

through his "Continental System" to shut out her commerce from all the ports of Europe and America.

Meanwhile he advanced on the Austrian capital and entered it in triumph. Less than three weeks afterwards, Napoleon encountered the combined forces of the czar and the German emperor at Austerlitz¹ (December 2, 1805). Here his military genius showed its preëminence in a series of marvelous combinations and rapid strategic movements, which enabled him to gain one of the most brilliant and also one of the most heartless successes of his life. The enemy held a position of great advantage and largely outnumbered the French. But Napoleon by a feigned attack drew them into a cunningly prepared trap, and they fell entirely into his power.

As the Russians in retreat were crossing the frozen ponds at the foot of the heights of Austerlitz, the French artillery, with their grapeshot, cut down company after company as a stalwart mower cuts down tall standing grass.

Napoleon, who was standing on an eminence, saw that the battle was his, but he also saw how he could make the victory more complete. He ordered the gunners to depress their cannon so that the balls would strike the ice in front and behind the compact mass of the retreating enemy. The plan succeeded perfectly. Under a furious cannonade the ice gave way, and multitudes of Russians were in an instant engulfed in the deep waters. This massacre finished the day.

"Soldiers," said the great destroyer to his men, "I am proud of you. When you reënter your homes you need but say, 'I was at Austerlitz,' and you will be welcomed as a hero." The next day Napoleon wrote to Josephine:

3d Dec. 1805.

I have beaten the Russian and Austrian armies commanded by the two emperors. I am a little tired. . . . I go to sleep for two or three hours. The Russian army is not only beaten, but destroyed. I embrace you.

NAPOLÉON.

¹ Austerlitz: in Austria.

Napoleon granted peace on his own terms. Austria relinquished all claims to Italy and all influence over Switzerland. From the cannon he had taken, the French emperor erected the magnificent bronze memorial column which stands in Paris in the Place Vendôme.¹

207. Reconstruction of Germany, Italy, and the Netherlands; Napoleon King of Kings.—Next, the emperor proceeded to reconstruct Germany. Francis II was forced to give up the imperial crown, and was known henceforth as Emperor of Austria only. The old German empire, which had stood for a thousand years, and which was composed of several hundred discordant states, was henceforth dissolved, and a league formed of sixteen of the most powerful princes.

These new states agreed to accept Napoleon as protector and virtual master. In one sense, it was a step toward that unification of Germany which that country has since accomplished. Napoleon's motive in forming the confederation was to destroy the power of Austria and Prussia, in order that he might aspire to become a second Charlemagne.

But this was only the beginning of the new system which Napoleon had conceived. He was resolved to rule over an empire surrounded and guarded by a belt of dependent thrones. To this end he now seized the kingdom of Naples, and placed the crown on the head of his brother Joseph. Next, he converted the republic of the Netherlands into a monarchy, and gave it to his brother Louis, with the title of King of Holland. Last of all he carved out nineteen dukedoms in Italy, and bestowed them on those who he knew would do his will.

It was a grand system of centralization with the newly made emperor of France as supreme arbiter and king maker. But Napoleon, though not yet satisfied, had for the present to

¹ Vendôme (vōN-dōm): the column was pulled down by the communist mob in 1871, but was reërected.

turn his attention to other matters than the aggrandizement of himself, his family, and his friends.

208. Defeat of Prussia; the Berlin Decree; Peace of Tilsit.—The northern powers now became thoroughly alarmed at the schemes of this man who threatened to get the control of all Europe. A fourth coalition was formed against France, consisting of England, Russia, Sweden, Saxony, and Prussia, a country that had long stood neutral. The war recommenced (1806). In the two tremendous battles of Jena¹ and Auerstädt,² fought on the same day, Napoleon completely humbled the Prussian monarchy so that its independence was nearly destroyed.

Thus in the space of a few hours his veteran troops accomplished what all the might of Austria, France, and Russia had been unable to effect in the Seven Years' War of the preceding century.³

Napoleon then entered the capital of Prussia, and there issued that Berlin Decree which forbade all trade or intercourse with England (November 21, 1806). The following year he issued a still more stringent decree at Milan, for the purpose of extending and enforcing the former measure.

The remnant of the Prussian forces united with the Russian army and made a stand at Eylau,⁴ where a fierce but indecisive battle was fought. A few months later the French gained the victory of Friedland,⁵ and then the Peace of Tilsit was made (July, 1807). By that treaty Prussia had to give up a large part of her territory. Out of a portion of it, lying west of the Elbe,⁶ Napoleon created the kingdom of Westphalia. This he gave to his brother Jerome, thus adding one more sovereign to the frontier guard of honor of the French empire, and one more sovereign dependent on this earthly "King of Kings."

¹ Jena (jën'a).

² Auerstädt (ow'gr-stett).

³ See Paragraph 166.

⁴ Eylau (i'lou): in Prussia.

⁵ Friedland (frët'länt): in Prussia.

⁶ Elbe (elb).

209. Seizure of the Thrones of Portugal and Spain; the Peninsular War.—But there were still fields of conquest in the southwest, and in order to complete the circle of dependent kingdoms Napoleon must round out his acquisitions by getting possession of Spain and Portugal.

This last-mentioned power was the friend and ally of England, and was now the only important nation in western Europe which he had not compelled to shut its ports against English trade, though his "Continental System,"¹ as he called it, had nowhere been more than a partial success. He tempted Spain to act as his ally. An army was sent to Lisbon, and such was the fear of the French that that city succumbed without resistance, and the king was driven into exile.

Napoleon next turned his attention to Spain. She was his friend; but in war Napoleon knew no friends. He cunningly managed to get the Spanish king into his power, compelled him to abdicate, and then placed his brother Joseph, King of Naples, on the throne, giving Joseph's former kingdom to his favorite, General Murat.² But the Spaniards resented this appropriation of their country. They rose in rebellion and forced Joseph to abandon the capital of Madrid, and finally to give up all Spain except a portion bordering on the Pyrenees. It was the first real reverse that Napoleon had met.

Meanwhile the English sent over an army under Sir Arthur Wellesley (better known later as the Duke of Wellington) to complete the work of driving out the French, and to restore Portugal and Spain to their respective kings. Thus began in 1808 what was called the Peninsular War, which lasted for several years. In a series of campaigns victory alternated to the side of the English and the French.

At length Napoleon had to draw off the larger part of his forces and give all his attention to Russia, and then

¹ See Paragraph 206.

² Murat (mü-rä').

Wellesley gained the day. Years afterward, when a captive at St. Helena, Napoleon said of his attack on Spain, "That disastrous war was my ruin. It divided my strength, opened a way for the English, and injured my reputation throughout Europe."

210. Napoleon's Quarrel with the Pope.— Meantime the emperor of the French had struck himself another suicidal blow. He quarreled with the pope, who wished to remain neutral; but Napoleon insisted that, since His Holiness was a temporal sovereign,¹ he was bound to aid him in shutting out English commerce from Europe.

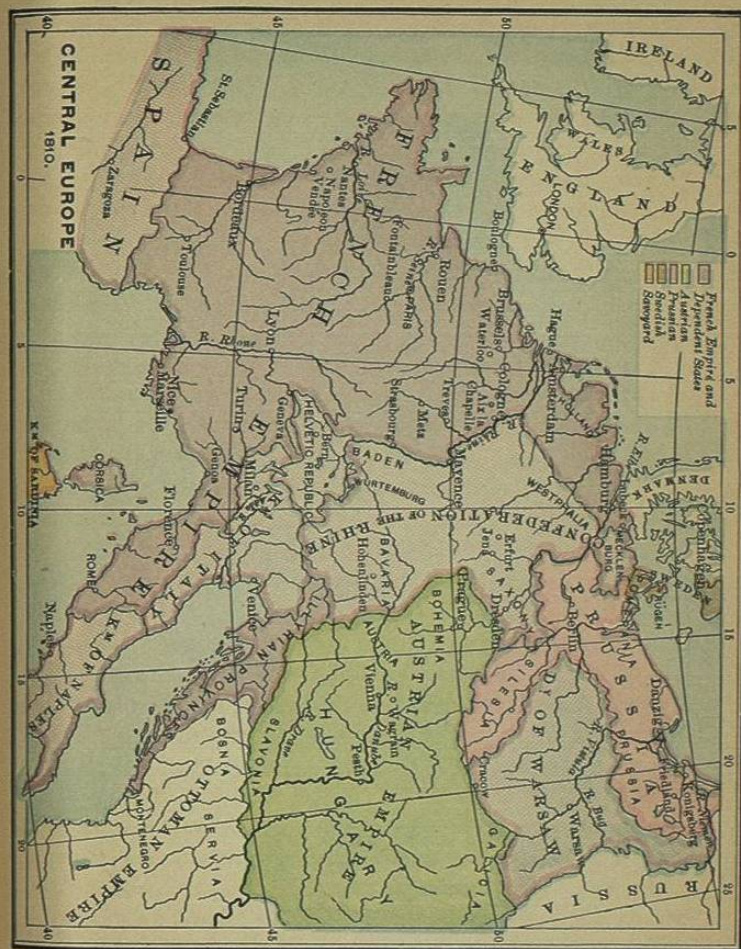
Finally the emperor sent an army to Rome and annexed it to France. The pope retorted by excommunicating him. Napoleon, not to be outdone, carried off the pope to France as a prisoner, and kept him there as long as his power lasted. Such an act of violence, to quote the words attributed to a noted man of that day, "was worse than a crime; it was a blunder." It united the Catholic clergy of France and of all Europe against him, so that in future he had powerful enemies at home as well as abroad.

The year following, Louis Bonaparte, disgusted with his brother's policy toward Holland, resigned the crown of that kingdom. The emperor then united it with France, saying that the country was nothing but "the sediment of French rivers."

211. Battle of Wagram; Napoleon at the Height of his Power; Divorce and Marriage.— Napoleon's want of success in the war in Spain made him anxious to gain new victories elsewhere. He accordingly provoked a quarrel with Austria. Russia was temporarily his political ally; but England did all in her power to thwart his movements. Austria, though not quite ready for the contest, burned to revenge the humiliation of Austerlitz² and to recover the territory she had lost in

¹ See Paragraph 22.

² See Paragraph 206.



Italy. She was also jealous of the friendly relations of France with the czar.

In the war which ensued the Austrians gained some advantages, but they were not permanent. The battle of Aspern,¹ though rather in their favor, was by no means decisive. The crisis came at Wagram² (July 6, 1809), when the Austrian army was utterly overthrown. By the Peace of Vienna which followed, France gained still further cessions of territory.

Napoleon was now, seemingly, at the height of his power. "He had the air," one of his friends said, "of one walking in a halo of glory." In fact, if we except his reverses in Spain, there appeared to be no bounds to his success.

He had extended France to the shores of the Baltic on the north, and beyond Rome on the south.³ He had surrounded his imperial throne with subject kingdoms under his brothers. To Louis he had given the crown of Holland; to Jerome, that of Westphalia; to Joseph, that of Spain. He was ready to place his remaining brother, Lucien, on a throne whenever Lucien could make up his mind to do his will. Two of his sisters were princesses, and the third was queen of Naples.

On the battlefield he had beaten the mightiest armies of Europe, and dictated his own terms of peace. He had driven the kings from the thrones of Portugal and Spain, and expected sooner or later to obtain their dominions.

He had crippled if not paralyzed English commerce in a large part of the world by his Berlin Decree.⁴ He had filled Paris with the splendid spoils of conquest. He had cast down the pope from power, and seized his possessions. He indeed appeared irresistible. As a distinguished French statesman⁵ said, "France gave herself to him, absorbed herself in him, and seemed, at one time, no longer to think except through him."

¹ Aspern: in Austria.

³ See Map No. XIII, page 280.

⁵ Thiers.

² Wagram: in Austria.

⁴ See Paragraph 208.

To make his glory complete, he must secure its transmission in the line of his own descent. Napoleon was childless; if he continued so, then when he died, the great empire would crumble. He was resolved to ally himself by marriage with royal blood, that he might found a family which should take its place at the head of the ruling dynasties of Europe.

In accordance with this purpose, the emperor sought and obtained a divorce from Josephine.¹

He issued the proclamation announcing it from the palace of Fontainebleau,² little thinking that in a few years he would be compelled to sign his abdication in the same palace. Then, in 1810, he made the vanquished emperor of Austria give him the hand of the Princess Marie Louise. By her he had a son in 1811, who received the title of King of Rome.

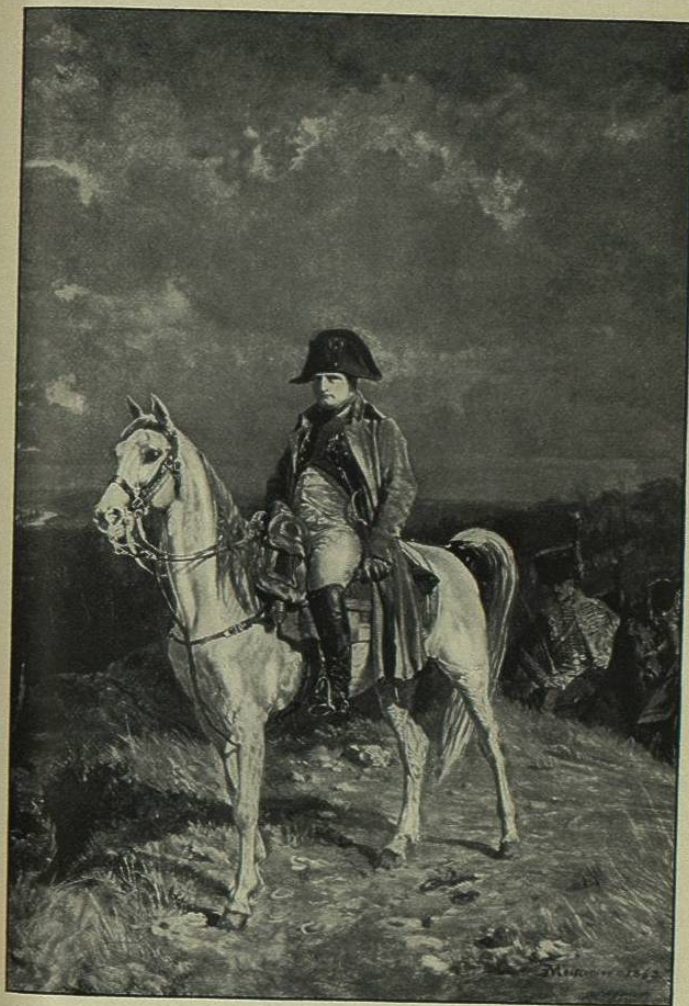
But the marriage was a fatal step. As an eminent French writer says, "When Napoleon divorced himself from the devoted Josephine, he seems to have divorced himself from his good genius." However that may be, it is certain that his misfortunes began from this time; defeat became the rule, victory the exception. Humiliation followed humiliation, until the final and irrecoverable fall.

212. The Russian Campaign. — In order to strike a blow at England, Napoleon now resolved to attack Russia, with whose ruler he was no longer on good terms, since he had refused to close his ports against English trade. The emperor was determined to bring the czar to terms, and, while he humbled him, to cripple still further the commerce of his old enemy, England, boasting the security of her island home.

The preparations for the invasion of the North were on a scale commensurate with the importance of the object sought. Napoleon raised an army of six hundred thousand

¹ See Paragraph 197.

² Fontainebleau (f6n-t6n-bl6): near Paris.



NAPOLION AT THE HEIGHT OF HIS POWER

men. In the summer of 1812 he crossed the Niemen,¹ and began his march on Moscow.

The policy of the Russians was to avoid an encounter. They kept falling back. As fast as they retreated, they burned their villages and fields of grain. Napoleon's army advanced through a desolated country. It was a march from one pile of smoldering ruins to another. There was something ominous in such a campaign.

At last, after ten weeks had elapsed, when Napoleon had penetrated the country for nearly five hundred miles, the enemy came to a stand. At Borodino a desperate battle was fought, in which the French came off victors. The way was now clear for an advance on Moscow. A week after his engagement at Borodino, Napoleon entered the ancient capital of Russia (September 14, 1812).

No one opposed him. The place was silent and nearly deserted. Only the refuse of the population remained. The French gave themselves up to pillage and to festivity. Suddenly they discovered, to their consternation, that the city was on fire. The troops tried in vain to stop the flames. But the work of destruction had been carefully planned. The Russians had applied the torch at different points, and the fire speedily became a conflagration.

Even Napoleon was appalled. "Who would have believed," cried he, "that any people would burn their own capital?" In five days the city was in ashes, and the French were without shelter, with but scant rations of food, and with the terrible Russian winter drawing near. Still, something might have been done; but for once Napoleon seemed to have lost his power of decision. He wasted precious time that he might have used either for an advance or a retreat.

¹ Niemen (nyēm'gn): also called the Memel. Napoleon crossed the river in Russian Poland, about ninety miles southeast of Tilsit. The upper dotted line on the map (No. XII, page 262) shows the march to Moscow; the lower dotted line, the retreat from that city.

213. **The Retreat from Moscow.** — Finally the word was given to begin the retreat. No one can adequately realize what it must have cost Napoleon's proud nature to utter such an order. Then came the disastrous march through a country which was utterly desolate. It was a funeral march; for, even before the first flake of snow fell, Napoleon had lost nearly a quarter of a million of men and over seventy thousand horses. The retreat continued for eight weeks, the last part of it through drifting snow and amid intense frost.

It was such a battle as Napoleon had never waged. It was one long, hopeless fight with hunger and cold. The ragged, shivering, starving troops threw away their useless arms. They staggered on, day after day, through the snow, until their strength gave out and they fell to the ground. The falling flakes soon covered them; and hundreds of little white hillocks appeared, each one of which showed where one or more dead soldiers lay.¹

On the outskirts of the sad procession the Russian cavalry hovered to harass and kill. At last the miserable remnant of the imperial army reached and recrossed the Niemen, but few of them ever gained their homes. France was decimated. There was hardly a peasant's fireside where some grief-stricken mother was not mourning for her son, left unburied, a frozen corpse, on the plains of Russia. In all the sorrowful annals of the history of war, this retreat stands out the most terrible and the most disastrous.

It was at this time that Béranger's famous song appeared, in which the French poet satirized the insatiable and ruinous ambition of Napoleon by his ironical picture of the "Good Little King of Yvetot,"² whose only crown was a cotton night-cap, who never fought a battle, or cared a fig for glory.³

¹ See Count Ségur's narrative of Napoleon's retreat in *The Two Great Retreats of History* (Ginn & Company, Boston). ² Yvetot (Ëv-tô').

³ Béranger (bã-rôn-zhã'): see the poem in Thackeray's translation.

214. **The Defeat of Leipsic; Napoleon sent to Elba.** — Then all Europe rose in a fifth coalition to crush the fallen giant. England, Russia, Prussia, Sweden, and Austria massed a million of men against France. But even then Napoleon would not yield. He raised a second army. It was little better than "an army of boys," for the country had few men left to give. The decisive struggle came at Leipsic¹ in the autumn of 1813, and Napoleon was beaten.

The allied forces invaded France from both north and south. Paris could not defend itself. The enemies' hosts passed through her gates. They placed Louis XVIII, brother of Louis XVI,² on the throne. Napoleon was forced to abdicate, and, it is said, took poison, but without effect. He was now sent an exile to rule over the island of Elba, in the Mediterranean. That speck on the map of Europe was all the kingdom or dominion he had left.

215. **The Escape from Elba; The Hundred Days (March 20 to June 22, 1815); Waterloo.** — In less than a twelvemonth (March 1, 1815) he escaped to France. He marched in triumph to Paris, and entered the capital on the 20th of March. Louis XVIII had fled in dismay the day before. But Napoleon was no longer what he had been. He had lost faith in himself. While making preparations for the great and final combat with Europe, he said, "I have a presentiment of evil."

A congress of sovereigns was then sitting at Vienna rearranging the map of Europe. They had given the Belgians a king, and allotted certain provinces on the Rhine to Prussia. The English, under the Duke of Wellington, were in Belgium to establish their new king on his throne; and Blücher,³ the most famous of the Prussian generals, was in the Rhenish provinces not far off with another army. The plan was for the Russians to join forces with the Prussians and English, and march on Paris. Napoleon decided not to wait for them, but to invade

¹ Leipsic: in Germany. ² See Paragraph 194. ³ Blücher (bloo'ker).

Belgium and destroy Blücher's and Wellington's armies, one after the other, before they had an opportunity to unite.

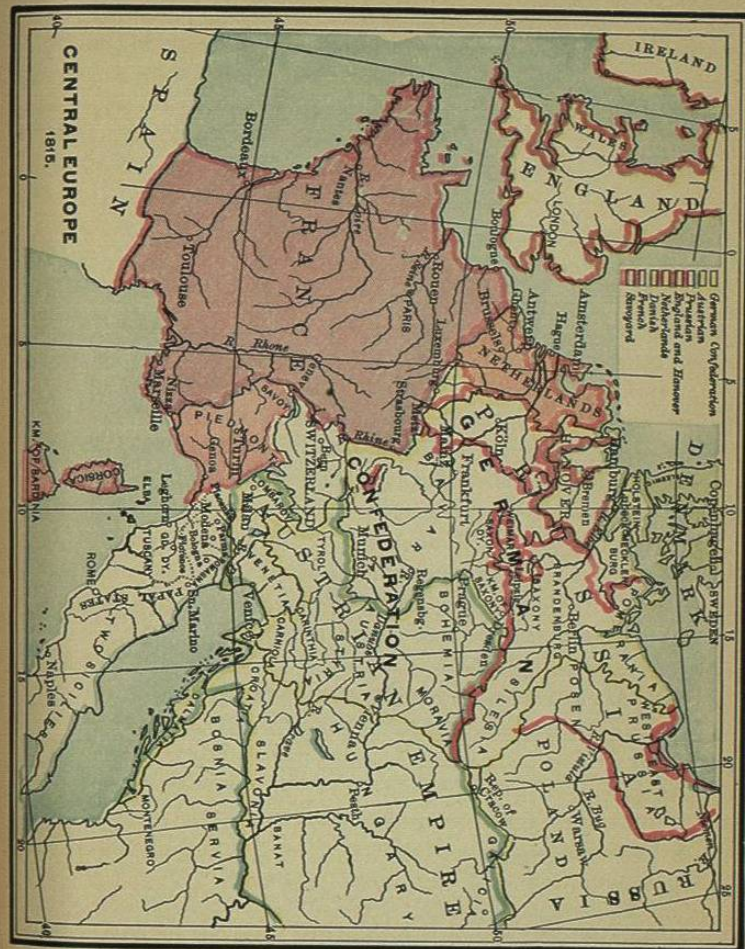
The emperor crossed the Belgian frontier on June 14 (1815). On the 16th an engagement took place with the enemy. The great, final battle was fought on Sunday, June 18, at Waterloo,¹ a hamlet about twelve miles southeast of Brussels. The allied forces were nearly two to one of the French.² The rain had fallen heavily all day Saturday, and the mud was so deep that the horses could scarcely drag the cannon through it. While the church bells were ringing for morning service, the preparations for the conflict were completed. The fight began about an hour later (11.30).

Wellington's policy was to hold his position until joined by the entire Prussian force, which he hourly expected. But there was delay. As the day wore on, and the "Iron Duke" saw line after line of his men fall under the murderous French fire, he was heard to say, "O that night or Blücher would come!" On the other hand, Napoleon was looking with equal anxiety for the coming of a strong French division under General Grouchy. Toward evening Blücher's forces arrived, but nothing was seen of Grouchy's battalions.

The battle now grew desperate. As a last resort Napoleon ordered part of his Imperial Guard — a body of picked veterans, familiarly known as the "Old Guard" — to charge the enemy. They advanced, but only to fall back at last in confusion, cut to pieces by a storm of grapeshot from batteries at the front, side, and rear. Seeing the Guard retreat, the French lost all hope, and, with a cry of despair, thousands turned and fled.

¹ Waterloo: see, by way of illustration, Victor Hugo's description of the battle in his *Les Misérables*, and Byron's lines, beginning "There was a sound of revelry by night," in *Childe Harold*, Canto III.

² Napoleon had 122,401 men, many of whom were veterans. Wellington had 105,950, "the worst army," he said, "ever brought together." Blücher had a disciplined force of 116,897. Total allied army, 222,847.



But a remnant of the Old Guard, taking up a position on an eminence, determined to hold their ground. The enemy were thirty to one against them, and repeatedly summoned them to surrender. They refused, saying, "The Guard dies, but never surrenders." Whether they made this reply in words has been disputed, but no one has ever disputed that they did better — they acted it.

The enemy captured none but the wounded and the dying. As the immortal three hundred fell at Thermopylæ, so fell the remnant of the Old Guard.

When all was over, Wellington said to Blücher as they stood on a height surveying the bloody field, "A great victory is the saddest thing on earth, except a great defeat."

216. The Second Abdication; St. Helena. — Napoleon succeeded in escaping and reaching Paris. His presentiment of evil was fulfilled. The end had come. Years afterward he said, "I ought to have died at Waterloo." His brother tried to encourage him to make one more effort, saying, "Dare." But "the spring of that terrible will was broken," and he only answered, "I have dared too much."

On June 22 he drew up his second act of abdication, in which he declared, "My public life is finished. I proclaim my son Emperor of the French, under the title of Napoleon II." Thus ended the final period of the reign of Napoleon; it had lasted not quite a hundred days.

He intended to take refuge in the United States, but failed to escape. Then, knowing that he had few friends in France, he gave himself up to the English authorities. They, with the consent of the other European powers, sent him a prisoner for life to the desolate rock of St. Helena. There, in silence and solitude, the man who had so long held the destinies of nations in his hands spent six years of mental torture, "eating his own heart."

There he reviewed his past and wrote those memoirs of himself in which he deliberately falsified history. He died

May 5, 1821, at the age of fifty-two. In a codicil to his will he left ten thousand francs to an officer who had attempted to assassinate the Duke of Wellington, saying that "the man had as much right to kill that oligarchist as the latter had to send me to perish on the rock of St. Helena."

217. Estimate of Napoleon's Character and Work.—The secret of Napoleon's fall was his utter selfishness. He began nobly by loving France; he ended by caring only for himself. Theoretically he believed in God. He even rebuked the professed atheists of his day by pointing to the starry heavens with the question, "Gentlemen, who made all that?"

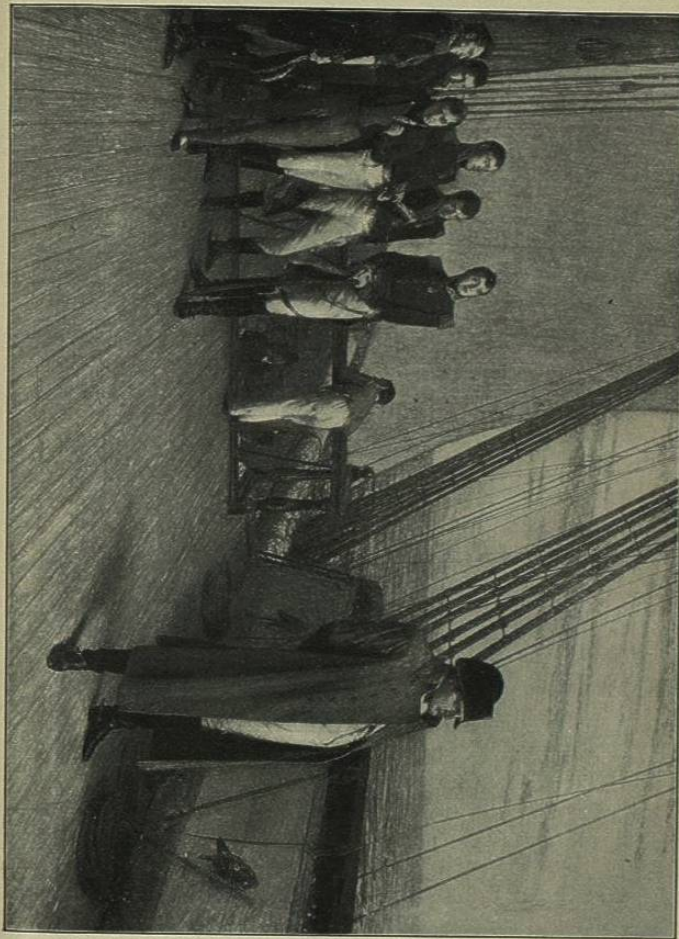
But practically his god was his own will; to that he sacrificed everything. He cared absolutely nothing for human life. To him a soldier was simply a military machine, whose sole work was to kill or to be killed; it made little difference which, so long as he won a victory for his master. It is said that even his own mother never believed in his apparent success, but was constantly laying aside money to meet the final catastrophe. Much as the great general professed to care for his adopted country, he proved in many respects to be her worst enemy.

In twenty years his victorious armies had entered nearly every capital on the continent of Europe, save St. Petersburg and Constantinople. Milan, Rome, Vienna, Berlin, Madrid, Venice, Lisbon, Brussels, Amsterdam, Moscow,—not one had been able to resist him. But to gain these short-lived triumphs Napoleon had drained France of her young men. He left the country, at last, poorer, weaker, and geographically smaller than he found it.¹

If we except his public works and his code,² everything that he undertook finally failed. Last of all, the son for whose

¹ When Napoleon was chosen First Consul, France included, by the Treaty of Campo Formio (see Paragraph 196), Belgium and the left bank of the Rhine. After his abdication the European powers reduced France to the old limits that she had during the Revolution, as represented by Map No. XI, page 236.

² See Paragraph 199.



NAPOLEON ON HIS WAY TO ST. HELENA

sake he had sacrificed Josephine, and who he hoped would succeed him, died, and thus all possibilities of a Napoleonic dynasty ended.

But it would be a serious error to suppose that the career of this mighty destroyer of men and builder of kingdoms had no lasting results. On the contrary, he was a powerful agent for good. Though he founded a military despotism, yet no man ever broke more despotisms to pieces, or did more to lay the foundation of constitutional monarchy. The principles of political liberty and equality born of the French Revolution were disseminated by his armies, and whatever progress has since been made in the recognition of the rights of man, Europe owes it largely to the conquests of Napoleon.

He humiliated Germany; but he helped her to throw off a multitude of antiquated and oppressive restrictions. He first stirred Italy to newness of life. He roused "the idea of nationality," and since his death the conviction that people of the same blood ought to be under the same political rule "has been the guiding influence in European politics."

He also, as we have seen, gave his sanction and contributed his thought to the establishment of that excellent digest of law — the Code Napoleon — which regulates the administration of justice for upwards of ninety millions of men in the foremost ranks of civilization.¹

When Napoleon fell, a great reaction set in. The sovereigns of Europe labored to destroy what he had done, and to restore monarchical privilege and prerogative at the expense of the people. They succeeded in a measure; they brought back the form, but could not prevent that form from being permeated by a different thought and spirit. Thus, in spite of them, their old bottles were filled with new wine, which in the end proved damaging to the bottles.

Through the revolutions which have followed, the leading European nations have been reconstructed in no small degree

¹ See Paragraph 199.

according to the lines laid down by the great French general. The books and pamphlets on this wonderful man fill some hundreds of volumes. The judgments passed on him are almost as numerous as the writers.

However difficult it may be to come to a conclusion in regard to his motives, the actual results of his life are tolerably clear. Considering these, perhaps we shall be justified in affirming that on the whole the world has good reason to be thankful for, if not to, Napoleon.

218. Summary.—The entire period covering nearly twenty years is filled with this one great name of Napoleon. Through his energy and genius France emerged from the anarchy of the Revolution, and became, outwardly at least, a strong, united, law-abiding nation. Through his ambition she conquered, but then lost, a large part of Europe. Finally, through the instrumentality of Napoleon, the principles of constitutional and political progress were to a large extent disseminated and eventually established.

SECTION XIV

France has not lost, and will not lose, courage. She is laboring; she is hoping; and while endeavoring to find her proper path, she looks forward to the day when revolutions will be at an end, and when liberty with order will forever crown the long and painful efforts of her most faithful servants of every name and period. — GUIZOT DE WITT.

FRANCE SINCE NAPOLEON I (1815-)

LOUIS XVIII, 1815-1824.	THE SECOND REPUBLIC, 1848-1852.
CHARLES X, 1824-1830.	LOUIS NAPOLEON, 1852-1870.
LOUIS PHILIPPE, 1830-1848.	THE THIRD REPUBLIC, 1870-

219. Louis XVIII's Charter; Execution of Labédoyère and Ney; Humiliation of France.—After the final fall of the emperor in June, 1815, Louis XVIII, a younger brother of Louis XVI, resumed the crown which the unexpected return of Napoleon from Elba had forced him to lay aside.¹ The king dated his accession from the death of his nephew, Louis XVII, in 1795,² calling 1815 the twentieth year of his reign. By this convenient fiction Napoleon was treated as a usurper not worthy of being reckoned among the sovereigns of France, and the republic and the empire were alike ignored.

The new ruler fully realized that "revolutions never go backward," and that France as he found it was not the France that existed before the days of the National Convention and the Reign of Terror. He therefore bound himself to carry out the principles of the liberal charter which he had granted on first ascending the throne.

¹ See Paragraph 215.

² See Paragraph 194.