

The intrigue  
of Bayonne,  
1808.

ficed it at Trafalgar. As a return for these good offices, Napoleon now deliberately planned to seize his kingdom. Taking advantage of a quarrel between Charles and his son Ferdinand—two clowns as disgusting as any that have ever masqueraded in a royal mantle—he invited the pair to Bayonne, just across the border, in order to lay their quarrel before him. There the trap closed on them and the two simpletons were forced to resign their royal rights to the wily arbiter (May, 1808). Spain was thereupon given to Joseph Bonaparte, who before assuming his new dignity was obliged to surrender the kingdom of Naples, held for the last two years, to Caroline Bonaparte's husband, Murat, henceforth King Murat.

The insur-  
rection of  
Spain.

The shameless violence and duplicity by which Napoleon seized the crown of Spain sent a thrill of horror through the Spanish people. By disposing of them as if they were a nation at auction he had wounded their pride, and instead of a peaceful occupation he found himself confronted with an insurrection. It was a new phenomenon upon the emperor's path, and he failed to read the meaning of it. Convinced, soldier like, that there was no obstacle which would not yield to force, he rapidly diagnosed the Spanish situation as requiring a little treatment by cold steel. If the Spaniards had met the regular army which he now launched against them in the field, it is plain that their ineffective forces would have gone down before the French eagles like the rest of Europe. But wisely they assembled only in small guerrilla bands, swept from ambushes upon detachments and rear-guards, and were gone again before they could be punished. The summer of 1808 brought Napoleon his first serious military disasters, and to make things worse England immediately took a lively interest in Spanish affairs. Having waited in vain for Napoleon to seek her on the sea, she found and seized this opportunity to seek him on the land. In

the summer of 1808 an English army disembarked in Portugal for the purpose of supporting the revolt of the peninsula. When Napoleon, angered by the check received by his political system, appeared in person on the scene (autumn, 1808), he had no difficulty in sweeping the Spaniards into the hills and the English to their ships, but he was hardly gone when the scattered guerrillas ventured forth from their retreats and the English forced a new landing.

Napoleon had now to learn that a people resolved to live free cannot be conquered. The Spanish war swallowed immense sums and immense forces, but the emperor, as stubborn in his way as the Spaniards, would give ear to no suggestion of concession. Slowly, however, circumstances told against him. The revolts showed no signs of abating, and when, in 1809, a capable general, Sir Arthur Wellesley, better known by his later title of duke of Wellington, took command of the English forces, and foot by foot forced his way toward Madrid, Napoleon's Spanish enterprise became hopeless. Of course that was not immediately apparent; but what did become all too soon apparent was that the enslaved states of central Europe were taking the cue from the Spaniards, and were preparing for a similar struggle with their oppressor.

In the year 1809 Austria, encouraged by the Spanish successes, was inspired to arouse the Germans to a national revolt. But the effort was premature, for as Prussia was still occupied by French troops, and the whole territory of the Confederation of the Rhine was pledged to Napoleon's interests, only detached bodies in the Tyrol, in Jerome's kingdom of Westphalia and elsewhere, responded to Austria's call. At Wagram (July, 1809) Napoleon laid Austria a fourth time at his feet. In the Peace of Vienna, which followed, she was forced to cede Salzburg to Bavaria, give up most of her Polish provinces to the duchy of Warsaw and

Napoleon  
cannot put  
the Spaniards  
down.

Austria tries  
to organize  
a German  
insurrection



Humiliation of  
Austria, 1809.

Napoleon  
changes his  
political sys-  
tem, Russia  
being replaced  
by Austria.

Review of  
Napoleon's  
position in  
1811.

to the Czar of Russia, and her southern districts, which Napoleon reorganized as the Illyrian provinces, to France. It was but a trunk shorn of its boughs which the conqueror left, and it is not improbable that he would have felled the trunk, too, if he had not been forced at this time to provide for a complete change of his political system.

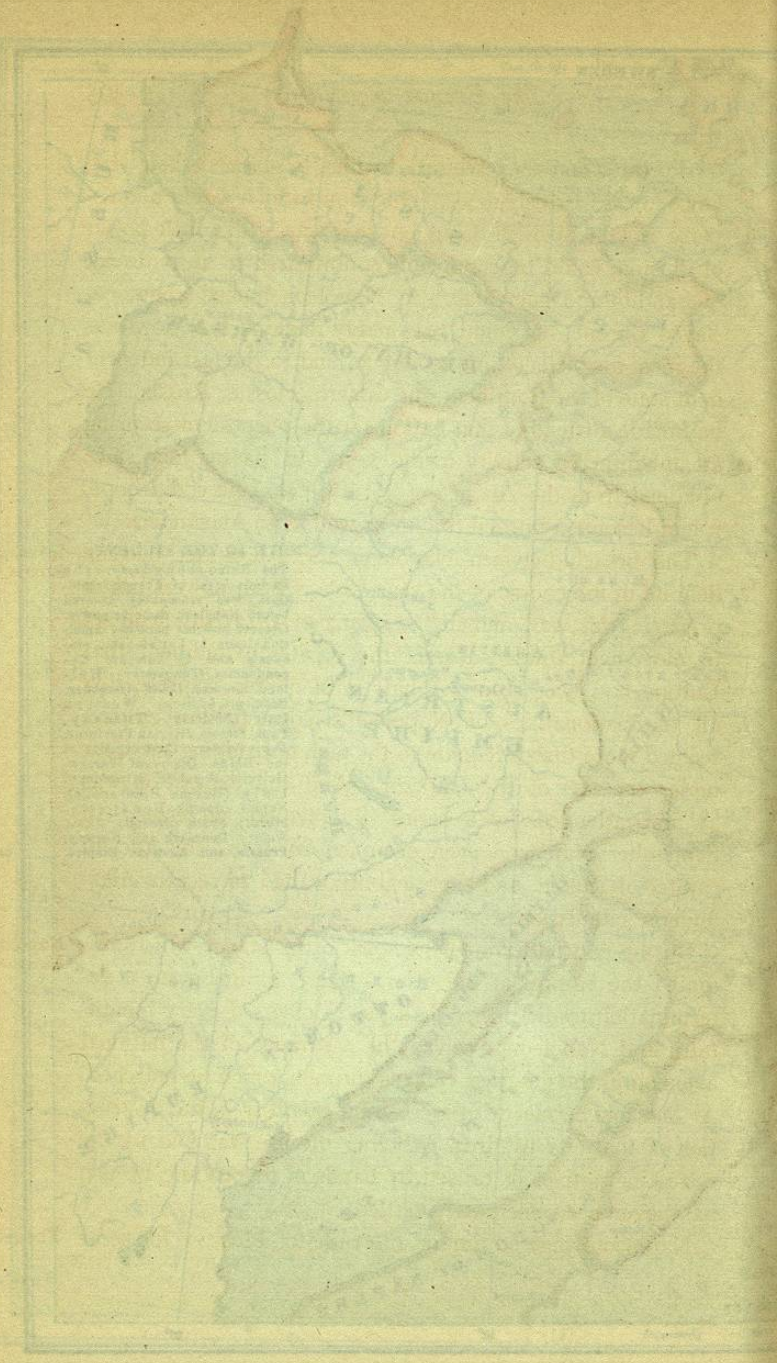
The fact was the Czar Alexander was tiring of the alliance of Tilsit, which handed over the whole Continent to Napoleon, while Russia received no commensurate advantage, besides being subjected to an intolerable burden by reason of the Continental System. Napoleon noticed the diminishing heartiness of the Czar, and resolved to secure himself against defection by seeking the friendship of Austria. That state was, after the war of 1809, in no position to refuse the proffered hand, and when Napoleon further demanded the emperor's daughter, Marie Louise, in marriage; that request, too, had to be granted. That he was already married to Josephine Beauharnais was a slight annoyance, disposed of by divorce on the ground that the union was childless. In April, 1810, the military upstart, for that is what Napoleon was from the point of view of the drawing-room and the court, celebrated his union with a daughter of the ancient imperial line of Hapsburg, and when, in the succeeding year, there was born to him a son and heir, to whom he gave in his cradle the sounding title of king of Rome, he could fancy that the Napoleonic empire was finally settled upon secure foundations.

And surely never did Napoleon's power exhibit a greater outward splendor, never did his behests meet with more implicit obedience, than in the year 1811. The spoiled son of fortune had now acquired the imperious habit of falling into a rage at the slightest sign of opposition. He imposed the Continental System with increasing rigor, and punished the Pope and his own brother Louis with the loss of their









territories when they seemed to him to slacken their vigilance toward British goods. One cloud which would not disperse was the Spanish rising, but that war, with a little power of illusion, could be comfortably minimized to an outbreak of bandits and guerrillas. As Napoleon looked about enslaved Europe, he might reasonably imagine that now was the most auspicious time to put an end to the last independent state of the Continent, the eastern colossus, Russia. He had made a friend of that nation for the purpose of securing an unhampered activity in the west, but having long since obtained from the alliance of Tilsit all that he could hope, it had become a burden to him as well as to Alexander.

The breach between Napoleon and Alexander became definite in the course of the year 1811. Both powers began preparing for war, and in the spring of 1812 Napoleon set in movement toward Russia the greatest armament that Europe had ever seen. A half million men, representing all the nationalities of Napoleon's cosmopolitan empire, seemed more than adequate to the task of bringing the Czar under the law of the emperor. And the expedition was at first attended by a series of splendid successes. In September Napoleon even occupied Moscow, the ancient capital of Russia, and there calmly waited to receive Alexander's submission.

Invasion of  
Russia, 1812.

But he had underrated the spirit of resistance which animated the empire of the Czar. Here, as in Spain, a determination to die rather than yield possessed every inhabitant, and Napoleon received the assurance of the national aversion in the deserted villages through which he marched. At Moscow he met with a crushing calamity in the destruction of that city by fire. Whether the fire was laid by the retreating natives or caused by bands of marauding French has never been accurately settled.

Napoleon at  
Moscow.

Napoleon lingered among the ruins of Moscow for some

The retreat.



weeks in the vain hope that the Czar, unnerved by the invasion of his country, would make peace. But for once Alexander was firm, and the delay overwhelmed the French with disaster. For since the retreat, unavoidable in a country eaten bare of supplies, was not begun till October 19th, the poor troops were overtaken by winter and buried under its icy blasts. To the misery of cold were added hunger and the constant raids of the swift-moving Cossacks until the formidable Grand Army of the spring had melted into a few scattered bands of struggling fugitives. Napoleon directed the rout through the first stages, but early in December he set out for Paris, realizing that he had sacrificed his veterans in an impossible enterprise. In his absence Marshal Ney, "the bravest of the brave," fighting like a common soldier, did what valor could to save the honor of France and the wreck of her military power. Late in December a few thousand starved, broken, and half-crazed men, whose brothers strewed the frozen plains of Russia, found refuge across the Niemen.

The revolt of  
Germany.

The loss of his splendid army was, in any case, a serious calamity for Napoleon. But it would become an irremediable catastrophe if it encouraged Germany, long throbbing with suppressed rage, to rise in revolt and create new complications at a juncture when he required all his strength to repair the supreme disaster of his life. Unluckily for Napoleon, the German patriots felt this fact instinctively, and thrilled with the consciousness that never again would such an opportunity be offered them. They wanted a general and national rising; but they saw that its success would be best assured if its guidance were undertaken by Prussia. And Prussia, which Napoleon had trampled into the dust at Jena and shut into a tomb at Tilsit, did not deceive their expectations, and raised the standard of revolt.

Prussia since her overwhelming disasters had gone through

a renovation which is one of the remarkable revivals of history. Her king and leading men had come to see that her overthrow was the inevitable consequence of her backwardness, and resolved that new foundations would have to be laid in a series of sweeping reforms. Luckily, the state found the men to undertake the work. Stein, as chief minister, and Scharnhorst, as head of the war department, carried through a number of measures, such as the abolition of serfdom, the creation of local self-government, and the reorganization of the army on a national and patriotic basis, which gave Prussia many of the advantages of the French Revolution. And with the new institutions was born a new spirit, unknown hitherto in this feudal and military state, which bound high and low together in a common passionate love of country. When this revived nation heard of Napoleon's ruin on the Russian snow-fields, all classes were seized with the conviction that the great hour of revenge had come; no debate, no delay on the part of the timid king was suffered, and resistlessly swept along by the rising tide of enthusiasm, he was forced to sign an alliance with Russia and declare war (March, 1813).

The renaissance of  
Prussia.

The disastrous campaign of 1812 would have exhausted any other man than Napoleon. But he faced the new situation as undaunted as ever. By herculean efforts he succeeded in mustering and training a new army, and in the spring of 1813 appeared suddenly in the heart of Germany, ready to punish the new coalition. Life and death depended on his defeating Russia and Prussia before the Confederation of the Rhine, already simmering with revolt, and Austria, only waiting for a chance to recover her own, had declared against him. At Lützen (May 2d) and at Bautzen (May 20th) he maintained his ancient reputation. But clearly the day of the Jenas and Friedlands was over, for not only did he capture no cannon or men, but the allies fell

The campaign  
of 1813: first  
part.