

their resignations, and Napoleon assumed the reins of government under the title of *First Consul*, and was associated with Sièyes and Roger Ducos. The legislative branches of the government resisted, but the Council of Five Hundred was powerless before the bayonets of the military. A new revolution was effected, and despotic power in the hands of a military chieftain commenced. He, however, signalized himself by the clemency he showed in the moment of victory, and the principles of humanity, even in the government of a military despot, triumphed over the principles of cruelty. Bonaparte chose able men to assist him in the government. Talleyrand was made minister of foreign affairs. Fouché retained his portfolio of police, and the celebrated La Place was made minister of the interior. On the 24th of December, 1799, the new constitution was proclaimed; and, shortly after, Sièyes and Roger Ducos withdrew from the consulate, and gave place to Cambacères and Lebrun, who were in the interests of Napoleon.

The first step of the first consul was to offer peace to Great Britain; and he wrote a letter to the king, couched in his peculiar style of mock philanthropy and benevolence, in which he spoke of peace as the first necessity and truest glory of nations! Lord Grenville, minister of foreign affairs, replied in a long letter, in which he laid upon France the blame of the war, in consequence of her revolutionary principles and aggressive spirit, and refused to make peace while the causes of difficulty remained; in other words, until the Bourbon dynasty was restored. The Commons supported the government by a large majority, and all parties prepared for a still more desperate conflict. Napoleon was obliged to fight, and probably desired to fight, feeling that his power and the greatness of his country would depend upon the victories he might gain; that so long as the *éclat* of his government continued, his government would be strong. Mr. Pitt was probably right in his opinion that no peace could be lasting with a revolutionary power, and that every successive peace would only pave the way for fresh aggressions. Bonaparte could only fulfil what he called his destiny, by continual agitation; and this was well understood by himself and by his enemies. The contest had become one of life and death; and both parties resolved that no peace should be made until one or the other was effectually conquered.

*Proposal of Peace to Great Britain. Napoleon First Consul.*

The land forces of Great Britain, at the commencement of the year 1800, amounted to one hundred and sixty-eight thousand men exclusive of eighty thousand militia, while one hundred and twenty thousand seamen and marines were voted. The ships in commission were no less than five hundred, including one hundred and twenty-four of the line. The charter of the Bank of England was renewed, and the union with Ireland effected. The various German states made still greater exertions, and agreed to raise a contingent force of three hundred thousand men. They were greatly assisted in this measure by subsidies from Great Britain. Austria, alone, had in the field at this time a force of two hundred thousand men, half of whom belonged to the army of Italy under Melas.

To make head against the united forces of England and Austria, with a defeated army, an exhausted treasury, and a disunited people, was the difficult task of Bonaparte. His first object was to improve the finances; his second, to tranquillize La Vendée; his third, to detach Russia from the allies; his fourth, to raise armies equal to the crisis; and all these measures he rapidly accomplished. One hundred and twenty thousand men were raised by conscription, without any exemption from either rank or fortune, and two hundred and fifty thousand men were ready to commence hostilities. The first consul suppressed the liberty of the press, fixed his residence in the Tuileries, and established the usages and ceremonial of a court. He revoked the sentence of banishment on illustrious individuals, established a secret police, and constructed the gallery of the Louvre.

Hostilities commenced in Germany, and General Moreau was successful over General Kray at the battles of Engen, Moeskirch, and Biberach. General Massena fought with great courage in the Maritime Alps, but was obliged to retreat before superior forces, and shut himself up in Genoa, which endured a dreadful siege, but was finally compelled to surrender. The victor, Melas, then set out to meet Bonaparte himself, who was invading Italy, and had just effected his wonderful passage over the Alps by the Great St. Bernard, one of the most wonderful feats in the annals of war; for his artillery and baggage had to be transported over one of the highest and most difficult passes of the

*Immense Military Preparations.*



Alps. The passes of the St. Gothard and Mount Cenis were also effected by the wings of the army. The first action was at Montebello, which ended in favor of the French; and this was soon followed by a decisive and brilliant victory at Marengo, (June 14,) one of the most obstinately contested during the war, and which was attended with greater results than perhaps any battle that had yet occurred in modern warfare. Moreau also gained a great victory over the Austrians at Hohenlinden, and Macdonald performed great exploits amid the mountains of the Italian Tyrol. The treaty of Lunéville, (February 9, 1801,) in consequence of the victorious career of Bonaparte, ceded to France the possession of Belgium, and the whole left bank of the Rhine. Lombardy was erected into an independent state, Venice was restored to Austria, and the independence of the Batavian, Helvetic, Cisalpine, and Ligurian republics was guaranteed. This peace excited unbounded joy at Paris, and was the first considerable pause in the continental strife.

Napoleon returned to his capital to reconstruct society, which was entirely disorganized. It was his object to restore the institutions of religion, law, commerce, and education. He did not attempt to give constitutional freedom. This was impracticable; but he did desire to bring order out of confusion. One night, going to the theatre, he narrowly escaped death by the explosion of an "infernal machine." He attributed the design of assassination to the Jacobins, and forthwith transported one hundred and thirty of them, more as a statesman than as a judge. He was determined to break up that obnoxious party, and the design against his life furnished the pretence. Shortly after, he instituted the Legion of Honor, an order of merit which was designed to restore gradually the gradation in the ranks of society. He was violently opposed, but he carried his measures through the Council of State, and this institution, which at length numbered two thousand persons, civil and military, became both popular and useful. He then restored the external institution of religion, and ten archbishops and fifty bishops administered the affairs of the Gallican Church. The restoration of the Sunday, with its customary observances, was hailed by the peasantry with undisguised delight and was a pleasing sight to the nations of Europe. He then contemplated the complete restoration of all the unalienated national

*Success of Napoleon.*

*Reforms of Napoleon.*

property to the original proprietors, but was forced to abandon the design. A general amnesty was also proclaimed to emigrants, by which one hundred thousand people returned, not to enjoy their possessions, but to recover a part of them, and breathe the air of their native land. At last, he resolved to make himself first consul for life, and seat his family on a monarchical throne. He was opposed by the Council of State; but he appealed to the people, and three million three hundred and sixty-eight thousand two hundred and nine, out of three million five hundred and fifty-seven thousand eight hundred and eighty-five electors, voted for his elevation.

The "*Code Napoléon*" then occupied his attention, indisputably the greatest monument of his reign, and the most beneficial event of his age. All classes and parties have praised the wisdom of this great compilation, which produced more salutary changes than had been effected by all the early revolutionists. Amid these great undertakings of the consul, the internal prosperity of France was constantly increasing, and education, art, and science received an immense impulse. Every thing seemed to smile upon Bonaparte, and all appeared reconciled to the great power which he exercised.

But there were some of his generals who were attached to republican principles, and viewed with ill-suppressed jealousy the rapid strides he was making to imperial power. Moreau, the victor at Hohenlinden, was at the head of these, and, in conjunction with Fouché, who had been turned out of his office on account of the immense power which it gave him, formed a conspiracy of republicans and royalists to overturn the consular throne. But Fouché revealed the plot to Bonaparte, who restored him to power, and Generals Moreau and Pichegru, the Duke d'Enghien, and other illustrious persons were arrested. The duke himself was innocent of the conspiracy, but was sacrificed to the jealousy of Bonaparte, who wished to remove from the eyes of the people this illustrious scion of the Bourbon family, the only member of it he feared. This act was one of the most cruel and unjustifiable, and therefore impolitic, which Bonaparte ever committed. "It was worse than a crime," said Talleyrand; "it was a blunder." His murder again lighted the flames of continental war, and from it

*Conspiracy against Napoleon.*



may be dated the commencement of that train of events which ultimately hurled Napoleon from the imperial throne.

That possession was what his heart now coveted, and he therefore seized what he desired, and what he had power to retain. On the 18th of May, 1804, Napoleon was declared Emperor of the French, and an overwhelming majority of the electoral votes of France confirmed him in his usurpation of the throne of Hugh Capet.

His first step, as emperor, was the creation of eighteen marshals, all memorable in the annals of military glory — Berthier, Murat, Moncey, Jourdan, Masséna, Augereau, Bernadotte, Soult, Brune, Lannes, Mortier, Ney, Davoust, Bessières, Kellermann, Lefebvre, Pérignon, and Serrurier. The individual lives of these military heroes cannot here be alluded to.

Early in the year 1805, the great powers of England, Austria, and Russia entered into a coalition to reduce France to its ancient limits, and humble the despot who had usurped the throne. Enormous preparations were made by all the belligerent states, and four hundred thousand men were furnished by the allies for active service; a force not, however, much larger than Napoleon raised to prosecute his scheme of universal dominion.

Among other designs, he meditated the invasion of England itself, and assembled for that purpose one of the most splendid armies which had been collected since the days of the Roman legions. It amounted to one hundred and fourteen thousand men, four hundred and thirty-two pieces of cannon, and fourteen thousand six hundred and fifty-four horses. Ample transports were provided to convey this immense army to the shores of England. But the English government took corresponding means of defence, having fathomed the designs of the enemy, who had succeeded in securing the coöperation of Spain. This great design of Napoleon was defeated by the vigilance of the English, and the number of British ships which defended the coasts — the “wooden walls” which preserved England from a most imminent and dreaded danger.

Frustrated in the attempt to invade Great Britain, Napoleon instantly conceived the plan of the campaign of Austerlitz, and without delay gave orders for the march of his different armies to

*Meditated Invasion of England.*

the banks of the Danube. The army of England on the shores of the Channel, the forces in Holland, and the troops in Hanover were formed into seven corps, under the command of as many marshals, comprising altogether one hundred and ninety thousand men, while the troops of his allies in Italy and Germany amounted to nearly seventy thousand more. Eighty thousand new conscripts were also raised, and all of these were designed for the approaching conflict with the Austrians.

But before the different armies could meet together in Germany, Nelson had gained the great and ever-memorable victory of Trafalgar, (October 23,) on the coast of Spain, by which the naval power of France and Spain was so crippled and weakened, that England remained, during the continuance of the war, sovereign mistress of the ocean. Nothing could exceed the transports of exultation which pervaded the British empire on the news of this great naval victory — perhaps the greatest in the annals of war. And all that national gratitude could prompt was done in honor of Nelson. The remains of the fallen victor were buried in St. Paul's Cathedral, over which a magnificent monument was erected. His brother, who inherited his title, was made an earl, with a grant of six thousand pounds a year, and an estate worth one hundred thousand pounds. Admiral Collingwood, the second in command, was raised to the peerage, with a grant of two thousand pounds yearly. But the thoughts of the nation were directed to the departed hero, and countless and weeping multitudes followed him to the grave; and his memory has ever since been consecrated in the hearts of his countrymen, who regard him, and with justice, as the greatest naval commander whom any nation or age has produced.

Early in October, the forces of Napoleon were marshalled on the plains of Germany, and the Austrians, under the Archduke Charles, acted on the defensive. Napoleon advanced rapidly on Vienna, seized the bridge which led from it to the northern provinces of the empire, passed through the city, and established his head-quarters at Schoenbrunn. On the 1st of December was fought the celebrated battle of Austerlitz, the most glorious of all Napoleon's battles, and in which his military genius shone with the greatest lustre, and which decided the campaign

*Battle of Trafalgar.*

*Battle of Austerlitz.*



Negotiations with Austria, dictated by the irresistible power of the French emperor, were soon concluded at Presburg, (27th December,) by which that ancient state was completely humbled. The dethronement of the King of Naples followed, and the power of Napoleon was consolidated on the continent of Europe.

The defeat of Austerlitz was a great blow to the allied powers and the health and spirits of Pitt sunk under the disastrous intelligence. A devouring fever seized his brain, and delirium quenched the fire of his genius. He died on the 23d of January, 1806, at the age of forty-seven, with the exclamation, "Alas, my country!" after having nobly guided the British bark in the most stormy times his nation had witnessed since the age of Cromwell. He was buried with great pomp in Westminster Abbey, and died in debt, after having the control, for so many years, of the treasury of England. Mr. Fox did not long survive his more illustrious rival, but departed from the scene of conflict and of glory the 13th of September.

The humiliation of Prussia succeeded that of Austria. The battle of Jena, the 14th of October, prostrated, in a single day, the strength of the Prussian monarchy, and did what the united armies of Austria, Russia, and France could not accomplish by the Seven Years' War. Napoleon followed up his victories by bold and decisive measures, invested Magdeburg, which was soon abandoned, entered Berlin in triumph, and levied enormous contributions on the kingdom, to the amount of one hundred and fifty-nine millions of francs. In less than seven weeks, three hundred and fifty standards, four thousand pieces of cannon, and eighty thousand prisoners were taken; while only fifteen thousand, out of one hundred and twenty thousand men, were able to follow the standards of the conquered king to the banks of the Vistula. Alarm, as well as despondency, now seized all the nations of Europe. All the coalitions which had been made to suppress a revolutionary state had failed, and the proudest monarchs of Christendom were suppliant at the feet of Napoleon.

The unfortunate Frederic William sued for peace; but such hard conditions were imposed by the haughty conqueror at Berlin, that the King of Prussia prepared for further resistance, especially in view of the fact that the Russians were coming to his assistance.

At Berlin, Napoleon issued his celebrated decrees against British commerce, which, however, flourished in spite of them.

Napoleon then advanced into Poland to meet the Russian armies, and at Eylau, on the 8th of February, 1807, was fought a bloody battle, in which fifty thousand men perished. It was indecisive, but had the effect of checking the progress of the French armies. But Napoleon ordered new conscriptions, and made unusual exertions, so that he soon had two hundred and eighty thousand men between the Vistula and Memel. New successes attended the French armies, which resulted in a peace with Russia, at Tilsit, on the river Niemen, at which place Napoleon had a personal interview with the Emperor Alexander and the King of Prussia. By this treaty, (7th July,) Poland was erected into a separate principality, and the general changes which Napoleon had made in Europe were ratified by the two monarchs. Soon after, Napoleon, having subdued resistance on the continent of Europe, returned to his capital. He was now at the height of his fame and power, but on an elevation so high that his head became giddy. Moreover, his elevation, at the expense of Italy, Belgium, Switzerland, Austria, Prussia, Saxony, and Russia, to say nothing of inferior powers, excited the envy and the hatred of all over whom he had triumphed, and prepared the way for new intrigues and coalitions.

Napoleon after the peace of Tilsit, devoted all his energies to the preservation of his power and to the improvement of his country, and expected of his numerous subjects the most implicit obedience to his will. He looked upon himself as having received a commission from Heaven to rule and to reign as absolute monarch of a vast empire, as a being upon whom the fate of France depended. The watchwords "liberty," "equality," "fraternity," "the public welfare," were heard no more, and gave place to others which equally flattered the feelings of the French people—"the interests of the empire," "the splendor of the imperial throne." From him emanated all glory and power, and the whole structure of the state, executive, judicial, and legislative, depended upon his will. Freedom, in the eyes of the people, was succeeded by glory, and the *éclat* of victory was more highly prized than any fictitious liberty. The *Code Napoléon* rapidly progressed; schools



of science were improved; arts, manufactures, and agriculture revived. Great monuments were reared to gratify the national pride and perpetuate the glory of conquests. The dignity of the imperial throne was splendidly maintained, and the utmost duties of etiquette were observed. He encouraged amusements, festivities, and fêtes; and Talma, the actor, as well as artists and scholars, received his personal regard. But his reforms and his policy had reference chiefly to the conversion of France into a nation of soldiers; and his system of conscription secured him vast and disciplined armies, not animated, as were the soldiers of the revolution, by the spirit of liberty, but transformed into mechanical forces. The time was to come, in spite of the military enthusiasm of his veteran soldiers, when it was to be proved that the throne of absolutism is better sustained by love than by mechanism.

Napoleon had already elevated his two brothers, Louis and Joseph, to the thrones of Holland and Naples. He now sought to make his brother Joseph the King of Spain. He availed himself of a quarrel between King Charles and his son; acted as mediator, in the same sense that Hastings and Clive acted as mediators in the quarrels of Indian princes; and prepared to seize, not to humble, one of the oldest and proudest monarchies of Europe.

The details of that long war on the Spanish peninsula, which resulted from the appointment of Joseph Bonaparte to the throne of Spain, have been most admirably traced by Napier, in the best military history that has been written in modern times. The great hero of that war was Wellington; and, though he fought under the greatest disadvantages and against superior forces, — though unparalleled sufferings and miseries ensued among all the belligerent forces, — still he succeeded in turning the tide of French conquest.

Spain did not fall without a struggle. The Spanish Juntas adopted all the means of defence in their power; and the immortal defence of Saragossa, the capital of Arragon, should have taught the imperial robber that the Spanish spirit, though degenerate, was not yet extinguished.

It became almost the universal wish of the English to afford the Spaniards every possible assistance in their honorable struggle.

and Sir Arthur Wellesley, the conqueror of the Mahrattas, landed in Portugal in August, 1808. He was immediately opposed by Marshal Junot. Napoleon could not be spared to defend in person the throne of his brother, but his most illustrious marshals were sent into the field; and, shortly after, the battle of Corunna was fought, at which Sir John Moore, one of the bravest of generals, was killed in the moment of victory.

Long and disastrous was that Peninsular war. Before it could be closed, Napoleon was called to make new exertions. Austria had again declared war, and the forces which she raised were gigantic. Five hundred and fifty thousand men, in different armies, were put under the command of the Archduke Charles. Napoleon advanced against him, and was again successful, at Abensberg and at Eckmühl. Again he occupied Vienna; but its fall did not discourage the Austrians, who, soon after, were marshalled against the French at Wagram, which dreadful battle made Napoleon once more the conqueror of Austria. On the 14th of November, 1809, he returned to Paris, and soon after made the grand mistake of his life.

He resolved to divorce Josephine, whom he loved and respected: a woman fully worthy of his love, and of the exalted position to which she was raised. But she had no children, and Napoleon wanted an heir to the universal empire which he sought to erect on the ruins of the ancient monarchies of Europe. The dream of Charlemagne and of Charles V. was his, also — the revival of the great Western Empire. Moreover, Napoleon sought a domestic alliance with the proud family of the German emperor. He sought, by this, to gratify his pride and strengthen his throne. He perhaps also contemplated, with the Emperor of Austria for his father and ally, the easy conquest of Russia. Alexander so supposed. "His next task," said he, "will be to drive me back to my forests."

The Empress Josephine heard of the intentions of Napoleon with indescribable anguish, but submitted to his will; thus sacrificing her happiness to what she was made to believe would advance the welfare of her country and the interests of that heartless conqueror whom she nevertheless loved with unparalleled devotion. On the 11th of March, 1810, the espousals of

Aggrandizement of Napoleon's Family. Reforms in France.

Napoleon's Success in Austria. Divorce of Josephine.