

## CHAPTER LXVII.

## THE FIRST RESTORATION AND THE HUNDRED DAYS.

(1814-1815 A.D.)

**The First Restoration** (April 6, 1814-March 26, 1815).—While the great exile was journeying through France, Talleyrand, the real head of the provisional government, signed, on the 23d of April, a disastrous convention which reduced France to her frontiers of January 1, 1792.

Louis XVIII. left England, and on the 24th of April landed at Calais. It was essential, at any price, to attract popularity to the Bourbon princes who had, for twenty-four years, been strangers to the country, who owed their fortunes to its disasters, and derived their power from its enemies. But the new monarch, who entitled himself "king by the grace of God," replaced the tricolor by the white flag, and dated his accession from the death of his nephew Louis XVII., was little disposed to make concessions. The emperor Alexander, perceiving the necessity of liberal institutions, sustained the constitutional propositions drawn up by Talleyrand and a committee of senators and deputies. The king was obliged to issue the *Charte constitutionnelle* on the 4th of June. The following were its principles:—

Hereditary royalty; two chambers, one elective, the other, the Chamber of Peers, composed by the king, both having the right to vote upon taxation and to discuss the laws; public and individual liberty, liberty of the press and of worship; the inviolability of landed estates, even those acquired after confiscation; the responsibility of ministers; the immovability of judges; the security of the public debt; the free admissibility of all Frenchmen to all civil and military employments; the maintenance of the great institutions of the Empire: the Council of State, the Court of Cassation, the Court of Accounts, and the University. The treaty of peace was then signed, and the evacuation of France by the enemies' troops commenced.

The charter satisfied the middle class. It was consoled

for the loss of glory and power by the hope of having at least found repose and liberty; but with the Bourbons came the émigrés, who threatened the new interests created by the Revolution. They disturbed the possessors of confiscated property, they respected neither liberty of worship nor tolerance in religion. Ranks and honors were lavished upon the émigrés, while fourteen thousand officers who had won their epaulets in front of the enemy were retired on half-pay. Soldiers of the army of Condé became generals. Naval officers received the rank next superior to that which they had held previous to their emigration; those who had served on the British fleet retained the rank bestowed upon them by the English admiralty. In ten months the government of Louis XVIII. had lost all credit.

**Return from Elba** (March 20, 1815).—Meanwhile, from the island of Elba, Napoleon saw the mistakes of the Bourbons accumulate and their unpopularity increase, and resolved once more to try his fortune. He embarked with a few hundred men and landed near Cannes (March 1), and issued a stirring proclamation. From Cannes to Grenoble the little troop met with no obstacle. The Emperor frankly confessed that he had been mistaken in desiring to bestow upon France the empire of the world, spoke only of peace and liberty, promised a constitution and constitutional guarantees. Near Grenoble he met the first troops sent against him. He advanced alone to meet them and said, "Is there one among you who wishes to kill his Emperor?" The arms fell from the hands of the soldiers, and they answered by one great shout of "Vive l'Empereur!" Labédoyère brought over to him the 7th regiment of the line; each soldier had resumed his tricolor cockade, which each had religiously preserved for ten months in the bottom of his knapsack. After that, the journey was a complete triumph. Ney, who had left Paris a devoted servant of the king, saw his regiments yield to the universal enchantment, and came himself to rejoin his old chief at Auxerre. On the 20th of March Napoleon re-entered the Tuileries, which Louis XVIII. had quitted the day before. Not a gun was fired in defence of the Bourbons, not a drop of blood had been shed for the re-establishment of the Empire; an evidence that this revolution was not the result of a conspiracy, but of a universal impulse.

**The Hundred Days** (March 20-June 22).—The events

which had taken place during the year which had just passed had taught Napoleon that he had left out of his government one of the active forces of France,—the spirit of liberty. This force he now endeavored to win, and took measures intended to placate the liberal element. A new constitution (*Acte additionnel*), containing the principal provisions of the charter, was promulgated. Submitted to the people, it was passed by 1,500,000 yeas against 4206 nays.

Nevertheless he had all Europe to fight against, and, in addition, civil war in La Vendée. The allied sovereigns, then assembled in congress at Vienna to divide the nations among them, declared that Napoleon had placed himself outside of the pale of public law: they resolved to inflict the severest chastisement upon France. Such declarations excited the patriotic ardor of the French. Citizens, artisans, peasants, offered their aid, and all who were willing to join the regiments and place themselves under military law were accepted. But there was in a part of the country an extreme weariness, and in the official regions much distrust. The Emperor himself was conscious of a loss of spirit; he no longer believed in his good fortune; "I had," said he afterwards, "a presentiment of misfortune." Nevertheless he employed all his energies; he worked sixteen hours out of the twenty-four. In fifty days an army of one hundred and eighty-two thousand regular troops was organized. Another, of two hundred thousand national guards, was prepared for the defence of fortresses, and as a reserve of the active army.

The troops of the allies were all ready to enter upon the campaign. Austria sent towards the Rhine and the Alps three hundred thousand Germans; one hundred and seventy thousand Russians would reach Mainz on the 1st of July. Already there were ninety-five thousand English and Dutch in Belgium under Wellington, and one hundred and twenty-four thousand Prussians under Blücher. The arrival of the Russians was waited for, in order to commence operations.

**Battle of Waterloo (June 18, 1815).**—The Emperor determined to anticipate the enemy's attack. A great victory in Belgium might effect great changes. He crossed the Sambre with one hundred and twenty-four thousand men and three hundred and fifty pieces of cannon (June 15). He expected to surprise the Prussians; but Blücher, warned of the danger, had time to concentrate his forces at



WATERLOO—LA BELLE ALLIANCE.  
From photograph.

Ligny. The French advanced divided into three corps; the right wing under Grouchy, the centre under the direct command of Napoleon, the left under Ney. The right and the centre were to confront the Prussians, the left was to seize upon Quatre-Bras and arrest the progress of the English, then to fall upon the Prussians and complete their rout. This plan was only half executed; the English had time to establish themselves in force at Quatre-Bras; and though Ney with his indomitable energy succeeded in holding them back, he could not co-operate in the attack upon the Prussians. The Emperor had a terrible engagement with them at Ligny; at length they fled, after having suffered considerable loss, but without having been destroyed as they might have been (June 16).

The Prussians seemed for the moment to be thrown back upon Namur; it was time to turn his attention to the English. Napoleon marched upon them on the 17th. Wellington had gathered together seventy thousand men in front of the village of Waterloo on the plateau of Mont-Saint-Jean. He had long studied this position, and was determined to defend himself there to the last extremity. Napoleon left Grouchy thirty-four thousand men, with orders to follow the Prussians toward Namur. He himself with the rest of his forces joined Ney in order to attack the English. The French army numbered only seventy-two thousand men, but was full of enthusiasm. Wellington, having only one road upon which to retreat, would be destroyed unless he conquered. He sent word to Blücher to send him two of his corps; Blücher replied that he would come with all. Wellington counted therefore on the Prussians, but Napoleon counted on Grouchy to hold them back.

The rain which had fallen in torrents on the 17th and during the ensuing night had made the ground an expanse of mire. On the 18th, about eleven o'clock, the sun appeared, and the battle began. Napoleon first attacked the château of Hougomont, on which Wellington's right rested, intending to draw off troops from the English centre; then he would pierce the centre at the plateau Mont-Saint-Jean, cut the English off from Brussels, and throw their defeated right wing back into Flanders. Wellington, in fact, brought the best of his troops to the defence of Hougomont, and a desperate struggle raged there for four hours; the English held the position. During this feigned attack Napoleon

collected a powerful battery of seventy-eight pieces and directed a tremendous fire upon Mont-Saint-Jean, then threw Ney upon La Haie-Sainte, a hamlet which was situated at the foot of the hill. The heavy artillery of the marshal made frightful ravages in the English ranks. For a moment they seemed disconcerted; at this moment, when Ney attempted to bring forward his artillery, the twelve-pounders stuck, and were vigorously attacked by the English. They were in turn charged and cut to pieces by the sabres of the French cavalry; but a grievous disorder had been produced. But Ney, continually advancing, finally reached La Haie-Sainte, and took possession of it. The English army was a second time thrown into confusion. In order to turn this confusion into a rout, Napoleon was about to charge with his guard. Suddenly cannons were heard thundering behind the French lines. "Is it Grouchy?" was heard on all sides.

It was Bülow, who was debouching on the right of the French army with thirty thousand Prussians, brought up by a forced march. The Emperor was obliged to send against him Lobau's corps and the guard with which he had intended to sustain Ney. Wellington recognized the promised aid, and took the offensive on the side toward La Haie-Sainte. On seeing this, all the French cavalry, even the reserves, rushed confusedly upon the fatal plateau, to cut down the enemy's cavalry. The latter, opening to right and left, unmasked twenty pieces of cannon which vomited death, and the whole of Wellington's infantry formed into squares. The French horsemen charged the English lines; eleven times they charged and sabred them; several were broken, but they formed anew. At seven o'clock the French cavalry were driven from the plateau; they had occupied it two hours. Finally Napoleon formed a column of four battalions of the guard; but he was too late; the English army had reappeared at the crest of the plateau. Three volleys of artillery broke successively upon the guard as it advanced; two battalions were entirely destroyed by the volleys. Napoleon then called to him the troops which were occupying Hougoumont, joined them to those of Ney, inspired them by a few words, and ordered a general attack. It was eight o'clock in the evening. The French soldiers charged the enemy with admirable enthusiasm; several of the English squares were broken through and cut to pieces.

Suddenly a tremendous cannonading was heard on the extreme right of the French army. "It is Grouchy," again cried all the soldiers. But it was Blücher, who, at the head of thirty-six thousand Prussians, was coming up after Bülow, upon the right flank of the French. Then the last army of France, pressed in front by all that remained of Wellington's ninety thousand men, on the right by the sixty-six thousand Prussians of Blücher and Bülow, was dashed together, with ranks all in disorder, and soon there was nothing but a dreadful confusion. Napoleon, in desperation, drew his sword and was about to rush into the midst of the enemy: his generals surrounded him and led him away on the road toward Génappe.

It was after nine o'clock; night had fallen on the terrible field of battle, and still the struggle continued. The old guard formed six squares; five were successively destroyed by an enemy thirty times as numerous: one only still remained, that of Cambronne. They bravely refused to surrender, and alone, against the whole army of the enemy, they charged with their bayonets in order to give their beloved chief time to escape. Other battalions of the guard, with Lobau, checked half of the Prussian army for an hour and a half, until the immense crowd, protected by their sacrifice, had passed on upon the route to Charleroi.

The battle of Waterloo had lasted ten hours; "a battle of giants," which cost France thirty thousand men killed, wounded, or captured, and the victors twenty-two thousand. Seventy-two thousand Frenchmen had fought against one hundred and fifteen thousand of the enemy, and had twice seen victory escape from their hands. So ended this four days' campaign.

**Second Abdication of the Emperor (June 22, 1815).**— The retreat was as disastrous as those from Leipzig and from Moscow. From Laon Napoleon set out for Paris. He entered the capital at midnight and established himself in the Élysée. He counted on the patriotism of the Chambers. "Let them stand by me," said he, "and nothing is lost." But the Chamber of Representatives failed him. A message was sent to him demanding his abdication. Napoleon resigned himself to fate and abdicated in favor of his son, proclaiming him Napoleon II., Emperor of the French. The Assembly accepted this abdication, but without at all mentioning the name of Napoleon II. A provisional gov-

ernment was appointed, and a special committee was charged with negotiating with the allies. But the latter refused all offers of peace. Wellington and Blücher marched directly upon Paris — an imprudent step; but the president of the provisional government, Fouché, managed everything in their favor.

**St. Helena.** — Threatened with being delivered up to the enemy, Napoleon departed for Rochefort, thinking of seeking an asylum in the United States. But all ways of escape were guarded: after long uncertainty, he went on board an English vessel, the *Bellerophon*, and gave himself up, and wrote to the regent of England an admirable letter, declaring that he had come, like Themistocles, to seat himself at the hearth of the British nation, and to claim the protection of "the most powerful, the most constant, and the most generous of my enemies." The English government treated him as a prisoner of war. The Emperor was taken to St. Helena, an island in the midst of the Atlantic Ocean, under a burning sun, five hundred leagues from any land. Not considering the deadly climate and the weariness of solitude and inaction sufficient suffering for the ardent genius who for fifteen years had astonished the world, the English ministry allowed the immortal captive to be annoyed by petty insults. Napoleon endured his tortures with calm dignity, and occupied the mournful leisure of his captivity in dictating the history of his campaigns. After six years, which were six years of moral suffering and material privation, he died at Longwood on the 5th of May, 1821, at four o'clock in the morning, wrapped in his military cloak, while a tropical hurricane was sweeping over the island and tearing up by the roots many of the largest trees, "as though the spirit of storms, borne on the wings of the wind, was hastening to inform the world that a mighty spirit had just descended into the sombre abysses of nature."

**Treaties of 1815.** — In the shipwreck of the Empire, France barely escaped total destruction. Neither the Chamber nor the government knew how to defend Paris. Davout, minister of war, came to an understanding with Fouché, and signed a convention by which the French army was to retire beyond the Loire, without firing a gun. The allies took possession of Paris as of a conquered city. Blücher proposed to blow up the bridge of Jena and overturn the column of the Grand Army. The museum of the Louvre

was despoiled of the masterpieces which had been transported thither: the allies closed the hall of the Chamber of Deputies, and re-established Louis XVIII. on the throne. This second restoration cost France dear. First of all, it was compelled to pay the allies another war indemnity of 800,000,000 fr. and 370,000,000 more of special claims. One hundred and fifty thousand foreign soldiers remained for three years on French soil, maintained and fed at French expense. Finally, the treaty of Paris (November 20) took from France Philippeville, Marienburg, the duchy of Bouillon, Saarlouis and the course of the Saar, Landau, several communes of the country of Gex and Savoy, all of which the treaty of 1814 had left her; in all five hundred and thirty-four thousand inhabitants. After twenty-five years of victories, the national territory found itself less extensive in certain directions than it had been a century before, at the end of the reign of Louis XIV.; and during that century the other powers had all vastly increased their strength.

Moreover, the treaties of 1815 had perfidiously exposed the frontiers of France. Important strategic points were wrested from her. Bavaria was placed at her gates in the Palatinate, Prussia established in the valley of the Moselle, the kingdom of the Netherlands erected so as to keep from her the mouths of the Meuse and the Scheldt, while the gift of the kingdom of Lombardy to Austria re-established the Austrian influence in the Italian peninsula at the expense of the French. Finally, by the treaty of the Holy Alliance, all Europe, which Napoleon had tried to unite under his power, united against France.