me on his return from Josephine, "that the first tête-à-tête of two individuals destined for each other, is a complete drudgery? I will frankly confess to you, that I could never have imagined it so unpleasant. The embarrassment it caused me, makes me even now completely ashamed of myself; I was for the moment a mere man, and even one of the weakest. It is true, that Madam Beauharnais had made a more than deep impression on me. As beautiful as a very handsome woman can be at the age of twenty-seven, this lady united to perfect gentility, that noble and exalted air which would become a throne. This observation recalled to my mind the gypsey's prophecy, and I imagined it already half accomplished.

"Josephine was seated near a window facing the garden; I occupied another chair on her right: I felt quite lost and speechless; when I suddenly reflected, that my silence might give her a very bad opinion of my person and intellectual powers. Inspire contempt to a woman, thought I, cause disdain to rise within her? . . . No . . . I could not brook the idea. Suddenly I started from my reverie, not as an insipid and



languishing lover, faultering with plaintive accent his soothing tale of love, but as a man of energy, speaking alternately the language of tenderness and reason.

" Madam, said I to Josephine, had I felt less abashed in your presence, I should not have remained so long May my silence impart to you what passes within my breast, and supply the place of those eulogiums I should feel happy to lavish on you, were I not convinced that your modesty equals your amiability. I trust you will, Madam, pardon me this laconism, and allow me to say for you, he knows well how to love, but badly to express it. Why need I, moreover, enter into greater details? Are you not aware of the motives of our interview? If nothing prevent you from the proposed alliance; if nothing in me, induce you to defer the happy day, speak it confidently; render me happy with your compliance. Madam, the general in chief of the Italian army flatters himself, that he will not lose any time in advancing your prosperity and glory; as to your young children, be assured that you will be giving them an affectionate father. may serve under me his apprenticeship in the art of war; and I have no doubt but that, docile to my instructions, he will rank hereafter among the first-rate captains. My eyes were fixed upon Josephine, and without flattering myself too much, I could plainly read in her looks that the precision of my declaration had not offended her."-" Your candour, General," replied she, "compels me also to speak sincerely. Be pleased, however, to satisfy yourself with this information, that he already merits my esteem and friendship, who promises to cherish my young family. Mr. Buonaparte, I place my son under your care, his future happiness is my anxious wish; I know to whom I confide him. Happy indeed shall I consider myself, if herefor the care you will bestow on him. You may, Sir, now fix the period of our union." This answer, you may be assured, Dangeais, completed my happiness; and I shall now call on Barras to fix the day of our marriage,

Napoleon had no sooner informed Barras of the mutual declarations that had taken place in the interview with Josephine, than this director promised to give his attention, without loss of time, to the making out of the instructions, necessary to take the command

of the army in Italy.

Buonaparte from the time of his first private interview with Madam Beauharnais, was not remiss in his visits. One day, he said to me, "I am but little acquainted with Josephine as yet, but still I am almost certain, that her husband will be able to gain something from her profound knowledge, and to regulate his own ideas, by the wisdom of her counsels. Do not think, however, that I intend to associate a woman in my grand enterprizes. Far from me such a degrading resource! But I shall rank among my avocations, the little confidences I shall now and then impart to my companion."

Two days after, Barras delivered to him the instructions he was to receive with his brevet of general in chief, in order that Buonaparte might make his own observations on them. After he had lightly gone over them, he told me that there were a thousand alterations he could make, but that he would take good care not to point them out. I should have sufficient to fill a volume, if I related all the remarks that Buonaparte made on the instructions upon his campaign to Italy. For five successive days, we were at work from four o'clock in the merning, till twelve at noon, without

taking the least refreshment; I really believe that Napoleon existed on his ideas. He had desired that no person should be admitted but Barras, Vandame,

and two or three other officers.

The closet which Napoleon occupied, at that time, would have interested any man. Upon every piece of furniture, were placed charts, plans, books, and other military documents: some, to be more easily seen, were pasted with a wafer on the doors, or on the windows, and in different conspicuous places. As for me, I was sitting in the most profound silence, with attentive eyes, and ears, my pen in my hand, ready to seize the words as they flowed; Napoleon, almost always on his feet and walking hastily up and down the room, with papers in one hand and a pencil in the other; at one time consulting a chart, at another, some loose leaves or a printed book; laying down his plan; indicating the means of execution; discussing them with eagerness; questioning himself, and making his own answers; searching his documents; furnishing his reasons; supporting some, rejecting others; forming in short, in himself alone, a council of war, of which he was at once the members, and the president, which character by-the-bye, he supported as noisily as that of another; let all these circumstances be taken into consideration, and they will present the most animated and most interesting picture that possibly can be imagined. And after this, shall I be upbraided for having followed the ex-emperor? this I answer that thousands of others in my place would have thought it a loss, had they ceased investigating this phenomenon.

I had need of an unbounded patience, when I wrote under Buonaparte's dictation; for when I had traced a series of ideas, imparted by himself, he would main-

vons re vener plus voir une amie qui vous aime vous laver tout a fait delaisee wus aver bien tout, Car elle vous est tendrement attachée. vener semain depetide dejeuner avec moi joi besoin de vous Noir et de Causer avec vous Jun vos interets, Bonsoir mon am la vons embrane

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THE RESIDENCE AS A SECRETARIAN PROPERTY OF SECURITY OF SECURITY OF SECURITY AS A STATE OF THE PARTY OF THE PAR TREATON OF THE PROPERTY TO A PERSON TO THE PERSON THE THE RESIDENCE OF THE PARTY OF T tain that it was not what he had dictated; and I was often obliged to begin afresh, when it almost always happened that he mentioned the very same things he had but the minute before obliged me to efface. We had been in the house for a whole week, thus employed, when Buonaparte received the following note.

"You no longer call on your dear friend who loves you; have you quite forsaken her? you have not, I hope, for she is tenderly attached to you.

"Come, to-morrow and breakfast with me, I wish

to see you, and talk with you.

" Adieu, my friend,

" Believe me your's,

" WIDOW BEAUHARNAIS."

"My friend," said Buonaparte to me, "make as much haste as you can, and call on Madam Beauharnais, and assure her that I accept with pleasure her kind invitation; you will explain to her my reasons for not calling and paying my addresses to her."

It is useless here to relate several events not in the least interesting; suffice it to say, that it was on the 8th of March, 1796, that the two lovers were married. A short time after, Napoleon said to me, "With my credentials of general in chief of the army in Italy, I received also your brevet of lieutenant-colonel, and will retain you with me in quality of aide-de-camp; yes, my friend, custom has rendered you absolutely necessary to me; and whatever my future prospects may be, you alone shall be the confidential depository

of my secret disclosures." I thanked him sincerely for a rank that suited me in every respect. "Thanks. to heaven, added I designedly, every thing smiles on your wishes, the greatest satisfaction shines in all your features. Madam Buonaparte, I presume, is one essential reason; for it has been already remarked by several, that ever since your marriage, you are quite another person: few husbands are so polite and so condescending as you are towards Madam Buonaparte. Has she had such influence over you, as to make you forget your grand projects? For my part, I assure you that you no longer appear the same."-" My present mode of conduct," said Napoleon to me, "is intimately connected with those very projects you allude to; hereafter I will explain it to you; for the present, be satisfied with knowing, my friend, that I am now strongly urging my departure for the army I am about to command. I am persuaded, moreover, that my absence from Josephine will disembarrass me from an enthusiasm; the principal cause of which is owing to the novelty of the possession."-" You seem to forget, General, that this enthusiasm will be the stronger on your return."-" On my return . . . be assured, my friend, that then I shall be quite another man; that, with a mind hardened with glory, and constantly encumbered with vast ideas, I shall have but little space in my heart to allot to the eminent qualities of my wife."

I longed at least as much as Napoleon to see a campaign opened, the successes of which he extolled so highly. For my part, I was of a very different opinion from him. The ruined condition of the French troops, encamped on the summits of the Piedmont, seemed to authorize such an opinion. In fact, I told the general so, "Take care," said I to him, "that you

do not find disgrace and reverses where you expect to meet with victory and renown. The troops you are about to contend with, are otherwise organized than the Sections of Paris."—"I should despair if they resembled them in the least," replied Napoleon hastily, my wish at present is to surmount great obstacles. It would not at all suit my purpose, if I had to march against town troops. I could not display myself against them as I would wish, I could not break through them with energy; I dare not massacre them by thousands."

Napoleon had no need to solicit his speedy departure for the army. The very same evening, and when he least expected it, he was ordered to prepare himself to set out in three days. On the 24th of March he received his last instructions, and a few hours afterwards we left the capital to repair to Nice, where we arrived

very unexpectedly.

To judge by the small portion of nourishment that Napoleon took during the route, and the silence he affected, it might have been imagined that he lived on his haughty ideas, and conversed with his presumptuous expectations. I conjectured from this, that, in consequence of his post of general in chief, he was already forming his plans for a future period, the limits

of which he himself could not determine.

I am totally unacquainted with the motives that influenced him, in not addressing me above half a dozen times during our whole journey from Paris to Nice. I could easily perceive, however, that this silence on his part was involuntary, and that he would willingly have followed up a conversation, if I had first broached it; but in order to break him of this behaviour towards me, I was determined to imitate him, and remain sullenly mute.

м. 3.

Napoleon was completely immerged in thought on his arrival at Nice. Scarcely were we to ourselves, than throwing himself on a seat, he exclaimed, "Thanks be to God, I am now out of the capital! Dangeais, you have no idea of the load that is removed from my What a state was mine but lately? I was under the sceptre of five masters of my own making; for to be plain, had it not been for my energy on the 13th Vendemiaire, Barras and his associates would perhaps, instead of a dictatorial throne, have found either exile or death. What a painful task it is to be the instrument of one man's elevation, when I myself aim at dominion over my fellow citizens! But it cannot be helped, every one must have his turn, and that is what torments me. Would you believe it, my friend, this directory and these counsellors do not even honour me so far as to suspect me of being ambitious. Ah! how I will avenge myself of this insult! I am no longer under their eyes, and I will now, let it cost me what it may, place a torrent of renown between their power and the use they may make of it against me."

Here Buonaparte was silent for a few minutes, then, and as if he suddenly recollected himself, he thus resumed: "And yet I have much to occupy my mind: I will first begin by my generals, for it is necessary that I should analyze them, and become acquainted with their intentions. I have a thousand methods to attain that end; methods, which perhaps you would never suspect."—"Likely enough, General, I may not be aware of them; but you will at least own, that two of the most essential points will be to obtain their confidence and regard: recollect that the men you will have to deal with, have already gained their renown; yours is to be acquired. Such men as Berthier,

Massena, Dallemagne, Rampon, Cervoni, Augereau, La Harpe, and several others will not be easily induced: to harmonize with your rough and blustering ways. So I trust you are determined to change your conduct altogether."-" If I were to follow your advice, I suppose then I should go to-morrow morning to each of them, and humbly make them protestations of friendship, claim their indulgence, celebrate their exploits, and beg their suffrages. Dangeais, I plainly see you will never change; you will always be a mere atom in the art of raising yourself in the estimation of men. Report has nearly furnished me with the character of the superior officers who are to serve under me. These have nothing in common with me. Their ambition is but that of a general; mine is of unlimited power. Besides they are my elders in the career: their titles are evident; mine are to be acquired; I know well enough that they look upon me as a mere upstart, a mere instrument in the hands of a government, which perhaps they secretly despise. How must I escape these presumptions, these repugnances, and display myself in a noble manner to these military men? Must it be by appearing as any other man? Why, I should ruin myself! How much better I intend to act, in order to make an impression. My behaviour must be noble, imposing, and haughty; my appearance courteous, but at the same time circumspect and lofty, should immediately announce a superior being, a man in short worthy of commanding them. Depend upon it, my friend, I shall be able to bring about all this. To-morrow then, as soon as my staff have introduced themselves to me, experience will prove to you the excellency of my method."

Although I had witnessed Buonaparte's effusions of mind for many years, I never till this time saw him so full of his project, so animated, so methodical in his reasonings. Not that many objectious might have been started; but the air of confidence with which he exposed his plan, compelled me to wait till events could prove, whether his logic were good or bad.





CHAP. XI.

THE day after his arrival at Nice, Buonaparte was visited by all the superior officers that resided at that time in the town. I am convinced, that on the stage, no scenes can equal those visits, which took place for some days without interruption: the actors were nearly all prepossessed against the principal hero of the piece. Jealousy, hatred, and disdain were the principal motives that induced them to visit him; and yet all these sentiments, culpable in others, were natural, I will even say, just, with respect to military men who had grown grey in the service and in danger. gine, if possible, such men as Massena, Rampon, and Augereau in the presence of a mere upstart, who was ordered to command them, merely for having swept away a few fortifications at Toulon, and shot a few paltry Parisians on the steps of St. Roch; for until this time these were the whole of his exploits. When I reflected on the inconsistency necessarily existing between the general of the army of Italy, and the superior officers all at once placed under his orders, I could not forbear saying, either the existence of this wonderful man was written in the book of fate, or every reasonable probability is exposed to become untrue.

It is true, that for the purpose of submitting to his command of so early a date, these warriors, who always look for merit either in exploits or years of service, Napoleon was obliged to metamorphose himself as often as he had different persons to gain over In.

this respect, hypocrisy personified, could not have acquitted itself better. Nevertheless, his complaisance, his grimaces, his pantomimical manners were constantly stamped with presumption and severity. "Gentlemen," said he to Generals Dallemagne and Rampon, "I perfectly know what you have done; from this knowledge arises that noble confidence I have, that your intelligence, added to my military knowledge, will soon conduct us into the very heart of Italy. As to discipline, generals, officers, and soldiers will find it strict, and that I shall be determined on this point."

A fortnight was taken up in re-organizing the army. In consequence of certain promises made to the troops, the soldiers, who were in want of every thing, did not dare complain in hope of plundering the rich provinces of Lombardy. But, whatever might be the means he had then at his disposal, had he not been the most inhuman of men, it is more than probable, that his suc-

cess would not have been nearly so rapid.

Many foreign and French authors have written on the causes of Napoleon's military successes; every one has bewildered himself in long reasonings, whilst one short paragraph might have decided the question. Had I not been so intimate with Buonaparte, and so attentive to observe him in his most secret actions, I might, as well as another, have been deceived as to his success and have attributed it solely to his military genius; but it was otherwise with me: I was present, I observed him, and at times I received from him dreadful declarations. Were thousands of individuals to endeavour to refute the following assertion, I should nevertheless commit it to paper. It is as true as is the existence of an Almighty, and I appeal for the truth of it to every impartial and dispassionate man.

The principle of Napoleon's glory, the foundation

of his triumphs were his natural insensibility and contempt for mankind. All his exploits may be traced to this, and to this alone; every thing else was but accessary. By this definition, let it not be supposed, however, that I wish to deprive the generous warriors who accompanied him, of their glory and intrepidity, a glory that will be immortal! No: I have the honour of being a Frenchman; and from the fields of Steinquerque, Nerwinde, and Fonteney, I recal to my mind with enthusiasm, those of Marengo, Wagram, and Jena. It was Frenchmen that bravely and

nobly fought there.

A wiser and more humane warrior than Buonaparte, might certainly, at this period, have done great things with French soldiers already familiar with danger and battles. These great things, however, might have been performed with more circumspection and with less precipitation. He would not have rushed headlong into danger and sacrificed thousands of lives, for the sake of gaining an insignificant station, or taking a paltry village. The general of the army of Italy was not like one of our celebrated generals,* who said, "I could overwhelm those four thousand Germans, but it would cost me the lives of three thousand Frenchmen. Let us follow them and manœuvre; and, in a week, I shall be able to take the whole of them prisoners without losing a dozen men."

Before the campaign had begun, I foresaw a part of the dreadful means that would be resorted to by the general in chief. I had not, it is true, been made at all a partaker in the plan to be pursued; but in consequence of some of Napoleon's observations at the

^{*} Moreau, before Biberac.

council of war, assembled on the first of April, 1796, five days before the commencement of hostilities in Italy, I knew what was to he expected.

In this council, where very few superior officers were present, there was a great discussion on the kind

of war that was about to be undertaken.

Some generals, among whom were Rampon and Cervoni, wished, merely at the beginning, to gain ground on the enemy. They ought, according to their opinion, prudently to march down the narrow defiles in separate bodies, and on an extended line. "These multiplied attacks," said they "will render the movements of the enemy uncertain, and will separate the troops placed upon certain points. As soon as we reach the open plains, all our movements must

be directed to a general junction."

Napoleon was listening in silence to all that was advanced. I could plainly read in his countenance, that he was anxiously waiting for an opportunity to speak. General Rampon soon afforded him one, by saying, "We cannot act with too much circumspection: we have to oppose experienced generals who have grown grey in the service, and who are defending their native soil. Baulieu, Kray, Merfeld, Laudon, and Bellegarde, are men that will take every advantage offered them. Inured to battle, they will neglect no means of resistance." Buonaparte then rose and said: "While I render justice to your luminous observations, allow me, Gentlemen, to lay before you some new ideas. The art of war, be assured, is in its infancy. For these ages past war has been carried on in a theatrical and effeminate manner. We are not now-a-days to give each other rendezvous, and with our hats under our arm, to say to the enemy;

Gentlemen, please to fire first; we never do.* Such silly gentry as these, who make of a battle a duel, in the field, must be no patterns for us, entrusted as we are with the high interests that at present set us in motion. To slash our enemy, rush like a torrent on their battalions, and lay them in the dust; this is restoring warfare to its primitive state. Thus did Alexander and Cesar rush forward. Experienced generals, you say, are to oppose me. So much the better, Gentlemen, so much the better. It is not with experience, that they will gain battles with me. These veterans in tactics, take my word for it, will burn their books and will be completely puzzled. I shall not lead on my divisions as an armed force, but as a torrent that will carry all before it. A greater number may fall perhaps, but we shall gain our ends the sooner. He who makes but a faint attack, loses fewer men for the moment, but at the same time loses oftener and for a longer time; my plan is but the same in the end. The system I pursue, is, moreover, favourable to the profession of arms; it will make every soldier a hero; for whenever a man is hurried impetuously on, he has not time to reflect, and he performs wonders. Yes, Gentlemen, the first onset of the army of Italy will create an epoch in the annals of war. We must rush like a thunderbolt, and strike in the same manner. Our enemies disconcerted at our tactics, which they would never have ventured either to conceive or to put into execution, will flee before us, in the same manner as the shades of night before the majestic splendour of the sun."

VOL. I.

TAT

^{*} Buonaparte undoubtedly alludes to the battle of Fontenoy. There, the captain of the English Guards, having cried out: Gentlemen of the French Guards, fire. He was answered: We never fire first; please to fire yourselves.

The ardour and impetuosity with which Napoleon had uttered the latter part of the sentence, had probably so amazed his auditors, that they could not make any objection to the system which he extolled with so much assurance. Even Massena, thunderstruck at what he had heard, was silent, without shewing any disapprobation; I heard, however, some days after, that General Rampon had said, as he came from the council, "Here is a Corsican fellow that will cut out

work for government."

"Well," said Buonaparte to me the day after, "what think you of my conduct at the council?"-" I think it would have been better not to have assembled it, and have given your orders."-" Not at all, Sir, not at all. If it be true that I did not convene it, to demand advice, it is no less certain that it was my interest to prove to the council, that I knew how to conceive a grand plan of operations. How comes it that you do not approve of what I did and said yesterday? For my part, I think it was perfectly grand and novel! I am delighted with it; and my day's work is worth a victory."-"And I really expected it would cause you a defeat; I shall not discuss your system; it would be all time lost; but allow me to tell you, that it would have been more becoming in you to have laid down your projects in a more modest manner. Now, be candid; we are alone; do you think Condé, Turenne, and Villars, would have thus expressed themselves?"-"Stop, Dangeais, you are either my secret enemy, or your want of sagacity places you at an immeasurable distance from my situation. What resemblance is there between me and Condé, Turenne, and Villars? They had birth, fortune, and renown; I have all that to acquire. When they spoke in a council, the name and

splendour of their ancestors gave weight to their reasonings. They had no suspicions, no disdain, no secret jealousy to dread from their auditors. As no one envied them a post which was, I may say, hereditary in their families, they had no need to speak out in a determined manner, to captivate, to dazzle, nor to force into their plans; they had merely to follow the track. marked out for them, in order to be great men; but as for me, I can only become so by the sweat of my brow. One single scene of my part, is more harassing than the whole act of their brilliant existence. Were I now one of those three heroes, I should scarcely cause the least sensation. There is some difference, let me tell you, between the court and ministry of Louis XIV. and the government of a Barras, a Rewbel, and other such myrmidons. These reflections escaped you, my friend. You assimilate the present to the past, while there is not the least connexion between them. You imagine that men and circumstances are the same as they were fifty years ago. This is an error which proves a want of judgment and penetration. You may, however, console yourself by thinking that your fault is peculiar to many other persons.

"Did you not, moreover, perceive that not one objection was started against my system? And yet, Massena, D'Allemagne, Rampon, and La Harpe, were present, who had a right and a fair pretence to make any reply they thought proper. No, no, I completely stopped their mouths. Thunderstruck at the temerity of my ideas, which they would not have even expected in me, I only gave them the power of waiting for the event to applaud or condemn it."—"And yet, if fortune should not smile on you, what will be your situation. What an ocean of dangers and humiliations you will be thrown into!"—"Do you think then that I intended

to steer my bark merely into dock? Depend upon it, Dangeais, when I first hoisted my sails, I foresaw every storm, and determined within myself to brave them. Whoever, has not mounted Bucephalus, will never be borne on the steed of glory. This is as much as if I told you, that I dread nothing from futurity, and that all I nave done, all I do, and all I shall hereafter do, was, is, and ever will be adapted to the character I have assumed."

It was on the 6th of April, 1796, that hostilities began, and that the soldiers rushed on to death as quickly as they did to victory. This goddess could not escape one who pursued her so vigorously; and without reckoning those he left on the road, the men were slaughtered with rapidity; but they fell on the field of battle, and that was sufficient for the general

in chief of the army in Italy.

The Austro-Sardians completely beaten at Montenotte, and the division of General Provera, disarmed at Cosseria, more than ever strengthened Buonaparte in his slaughtering tactics. From that period, he irrevocably was determined to look upon great consumptions * as a mere nothing. French bravery rivalled the noblest traits of antiquity. But what slaughter! what victims! what blood! what amputations! what sufferings! there was cause for weeping over our laurels.†

The advantages that the army in Italy were constantly gaining, excited enthusiasm in every Frenchman's heart.

This it was that caused Madame de Staël to say: "Buonaparte in war is what certain men are in love affairs. The later, at times not perfectly sure in the possession of their

^{*} It is thus that Colonel Perrin styled the considerable losses that were experienced. Napoleon was probably struck at the propriety and energy of the expression, for he often made use of it to express the same idea.

Buonaparte's victories were alone thought of, without considering how dearly they were purchased. It was necessary, however, to fill up the regiments of this victorious army; an operation which did not experience the slightest difficulty. Young men of birth, whom the impetuous commander knew how to dispose of, and with whose lives he was about to sport without remorse, were soon sent as a re-inforcement, to gain fresh blood-stained laurels.

If Napoleon at this period had aimed at nothing else besides a fortune, his ambition might have glutted itself long before the taking of Mantua. His excursion to the Duke of Modena's, and other slight of hand tricks, had tolerably well filled his treasury.

These proceedings were not universally approved. Madam d'Aubreton, one of my relations, sent me from Paris the newspapers, which were not sparing of Buonaparte's transactions. I showed them to him, and to my surprise, he seemed to read them with attention. "I know," said he to me, "the authors of these articles; the editor is but the compiler of other people's opinions. That directory, with Barras at their head, who fancy they have honoured me with their patronage, perceive now that I have raised myself, and they fear for their own power; as they cannot attack me face to face, they are intriguing in order to ruin my reputation, the cowards . . . and yet they

mistresses, scatter gold plentifully, in order to obtain the object of their wish; and the general, to insure victory, lavishes the blood of his warriors. Probably this goddess will be for a long time under his orders; for I do not believe that the generals who oppose him, possess such a stock of men to enable them to consume so many, even supposing that they had the cruel inclination."

are right enough . . . I soar too high . . . I am becoming formidable . . . I have a great mind to intrigue also on my part; but as yet I am but a general; I am not powerful enough."-" You will do well," said I to him, " to shelter yourself from this storm." -" That is what I am thinking of. A letter in which any thing but my real sentiments shall be depicted . . . Yes that will do; to-morrow I will write. Besides, I must make some sacrifices." Then having looked over the article in the paper again, he resumed: "They must have very little to reproach me with, and be very unwilling to appreciate what I have done, to speak, as they do, of the Duke of Modena. The scoundrels, with their "always fingering the cash," do not they know that I have brothers and sisters to provide for? Would they have me introduce the former in buskins, and the latter in plain tuckers? Why, their impudence is enough to provoke one . . . the emperor of Austria will be no loser by it. I intended going to Vienna; but he has only to speak the word, and I desist. I wish to be at Paris and judge for myself; see with my own eyes whether our five kingly gentlemen are firm on their legs.

A wish expressed by Napoleon was equivalent to the fulfilment of it; consequently he accepted the first proposals of the enemy, in order to repair to the capital. An armistice was signed at Indenbourg, on the 8th of April, 1797, with Generals Merfeld and Bellegarde, which was soon followed by the preliminaries of peace, signed on the 17th of the same month at Gratz, near Leoben, in Styria, between Austria and the French republic, by Count Marfeld and the Marquis de Gallo on the part of the Emperor, and

by Napoleon, on the part of France.

The adjusting of the preliminaries was but the first

part of the project conceived by the general; it was necessary moreover.

1st. To make sure whether they would be ratified

by the directory;

2nd. To obtain their instructions, where the defini-

tive peace should be ratified.

3rd. And which was most important to him; to get himself named in the embassy. He would willingly have repaired to the capital, to watch over his own interests himself; but the views he then had on the states of Venice, not permitting him to be absent, he cast his eyes on his brother Lucien, to supply his place near the government, over which he wished to gain an ascendancy.

Lucien, who at this period, lived at Milan, received orders to leave that place immediately for Paris, with

the following instructions;-

" De Gratz, 18th of April, 1797.

" Dear Brother,

"The preliminaries of peace, which I have just adjusted with Messieurs de Marfeld and de Gallo, would necessarily require my presence at Paris; but I cannot at present remove hence. Have the goodness then to repair immediately to the capital. The interests you will there promote are of the highest importance, viz.:—

"To obtain the ratification of the said preliminaries; the specifying of the place for treating on a definitive peace; and my nomination to the embassy. You must make use of every means you possibly can to circumvent the government, and induce it to confer every power on me. Pay private visits to the mem-

bers of the directory; prove to them the necessity of quickly concluding an honourable and lucrative peace; tell them, that the army requires some respite from its numerous fatigues, to march afterwards in a body against the Venetians, who are daily growing more and more insolent. Insinuate to Barras and to Sieves, that they will be in want of troops to maintain themselves against the intrigues of Carnot, Barthelemy, Pichegru, Boissot d'Anglas, and other members of the council. Above all, my dear friend, be mistrustful of Carnot, and Pichegru; these two fellows must be sent out of the country if possible. Invite Boulay and Delarue to dinner; they have a few secrets that I should like to know. Mark well their sallies after the entertainment. If you could gain a footing into Moreau's family, or get some other person to do so, it would be of much service. I have a great wish to know what that man thinks: Frenières, I believe, could give you some information. As to the choice falling upon me, in order to negociate the definitive treaty of peace, there must be no hesitation; it must be so. Neglect nothing to procure this post for me, which suits me much better than any other person. Make use of every means; money, promises, intrigues; let nothing be spared; and, particularly, let me be acquainted with every transaction without delay.

"Call upon Josephine; make her a partaker of these negociations; I know but little of her; but I believe she sees things well; she speaks sensibly, and with circumspection; a word from her will be like distilled honey, which will gently flow into the hearts of the omnipotent ephemeras. They will immediately

say yes.

"I was thinking of associating our brother Joseph with you, but the duece take it, his only recommenda-

tion is a handsome person. His politics and conduct are so straightened, that it will be absolutely necessary to place him on rather a lofty eminence, in order to familiarize him with the existence of things. In fact, he is scarcely issued from the egg-shell; he must be hatched. Trust nothing of consequence to my sisters; they are yet but mere dolls; just give them a hint, however, of my expectations. As to Madam Buonaparte you may make her a confidant; she is clever and may assist. I need not make you acquainted with the motives which ought to stimulate you in this affair. You know as well as I do, that by urging on circumstances, you are labouring as much for your own interest as for mine. Forget not besides, that on your mission depends the happiness of all the family, which, I fondly hope, is about to shoot up, like a cedar, in riches and prosperity. Remember: circumspection, celerity, some degree of audacity, and believe me.

"Your affectionate brother,

"The general in chief of the army of Italy,

" BUONAPARTE."

No sooner had Buonaparte dispatched his brother to the capital, than, being perfectly easy on that score, he declared war against the Venetians. The emissaries he had scattered over this country, assisted the efforts of his army, and in a very short time he completed this important conquest.

I could not dissemble from myself, that every thing that happened to him at this time, appeared to have something supernatural in it; for it was neither his

it; for it was neither his

mildness, prudence, nor affability that chained fortune to his car. I even think, that this blind goddess was not so with respect to him; that she took upon herself to repair the faults he daily committed, and which should, in the right course of things, have deprived him for ever of her protection. I alone, I believe, can specify how reprehensibly he acted at that time, not to call it by a stronger term. I must, however,

be silent, and that for a reason.

If, by chance, I ventured to express my astonishment at his rashness and inconsistency, he stopped me immediately with saying: "Why, surely, my friend, you do not think of what you are saying; do you not perceive how smoothly every thing is going forward? No opposition, no obstacles, not the slightest difficulty; I am astonished at it myself, and how can it be otherwise? One part of Europe admire me, with open mouths; the other is in dread of me; and as for the good-natured Frenchmen, they are completely tired of applauding me. It is true, the space that the steed of my ambition is to traverse, is immense, and beyond all calculation; but by spurring him onwards, he will advance a hundred leagues in an hour. now, my dear friend, for I delight in repeating your youthful apostrophes, is my head still cracked, think you? Am I losing myself in imaginary illusions? The little protegée of the late kind Mr. Marbeuf, has not yet seen thirty summers, and he commands in the palace of the Doges. This is, I think, knowing tolerably well how to choose a lodging. Then those illustrious and grave senators, related in an ideal and burlesque line, to the Adriatic Sea, you find, Dangeais, are paying their homage to a young Corsican. projects I am now meditating, I must own, have something ludicrous in them; imagine to yourself, the

son of a private gentleman of Ajaccio, taking possession of one of the finest countries in Europe, the inheritance of the Cesars, the birth-place of Raphael, Tasso, and Dante; the cradle of the fine arts, in short, of Italy; imagine to yourself, I repeat, these fine countries turned topsy turvy by a young man of six and twenty; and yet this is what you will very shortly see. Yes, as much for diversion sake, as for philosophy and policy, I intend to overturn, change, suppress, and create all the governments of Italy. You seem not to be aware of the grand operations I am about to undertake; but have a little patience; you will shortly see what you are to expect.

I was, in fact, totally ignorant of the grand enterprizes he was meditating; I was far from believing in the existence of a man capable of overturning the laws and government of a country, that he might thereby learn hereafter to disturb the govern-

ment and the laws of the universe.

The impetuous general did not leave me long in suspence; he was soon seen to determine by his influence and intrigues, the organization of the Cispadan and Cisalpine republics. On the 19th of May, he re-united Romagna to the former, and Modena, Reggio, Massa, and Carrara to the latter. On the 5th of June, he regulated at Montebello, with the Genoese deputies, the new form of government he had imposed upon them. Some of his emissaries having afterwards insinuated themselves in Valtelina, it declared itself an independent republic, and sought his protection.

CHAP. XII.

IF ever since my connexion with Buonaparte, he had never ceased discoursing on his gigantic expectations; if some of those expectations had even been realized, I was, however, no less of opinion, that fortune would here limit her favours; and that he, an upstart, without his equal, would not torment her any longer. But how different was my opinion, when I perceived that he did not trust to his sword alone. Buonaparte officiously interposing his authority in the government of the countries which he had subdued, destroying them to establish others of his own fashion, all served to presage the accomplishment of those fantastic notions he had formed from his infancy. It was then, that, without imparting my ideas to him, I judged him capable of undertaking every thing, and of hazarding all, were he even to perceive the vessel of his ambition plunging into the gulf of perils, which he imprudently wished to make it encounter.

Whilst the general was revolutionizing Italy, Lucien, his brother, was procuring his nomination as one of the plenipotentiaries at the Congress of Udine. Napoleon received his instructions on the 20th of

August; and two days after we left Milan.

Buonaparte, at this period, was not at all an adept in the diplomatic style, which he politely surnamed the wrangling sophistry of great rogues. Nothing is more curious than what he advanced on this subject to 'Treilhard at the Congress of Rastadt. This explosion alone is worth a volume to gain a thorough knowledge of the hero; besides the relation is by so much the more historical, as, at a later period, he acted precisely

in opposition to what he then maintained.

Napoleon was dining at Treithard's house, with Bonnier and three other persons; I was one of the number. Towards the end of the entertainment, Trielhard was strongly discussing on the importance of the points to be treated of at the Congress. In the heat of his argument, he so far forgot himself as to say, "There, Gentlemen, military knowledge is but a secondary science; other knowledge and other views will be necessary." Such words as these spoken in the presence of a man, whose entire reputation was military, might undoubtedly be considered as an insult. All the guests felt it as such, and Bonnier intimated it to Treillard by an expressive glance. The latter, who has since ingenuously confessed, that he had not the slightest intention of hurting the general's feelings, wished to remedy his want of thought; but it was too late. Napoleon, with his head leaning on his right hand, was meditating a sharp parry to the thrust of his imprudent colleague. "If like you, Sir," replied Buonaparte rather calmly, "I should be called upon to discuss the interests of my government; excuse me if I differ in opinion with you as to the qualities you suppose indispensable for this great undertaking. (Then growing somewhat warm by degrees.) Allow me also to observe to you, that you are not at all qualified for the part you have to perform. In my eyes, Sir, you appear very little struck with your situation; very little impressed with the advantages that our military triumphs give us. You are come hither to dictate your pleasure, and not to subscribe to that of the conquered. What France is to acquire, ought to be VOL. I.

considered as what she is entitled to: and, with this view there is need neither of circumlocutions nor of equivocal notes; artifices necessary merely for him who is in fear, or who wishes to temporize. Were I but a school-boy, your task would appear to me perfectly easy. I should not, however, flatter myself so far as to suppose it required such vast knowledge and such extraordinary skill. With prudence, wisdom, and frankness I would settle the business, without imagining I had performed any very great or very difficult task. Double dealing and dissimulation are necessary at certain times and places; truth, sincerity, and conciseness, when one can use them with impunity and imperatively. It was at the Congress of Udine that I acquired a perfect knowledge of the diplomatic style, and of the method to be pursued in these negociations, which persons of sense and probity would terminate with such ease, and which certain persons possess the fatal secret of rendering perpetual.

"Reflecting one day that the foreign negociators merely wished to cause delay and settle nothing, I wrote out the following note, which I presented to the Congress: 'The emperor insists upon having Venice, his territory, and Dalmatia. The Netherlands shall belong to France.' Gentlemen, said I to the plenipotentiaries, all discussion is at present extraneous. have traced out this ultimatum with the point of my sword, and my horse is saddled in case of objection. It was thus that I expressed myself on the 16th of October; and, on the 17th, peace was signed. That man would be quite unworthy of his mission, who would not know how to suit his policy to circumstances; and, for my part, I cannot see, that, to act thus, it is necessary to possess so extraordinary a knowledge. But there are certain diplomatists who fancy

themselves demi-gods, when they have succeeded in framing long and tedious disputations, the substance of which might be easily contained in a single period. Such persons as these would think themselves dishonoured, if they were laconic or sincere, when they could be so. This infatuation, it is true, belongs to the profession, and nations do not perceive they are the sufferers."

I leave it to be imagined the embarrassment this address left us in. Bonnier was twisting his napkin, the other guests were silent, and Treilhard stammered out some apology, which Buonaparte took care to avoid, by rising from table and retiring almost immediately. This scene, it is said, was one of the principal causes of our return to Paris, where we arrived on

the 9th of December, 1797.

To judge by Napoleon's eagerness to quit Rastadt, and above all, the delight he manifested on the road, I foresaw that he was meditating great designs against the government. His wife met him at Compiegne, and went with him thence to Paris; on their journey they never ceased conversing in a low tone of voice: Napoleon seemed animated, and to pay great attention to what his wife related to him, who, on her part,

spoke emphatically, and with much action.

The day after his arrival in the capital, he was formally presented to the directory, who congratulated him as a warrior and pacificator. I was present at this audience, and I can maintain, that no person but Buonaparte could be dissatisfied with the reception he received from the directors, without exception. Perhaps they might think differently from what they spoke; but, at least, that was what he might doubt; his dissatisfaction was undoubtedly a consequence of the justice he rendered himself. A man who knows himself to be

guilty towards another, cannot trust to the sincerity of the kindness he receives from him. This was the general's situation; he was secretly plotting the ruin of the directory; consequently he could not confide in the protestations of the directors. "What is your opinion," said he to me, " of our five ephemeral monarchs? Did you remark with what coolness they bestowed their eulogiums? One would have supposed that they were hesitating whether they should inflict the lash on me, or render me the justice they did. It is, to be sure, a painful task to flatter a person, whom we dread. Yes, Dangeais, ever since my exploits have consolidated their power, the ungrateful set envy and detest me. The difference of their words and thoughts towards me, is as vast as the distance is from heaven to earth. But, am I not right in accusing them? Can they look upon me with calm and disinterested views? Certainly not; as knowing, as they are penetrating, they have dived into my very heart; my ambition has appeared to them what it is, great, vast, exchisive; and strongly disposed to kick them out whenever an opportunity shall present itself. It is wrong, therefore, in me to be vexed at their malign disposition towards me. In our reciprocal situation, secret war must exist between us. I must now, therefore, labour incessantly on the necessary means to put an end to this equivocal position; and, I trust, that by straining every nerve, I shall attain my ends,"

This important avowal of Napoleon will undoubtedly prove, that I was not mistaken in supposing that

he meditated projects against the government.

From this day, a continual ferment of intrigues and correspondence, took place at his house in Paris and at Mahnaison. Buonaparte took upon himself to analyze all the elements of the dictatorial government, in order

to discover the weak side and enfeeble it still more. Joseph and Lucien, Josephine and Murat, insinuated themselves into every faction, and discontented party, in order to beat up recruits. But whatever their dexterity might be, and after numerous intrigues and observations of every kind, they were at last plainly convinced that the government as irregular and despicable as it was, would prove too powerful to be overturned by the means of attack they intended to put into execution.

No doubt but that the obstacles were of a nature not to be surmounted, since Napoleon, notwithstanding his inflexible tenacity, consented to an adjournment of his ambitious projects. His sufferings, in consequence of his fruitless endeavours, were plainly visible in the sudden change that took place in him. In a few days he was completely altered; he became so melancholy and dejected, that to be in his presence was enough to make one shudder. To have an idea of his inward feelings, would be sufficient to hold ambition in horror. He suffered the more, by his endeavouring to conceal from others the true motives of his chagrin; the avowal would have been humiliating; he would have degraded the brazen character in which he gloried, throughout the most trifling actions of his life.

However he might secretly pine, and endeavour with so much care to conceal the real cause of his anguish, his family soon discovered the secret. Each of its members, deeply interested in the existence of the general, was grieved at perceiving this ambitious youth insensibly languish through excess of ambition, whilst brilliant means of appearing with advantage

were still at his disposal.

Buonaparte's greatest delight was to repair to the most gloomy recesses in the park of Malmaison, which he then inhabited in preference to the capital. Josephine and Lucien were the only persons who at times ventured to disturb his solitude; the former, with her natural sweetness of temper, and the latter with that blunt frankness, which has since caused his exile. If they asked him why he thus sequestered himself, he answered them with a mournful smile: "Leave me to myself, I will tell you shortly . . . I am meditating on something great, vast, lucrative, which will not leave the business unfinished. I will explain it to you, Lucien, and to you, Madam, and both of you will forgive me for having wished to be alone for a few moments." (These are the very words, he made use

of.)

For my part, I was less happy than the others; an unfortunate, or rather an insatiable ambition had closed his heart towards me. If at times he addressed me, it was no longer to impart his secrets. He looked at me with indifference, and more than once I observed that he endeavoured to shun me. I felt this behaviour of his, most acutely, and could not forbear writing to him, how incomprehensible his conduct towards me was, that I did not conceive I merited such treatment, and his, gloomy silence had rendered my life so insipid and monotonous, that I should immediately repair to Paris, to my relation Madam d'Aubreton, and there wait for his answer. I had ordered my servant not to leave Mahnaison, till he was certain that General Buonaparte had received my letter. "I cannot conceive," replied Napoleon, "the reason of your letter, I beg of you to do me the justice of believing, that no one can desire your friendship more than I, or is more inclined to do any thing to prove it. If my occupations had permitted me, I should have been the bearer of my letter to you myself." Nothing can express the plea-

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sure I felt on receiving this note; I went immediately to Malmaison, after having reproached myself. On my meeting with Napoleon, he took me familiarly by the arm and said, "Come my friend, and take a walk,

I wish to have a little conversation with you."

I had never seen Napoleon so communicative as he was on this day; we went into the thickest part of the park, and on our way, he repeated at least fifty times, "My silence must have puzzled you amazingly. confessed to him that it had. "Oh! but you are to blame to feel hurt at it, continued he: I was completely wrapt up in thought upon the world, upon men and circumstances. Every distraction would have appeared as a robbery committed on my interests, an interruption. to my important researches. I wished to be alone, in order to embrace every thing, Dangeais; I have suffered very much for the last fortnight. You must thence conclude that my character is changed. Not in the least, never was I so well aware of its energy and courage; I am not dead. Hundreds of vulgar minds, my friend, would have sunk under the weight of my anguish, if they could have felt as I did. Why is it not natural to me to stop where Lam! How many in my situation would fancy themselves well off! For I am well off, very well off, excessively well off! Yes, I am a great wretch* not to be able to be happy under such prosperity; but I cannot; the task is above my strength; I feel myself sinking . . . Dangeais, every thing, I believe, is over in Europe for me, I must determine upon living in it on a second or third footing.

"Bold intriguers, ambitious orators will sway the sceptre . . . Alas! since Frenchmen suffer this and I

^{*} All this passage, written ten minutes after it had been spoken, is exactly word for word, as delivered by Napoken.

am too weak to oppose it, let me at least, not witness it! Dangeais, accept this day a confidence I have kept from you for these filteen years. I wish to reign, yes, my friend, to reign; were it only over a vidage; I wish to be independent, it not in France, I must be so on some foreign shore. What is it to me where it is, so it be so, and that in every thing, and to every one I

can say, I will ?

" My ambition, after having wandered over the immensity of the universe, has fixed itself upon Egypt. This country seems to offer me the most fortunate chances: the people who inhabit it, cruelly harrassed by the Beys and Mamelukes, will see with delight a brave army and a renowned general, labour to extricate them from the encroachments of their oppressors. Milder laws, better treatment, a general affranchisement, will easily bind them to my standard: from this place to Syria, the passage is but short. I will march towards that province and soon a new kingdom of Jerusalem shall spring from the ruins of the ancient What a spectacle will this be, my friend, to the astonished universe! A Corsican at the head of a French victorious army, re-establishing the Holy City, and getting himself proclaimed as prince and sovereign of the celebrated land, where was born and died the God of Christians, will be one of those events, which change the appearance of the world, and which will be scarcely credited, even after their existence. What little justice did you and my friends, my dear Dangeais, render me, when sequestered under the thick shades of these ancient oaks, I was losing myself in this magnificent futurity! Ought you not to have said? Some grand conceptions deprive us of his society. But no: you accused me of weakness; my silence was, in your opinion, a want of energy and character, I was in short

beneath my ambition; Oh the pitiful error, the absence of sagacity! Whilst you were judging so wrongly of my firmness, all my moral and physical faculties were absorbed in the details of a conception no less admirable than gigantic. Thanks to my activity, all the parts of my plan, are fixed upon; not an atom is neglected; all is foreseen, both the conduct to be pursued in the course of the operation, and the obstacles I shall have to surmount. Now, my friend, be kind enough to tell me what you think of my projects."

What I had just heard appeared so extraordinary, so incredible, that I had scarcely strength of mind enough left to reply to him. Recovering, however, I said, "The distance is so great from your projects to those which I could possibly comprehend, that, without entering into the details of your under-

taking, I will content myself with asking you,

"Ist. How mean you to proceed, to induce the troops that may follow you, and engage them to protect your independence, to the detriment of the mother country, which they have so long and so gloriously served?

"2nd. How will you be able to persuade the directory to give you a fleet and troops for the execution of a project both complicated and susceptible of meeting

with heavy obstacles?"

"These interrogatories, however just they may be, stagger me not in the least. In reply to the first, I say: As soon as ever I shall be in Egypt, all those who will have followed me, will necessarily attach themselves to me. Officers, soldiers and other persons, suddenly rendered incapable of returning to their country, will find one in the land where I shall procure them all kinds of prosperity. Nine-tenths of those, who, if they were to return to France, freed from service, would be obliged to labour, each day,

by the sweat of their brow to procure themselves absolute necessaries, whilst, in my new empire, they will meet either with civil employment or military posts, which will shelter them from want, and supply them with abundance. My superior officers shall be raised to the first dignities of the state; I will enrich them with the treasures of the Pachas, Beys, and Mamelukes. I will chain them to the climate with harems where shall bloom the divine Circassians, and the beautiful Georgians. Think you not, Dangeais, that such brilliant advantages as these will detach them from a country where indigence might reach them; and to the shores of which I will take care that no yes-

sel shall ever transport them?

"Was it not always in the nature of the indigent man, to prefer the land where riches and pleasures dwell, to that where trouble, misery, and privation besiege him on all sides? As to gaining the voice of government to adopt my plan, I am well convinced I shall receive its entire approbation, even if they judge it as an extravagant one. The pleasure alone of removing me from their presence, will induce them to make the greatest sacrifices. I wish not, however, that this project should appear of my own concerting. One of my friends has taken upon himself to present. to the directors the plan of this grand expedition, which has for its principal motive the necessity of humbling the English power in Asia. In his opinion, our successes in this part of the world will deprive England of its store of abundance, and will shut up the richest markets of Africa.

"How gladly will the directory seize this pretext, much more apparent than solid, to cast upon a foreign shore the man whom they secretly dread; the warrior, who threatens their power! Ask what I will, men of

every profession, warriors, treasures, and vessels, all

will be granted me.

"To prevent the observations you might make as to the dangers of the enterprize and the distance of the situation, I have only two words to say: I wish at any rate to be independent, and to command others. This two-fold inclination once irrevocably expressed, ought to prevent any person from endeavouring to thwart my designs;—designs which are not so disproportionate to

my means, as most men would imagine."

Buonaparte might certainly have spared me this latter intelligence. The eagerness with which he had laid down his projects; his well known fixed determination; his inextinguishable thirst of ambition, every thing in short deterred me from making the slightest objection. Two other motives influenced my silence. Seduced, as many others have been, by the supposed results from the expedition to Egypt, I imagined it as a powerful measure to depress the pride of England, provided, however, I could be persuaded that the fidelity of the French army would not permit the general in chief to raise the standard of rebellion, and declare himself independent.

On the other hand, I imagined that the directory, calculating the dangers and uncertain success of such an enterprize, would refuse their approbation. It never entered my mind, that the head magistrates of a great nation would sacrifice to the pleasure of removing an audacious rival, an immense fleet and forty thousand fighting men, intrepid soldiers, whom France herself needed, to keep the neighbouring powers in

awe.

In this respect, how much more quick-sighted was Napoleon than 1! How much better had he dived into the hearts of our ambitious directors! Scarcely

were they made acquainted with his project, than they gave it their complete approbation and highest eulogy. A fine army, the choice of the French warriors, was immediately assembled, and assumed the name of an English army. A fleet of a hundred and ninety-four sail was assembled at Toulon, and Buonaparte appointed to command this famous expedition. Proud of these immense preparations, in which nothing had been spared, Napoleon wished to joke with me on the little faith I always placed in his future projects. "Well, Mr. Incredulous," said he to me one day, " what did I tell you a few days since? Treasures, warriors, and vessels; ask what I will, all will be granted me. Were not these my expressions? And are they not realized? Answer me, for I must induce you to confess, that fortune holds me by the hand."-" For this long time past, General, I have been convinced of that; my wish is, that this inconstant goddess who protects you now, may not leave you in the abyss whither your ambition hurls you. May you, in wisely using her favours, not compel her to turn her back upon you, in consequence of requiring too much." -" Mere timidity; ceutious proceedings that destroy all energy! If I were to think of the consequences, I should not perform any thing. But thanks to my observations, I am more than convinced, that no man ever reached the zenith of greatness, who always acts with prudence and reflection. The ambitious man, like the navigator, should shake off every dread of shoals and tempests: for never would a vessel have ploughed the ocean, if the pilot had had any idea of the perils be was about to encounter. Ambition, of whatever kind it may be, temerity, audacity, intrepidity, and want of reflection, have alone given knowledge to our globe of the grand empires that it contains,

and the treasures within its bowels. Prudence and wisdom are but secondary means, and calculated only to direct the employment of those riches. Great passions acquire, milder virtues preserve; therefore, my friend, allow me to put in action the grand principles of acquiring them: a time will come when I will put into practice the peaceable means of preserving. Who, if fortune favoured him as she does me, would not thus reason? I have indirectly required much from the directory; my requisitions have been granted. This beginning encourages me, and I am going to solicit more.

"My projected empire requires other persons besides soldiers: I intend to unite learned men of every class with them. I wish to be acquainted with the most trifling particulars of the country; the course of the rivers; the advantages they present; the nature of the soil, the amelioration of which it may be susceptible; the disposition of the inhabitants, their manners, the degree of courage and weakness they possess, their inclinations, prejudices; what may confine them to one spot, or stimulate them in another; in short, the laws which are most suitable to them. To attain these ends, I wish to have with me philosophers and mathematicians, naturalists and chemists, geographers and astronomers, antiquaries and engineers, historians and poets, painters and musicians. These several persons will, each in his profession, extend his knowledge throughout the country. They will educate their youth, whose number, in course of time, will increase, and my empire will be perfectly European."-" Suppose this latter request were to open the eyes of the directors, what would become of you then, General?" -" There is nothing to fear; the fear of the present VOL. I.

blinds them too much for them to think of the future; for were I to ask workmen of every kind, they would

grant them without a moments' reflection:"

Napoleon had not presumed too much on the complaisance of the directory, who, under pretence of enriching the literary world with a large history of

Egypt, quickly conceded to his latter demand.

The preparations for this expedition were nearly completed, and we were getting ready for our own, when I asked the general if his wife would follow him to Egypt. " No, no," answered he, " I leave her to observe how things go on in France. Lucien and Joseph shall be the advanced guard, and the other members of the family shall be on the look out. Who knows besides, whether they may not hereafter serve to protect my retreat? There are so many chances on the theatre I am about to enter upon. I shall know well how to seize the moment and opportunity to send for them, should fortune smile on me upon the banks of the Nile."

On the 2d of May, 1798, Buonaparte received his last instructions from the directory. These formed rather a voluminous treatise. "Here," said the general shewing it to me, "here is the contract of the sale, which the French government makes me of the king-

doms of Jerusalem and Tripoli."

Our departure was irrevocably fixed for the next day. I know not whether Buonaparte had communicated his brilliant expectations to his family; but his brothers, his sisters, and his mother, saw him depart, without experiencing any thing of that painful and melancholy sentiment always inspired by a long separation of friends who mutually cherish each other. Josephine, Josephine alone could not avoid showing marks of secret sorrow. Were I to live for ages, the last words she addressed him on parting, would ever be present to my recollection. "Courage, my friend," said she, in an accent of a deeply affected mind, "may you attain to whatever you wish to be; but if you have the smallest affection for your wife, preserve yourself for her sake; do not give too great a spring to the impetuosity of your genius; trust not always to the voice of glory; now and then she hurls her favourites into the tomb; be not too eager."

Her advice was entirely lost upon the impetuous Napoleon; he was no longer able to listen to her:

ambition had steeled him against prudence.

Having set out from Paris on the 4th of May, we arrived on the 9th at Toulon. If Buonaparte had not been puffed up with self-conceit, the honourable reception he met with in this city, the walls of which he had but four years before bombarded, must necessarily have rendered him less modest. Nothing was spared to prove to him, that great expectations

were placed in him.

Two days were sufficient for the general to organize the army, and complete the equipment of the fleet. On the 12th the troops began to embark, and on the 14th this operation was terminated. What an interesting spectacle did this army embarking for Egypt present! What feelings did it not inspire for the warlike and noble youths, the four-fifths of whom were never again to revisit their native country. Napoleon even, struck at the magnificent appearance of this army, could not forbear saying to me, in terms that unfolded the secrets of his soul,—" This is a noble empire, I am embarking for my own emolument."

On the 20th of May, the wind being very favour-

able, Admiral Brueyes gave the signal for departure the sea was covered with small vessels, the people mingled their huzzas with those of the soldiers, when they saw the anchors weighed, and the fleet steering towards Egypt.



FINIS.

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