

in dangers—it is for kings of Cockaigne to sit at home at ease. My army is in a superb condition still—it will be recruited at leisure at Wilna, and I go to bring up three hundred thousand men more from France.”

On the 14th he was at Dresden, and visited by the king of Saxony, who renewed his pledge of fidelity.

Four days later, he entered the Tuilleries after Maria Louisa had retired to sleep. A cry of alarm from the startled inmates roused the empress, and in another moment she embraced, with unfeigned affection, the royal fugitive. The next morning he held a levee, and freely declared the disastrous ravages of fire and frost among his annihilated army. The eighty thousand soldiers and stragglers left at Wilna continued to waste away before the increasing cold. Crossing the bridge at Kowno with only thirty thousand—the “Old Guard” was reduced to three hundred men—Marshal Ney had fought his way on, his path lined and paved with his slaughtered and frozen troops, and was the last to pass the bridge, with thirty heroes by his side. Calmly walking back toward the enemy’s shore, he fired the last shot, and threw his gun into the river. When he met General Dumas on the German side, in the house of a friend, he answered to the question, “Who are you?” “I am the rear-guard of the grand army—Marshal Ney. I have fired the last musket shot on the bridge of Kowno, I have thrown into the Niemen the last of our arms, and I have walked hither, as you see me, across the forest.” The annals of war can present no more sublime defiance of an unconquered will, and quenchless ardor of devotion to his king and country.

## CHAPTER VIII.

Napoleon’s reception after the defeat in Russia—His character.—The new coalition—Battle of Lutzen.—Entrance into Dresden.—Battle of Bautzen.—Negotiations.—Metternich.—The plan of campaign.—Siege of Dresden.—Disasters.—Napoleon’s desperate courage.—Battle of Leipsic.—Murat abandons the Emperor’s cause.—Treachery of the Allies.—The Senate of France falter in their support.—Napoleon’s rebuke.—Correspondence with Joseph.—Napoleon at the Tuilleries.—He enters on the final struggle.—Battle of Brienne.—Letters.—Want of arms.—Letters.—The progress of the Allies.—Napoleon’s expedition on the Marne.—His victories.—Letters from Joseph on the condition of Paris.—Negotiations for Peace.—Napoleon’s account of the crisis in his affairs.—His policy in his extremity.—Battle of Leon.—Rheims.—Letters to Joseph.—The last struggle.—The Allies advance toward Paris.—The flight of the Court.—The capitulation.

THE twenty-ninth bulletin of Napoleon had prepared the popular mind to welcome the emperor, whose eloquent words assured his subjects that the resistless elements alone had snatched victory from the grand army. Although nearly every family of the empire was in mourning, his magical name and presence restored the confidence, and renewed the devotion of the people. The senate, officials, and public bodies, all pressed up to the throne, with expressions of homage and applause. Enlistments were ordered, and the regiments of fresh troops gathered to his standard by thousands. The arsenals were alive with preparation, and in each habitation, the farewell to some manly inmate was spoken. Within a few weeks, Napoleon was at the head of three hundred and fifty thousand soldiers, fresh from the bosom of a loyal, gallant nation. The grandeur of his genius, was seen and felt at home and abroad, in the magnificent expenditures of money

and labor during these years of war with the rest of Europe, in national improvements. The whole sum laid out on canals, docks, harbors and public buildings, in nine years, was \$200,000,000. Such achievements of intellect and power, stamp Napoleon with a fascinating preeminence, which may lead the historian, and admirer of brilliant deeds, to a partial estimate of moral qualities, which are essential elements of true greatness. Napoleon's character was deficient in the strength and purity which have invested with a benign attraction the names of earth's noblest heroes—elevating far above Alexander, Hannibal, and Napoleon, in the scale of being, Washington, and the less successful Louis Kossuth of Hungary. Every rational mind feels the transcendent excellence of these Christian virtues, which we do not discern in the Emperor, of France, and without which, ambition must ever have an alliance with brute force, and be directed mainly to personal glory. But it is also undeniable that Napoleon was vastly superior in intellectual and moral proportions to the monarchs with whom he contended; and in his great campaigns, was sustained in the general principle of lawful war, by the violation of sacred treaties on the part of his enemies.

This does not change the motives which ruled him in the invasion of Egypt, the seizure of Naples, the conquest of Spain, the divorce of Josephine, the awful tragedy of the Russian expedition.

Napoleon was again mustering his energies for the conflict with surrounding kings. Frederic William of Prussia, a sincere ally, desired to continue his friendly relations with France. The garrisons of the emperor, scattered over the Prussian territory, were unable to keep the people in subordination. The king interposed, indeed, his authority to protect the soldiers of

Napoleon from popular violence; but it soon became manifest that their safety must depend on their concentrating themselves in a small number of fortified places; and that even if Frederic William had been cordially anxious to preserve his alliance with France, it would ere long be impossible for him to resist the unanimous wishes of his people. Murat was soon weary of his command. He found himself thwarted and controlled by the other generals, none of whom respected his authority; and one of whom, when he happened to speak of himself in the same breath with the sovereigns of Austria and Prussia, answered, without ceremony, "You must remember that these are kings by the grace of God, and by descent, and by custom; whereas you are only a king by the grace of Napoleon, and through the expenditure of French blood." Murat was moreover jealous of the extent to which his queen was understood to be playing the sovereign in Naples, and he threw up his command. Eugene succeeded him at the moment when it was obvious that Frederic William could no longer, even if he would, repress the universal enthusiasm of his people. On the 31st of January the king made his escape to Breslau, in which neighborhood no French were garrisoned, erected his standard, and called on the nation to rise in arms. Whereon Eugene retired to Magdeburg, and shut himself up in that great fortress, with as many troops as he could assemble to the west of the Elbe.

Six years had elapsed since the fatal day of Jena; and the Prussian nation had recovered in a great measure its energies. The people now answered the call of their beloved prince, as with the heart and voice of one man. Young men of all ranks, the highest and the lowest, flocked indiscriminately to the standard: the students of the universities formed themselves into bat-

talions, at the head of which, in many instances, their teachers marched. The women flung their trinkets into the king's treasury—the gentlemen melted their plate—England poured in her gold with a lavish hand. The rapidity with which discipline was established among the great levies thus assembled, excited universal astonishment.

In March the allies met at Breslau ; Alexander embraced cordially Frederic William. It was stipulated in the conditions of coalition, that the German powers should be required to join the alliance against Napoleon, or forfeit their estates. The King of Saxony refused the demand, and was compelled to flee from his capital. The allies then marched over his realm, and entered triumphantly Dresden. Bernadotte landed thirty-five thousand troops at Stralsund. England lavished gold by millions, to secure the revolution in feeling and action among these rulers, at this crisis of apparent weakness and waning power of Napoleon. The struggle in Spain continued. Thus once more the storm blackened around the single kingly captain, who had for twenty years rocked a continent with his advancing steps.

April 15th, Napoleon left St. Cloud for the banks of the Saale, the headquarters of his army. Maria Louisa had been created regent of the empire during his absence. She was amiable and loved by the emperor, who often expressed his entire confidence in her fidelity and devotion. On the 25th, he reached Erfurth, to lead onward in the shock of a continental struggle, his battalions of youthful, and enthusiastic recruits. His eagle eye was toward Dresden, where the czar and the King of Prussia were waiting for the coming of Russian legions, designing to move toward Leipsic.

May 2d, the hostile armies met unexpectedly on the

old battle-ground which drank the blood of Gustavus Adolphus, near the town of Lutzen. Crossing the Elster under cover of a dense fog, the allied forces emerged from the interposing heights, and fell upon the columns of Napoleon. During eight hours, the slaughter went on, and the young men fell in ranks around their emperor, toward whom was turned their dying glance. At last, Napoleon brought forward his guard, with sixty pieces of artillery, and entered like a falling avalanche, the living masses of disciplined soldiers. The field was won, but too dearly for pursuit.

The allies retreated to Leipsic, thence to Dresden, and finally crossed the Elbe to Bautzen.

This result was another splendid achievement of Napoleon's genius. The advantage in the opening conflict was with his enemies, but he wrung the victory from their hands. He ordered the *Te Deum* to be sung in the churches, in commemoration of the first success of his arms since he fled from the snow-fields of Russia. He advanced to Dresden ; and beneath the smile of a vernal day, reflected from the trappings and weapons of war, he entered the streets of the beautiful city, with a jubilant welcome from the subjects of his faithful friend, the King of Saxony. The aristocracy who had hailed the appearance of the allies, waited on the emperor ; and the hitherto wavering army joined his legions.

“ While the emperor paused at Dresden, Ney made various demonstrations in the direction of Berlin, with the view of inducing the allies to quit Bautzen ; but it soon became manifest that they had resolved to sacrifice the Prussian capital, if it were necessary, rather than forego their position ; by adhering to which they well knew Bonaparte must ultimately be com-

pelled to carry his main force into a difficult and mountainous country, in place of acting in the open plains of Saxony and Brandenburg.

“Having replaced by wood-work some arches of the magnificent bridge over the Elbe, at Dresden, which the allies had blown up on their retreat, Napoleon now moved toward Bautzen, and came in sight of the position on the morning of the 21st of May. Its strength was obviously great. In their front was the river Spree: wooded hills supported their right, and eminences well fortified their left. The action began with an attempt to turn their right, but Barclay de Tolly anticipated this movement, and repelled it with such vigor, that a whole column of seven thousand dispersed, and fled into the hills of Bohemia for safety. The emperor then determined to pass the Spree in front of the enemy, and they permitted him to do so, rather than come down from their position. He took up his quarters in the town of Bautzen, and his whole army bivouacked in presence of the allies. The battle was resumed at daybreak on the 22d; when Ney on the right, and Oudinot on the left, attempted simultaneously to turn the flanks of the position; while Soult and Napoleon himself directed charge after charge on the center. During four hours the struggle was maintained with unflinching obstinacy; the wooded heights where Blucher commanded, had been taken and retaken several times—the bloodshed, on either side, had been terrible—ere, the situation of both flanks being apparent, the allies perceived the necessity either of retiring, or of continuing the fight against superior numbers on disadvantageous ground. They withdrew accordingly; but still with all the deliberate coolness of a parade; halting at every favorable spot, and renewing their cannonade. ‘What,’

exclaimed Napoleon, ‘no results! not a gun! not a prisoner!—these people will not leave me so much as a nail.’ During the whole day he urged the pursuit with impetuous rage, reproaching even his chosen generals as ‘creeping scoundrels,’ and exposing his own person in the very hottest of the fire. By his side was Duroc, the grand master of the palace, his dearest—many said, ere now, his only friend. Bruyeres, another old associate of the Italian wars, was struck down in their view. ‘Duroc,’ whispered Napoleon, ‘fortune has a spite at us this day.’ A few minutes afterward Duroc himself was mortally wounded. The emperor instantly ordered a halt, and remained all the afternoon in front of his tent, surrounded by the guard, who did not witness his affliction without tears. From this time he would listen to no reports or suggestions. ‘Everything to-morrow,’ was his invariable answer. He stood by Duroc while he died; drew up with his own hand an epitaph to be placed over his remains by the pastor of the place, who received 200 Napoleons to defray the expense of a fitting monument; and issued also a decree in favor of his departed friend’s children. Thus closed the 22d. The allies, being strongly posted during most of the day, had suffered less than the French: the latter had lost fifteen thousand, the former ten thousand men.

“They continued their retreat into upper Silesia; and Napoleon advanced to Breslau and released the garrison of Glogau. Meanwhile, the Austrian, having watched these indecisive though bloody fields, once more renewed his offers of mediation. The sovereigns of Russia and Prussia expressed great willingness to accept it; and Napoleon also appears to have been sincerely desirous for the moment of bringing his disputes to a peaceful termination. He agreed to an

armistice, and in arranging its conditions, agreed to fall back out of Silesia; thus enabling the allied princes to re-open communications with Berlin. The lines of country to be occupied by the armies respectively, during the truce, were at length settled, and it was signed on the first of June. Napoleon then returned to Dresden, and a general congress of diplomats prepared to meet at Prague."

The allies demanded that Napoleon should surrender Illyria, half of Italy, and abandon Spain, Holland, the Confederation of the Rhine, and Switzerland. Metternich, the unprincipled and cunning politician, presented the terms of treaty to Napoleon.

There was doubtless truth in the words of the emperor, who afterward said, "These extravagant propositions were made that they might be rejected." The concessions would have given, in his declining power, the occasion of general conspiracy, and secured his inevitable overthrow.

He had gone too far to retreat; greater victories or a demolished throne was the alternative before him. But his enemies wished to gain time for the arrival of Bernadotte, and the Russian forces; while Austrian and Prussian relations were more definitely settled.

The interview between Napoleon and Metternich was private and spirited. The emperor expressed his surprise that his own father-in-law should declare war against France. He offered to give up the Hanse towns and Illyria, besides granting the dissolution of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, and the reconstruction of Prussia, to secure peace. He added, "I only wish you to be neutral. I can deal with these Russians and Prussians single-handed. Ah, Metternich, tell me honestly how much the English have given you to take their part against me?"

At this crisis, when the allies, conscious of the greatness of Napoleon, and the uncertainty of the conflict, were not unwilling to continue negotiations, news of the victories in Spain over the French army there, elated the enemy, and terminated the armistice. Wellington had triumphed; Joseph and Jourdan were defeated. The duke was ready to pour his columns into the valleys of southwestern France.

August 10th, 1813, Austria signed the alliance offensive and defensive with Russia and Prussia. At nightfall, brilliant rockets rose successively along the frontier-heights of Bohemia and Silesia, announcing the re-opening of war upon the plains of Europe. Generals Jomini and Moreau had joined the allied troops, and Bernadotte was leading the columns of Sweden into the field. This treachery was bitter to Napoleon, and ominous of future disasters. Austria contributed two hundred thousand men to the army which environed Napoleon, making a host of nearly five hundred thousand disciplined troops, to encounter which he had only about half the number of soldiers. He was entering on a desperate struggle for his tottering throne. The opposing generals had studied the emperor's military tactics, and under the direction of Bernadotte and Moreau, whose experience was no trifling auxiliary, the campaign was wisely planned.

The commanders agreed that whoever was first drawn into the conflict, should retreat, tempting Napoleon to abandon Dresden in the pursuit, and so leave the city exposed to an attack by remaining forces. If successful, the magazines would fall into their hands, and the French army would be broken by the interposing divisions of the enemy, while in the rear of the French, between the Elbe and the Rhine, the allies would extend their lines.

Blucher, a Prussian, whom Napoleon called "the debauched dragoon," commanding eighty thousand Russian and Prussian troops, threatened Macdonald's division. Blucher was a great general, but a man of reckless character. Napoleon knew his qualities as an officer, and despised his entire want of moral principle. He immediately decided to advance upon him, and protect Macdonald. Blucher retired, and the emperor pursued him. According to the plan of operations, Schwartzberg, with whom were Alexander and Francis, marched toward Dresden, August 25th. An immediate assault would have taken the city. But it was not till the next day that the allied armies, in six columns, with fifty pieces of artillery, opened their terrific fire upon the beautiful capital. The carnage defies description. The streets were deluged with blood, and the dead lay mangled in the gorgeous apartments of princely wealth. St. Cyr, who commanded the garrison, was on the borders of despair, and the inhabitants pleading for capitulation, when Napoleon, with the Imperial Guard, crossed the Elbe, and, amid a storm of balls and shells, entered the city. Shouts of exultation filled the air. Without pausing to rest or eat, the reinforcement rushed to the onset; the allies were driven back, and night interrupted the wasting conflict. A tempestuous morning was the signal for renewed battle; and with such marvelous skill did Napoleon pour his divisions upon the encircling host, that, before the close of day, the enemy retreated. Moreau, who was reconnoitering the French on a distant eminence in company with Alexander, was struck by a cannon-ball, and both his legs almost torn from his body. The fire was given by Napoleon's order, but without any knowledge of those at whom it was directed. With stoical indiffer-

ence the traitor submitted to amputation, and died two days after. The emperor was again victorious; but his strength was exhausted, and a sudden attack of illness compelled him to return to Dresden. Vandamme, a fiery, daring officer, while pursuing the flying battalions toward Toeplitz, where around the magazines the scattered forces were rallying, pushed on too far into the valley of the Culm. Here he was met by the Russian divisions, and, after a fierce encounter, surrendered with eight thousand troops. General Oudinot, who was ordered to advance upon Bernadotte, was overwhelmed by a superior force, and defeated. Macdonald was hemmed in within a narrow defile, and also conquered. When these tidings of disaster reached Napoleon on his couch of suffering at Dresden, he said to Murat, "This is the fate of war; exalted in the morning, low enough before night. There is but one step between triumph and ruin." A map of Germany was spread out before him, and, tracing the distances with his compasses, he repeated these lines of his favorite poet, Corneille:

"J'ai servi, commandé, vaincu quarante années;  
Du monde, entre mes mains, j'ai vu les destinées;  
Et j'ai toujours connu qu'en chaque événement  
Le destin des états dépendait d'un moment."\*

During the month of September, Napoleon marched upon the allies under Blucher and Bernadotte, at different points, and was victorious. But his triumphs were fruitless; no decisive results were obtained, and his army was declining in strength daily. The King

\* I have served, commanded, conquered for forty years.  
Of the world, in my hands, I have seen the destinies:  
And I have always known, that in each event,  
The destiny of states depended on a moment.

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of Bavaria was forced to yield to the pressure around him, and join the enemy. Jerome, King of Westphalia, was driven by revolt from his capital.

Napoleon, thus plunged into a sea of troubles, had one hundred thousand troops with which to face five times that number. It was a sublime and touching spectacle of greatness passing from the zenith toward a horizon of dismal gloom. His purpose was formed of marching upon Berlin, cutting his way through the opposing wall of living men, and by carrying the war into the enemy's country, oblige them to retrace their steps, and defend their beleaguered cities. France had responded to the call for 180,000 conscripts to strengthen his greatly inferior force. But his officers, exhausted and desponding, refused to support the emperor in the bold enterprise—the grandest in his career. A council of war was called; and never was the mighty heart of Napoleon more oppressed and filled with sorrow. His star was already in the darkness of eclipse. He could do nothing without the enthusiasm of his generals. He yielded to necessity, and abandoned the design which he believed would have retrieved his fortunes. He now turned toward Leipsic, where “as on a common center, the forces of France, and all her enemies, were now at length converging. Napoleon reached that venerable city on the 15th of October, and almost immediately the heads of Schwartzberg's columns began to appear toward the south. It was necessary to prepare on the northern side also, in case Bernadotte and Blucher should appear ere the grand army was disposed of; and, lastly, it was necessary to secure effectually the ground to the west of Leipsic;—a series of marshy meadows, interfused with the numerous branches of the Pleisse and the Elster, through which lies the only road to France. Napoleon, having made

all his preparations, reconnoitered every outpost in person, and distributed eagles, in great form, to some new regiments which had just joined him. The ceremonial was splendid; the soldiers knelt before the emperor, and in presence of all the line: military mass was performed, and the young warriors swore to die rather than witness the dishonor of France. Upon this scene the sun descended; and with it the star of Napoleon went down forever.

“At midnight, three rockets, emitting a brilliant white light, sprung into the heavens to the south of the city; these marked the position on which Schwartzberg had fixed his headquarters. They were answered by four rockets of a deep red color, ascending on the instant from the northern horizon. Bonaparte had with him, to defend the line of villages to the south and north of Leipsic, 136,000 men, while, even in the absence of Bernadotte, who might be hourly looked for, the allies mustered not less than 230,000.

“The battle commenced on the southern side, at day-break of the 16th. The allies charged the French line there six times in succession, and were as often repelled. Napoleon then charged in his turn, and with such effect, that Murat's cavalry were at one time in possession of a great gap between the two wings of the enemy. The Cossacks of the Russian imperial guard, however, encountered the French horse, and pushed them back again. The combat raged without intermission until nightfall: three cannon shots, discharged at the extremity of either line, then marked, as if preconcertedly, the pause of battle; and both armies bivouacked exactly where the morning light had found them. Such was the issue on the south, where Napoleon himself commanded. Marmont, his lieutenant on the northern side, was less fortunate. Blucher attacked

him with a vast superiority of numbers : nothing could be more obstinate than his defense ; but he lost many prisoners and guns, was driven from his original ground, and occupied, when the day closed, a new line of positions, much nearer the walls of the city.

“ Gallant as the behavior of his troops had been, the result satisfied Napoleon that he must finally retreat from Leipsic ; and he now made a sincere effort to obtain peace. He accordingly sent a messenger with proposals to the allied camps, but it was now too late : the allied princes had sworn to each other to entertain no treaty while one French soldier remained on the eastern side of the Rhine. Napoleon received no answer to his message ; and prepared for the difficult task of retreating with 100,000 men, through a crowded town, in presence of an enemy already twice as numerous, and in hourly expectation of being joined by a third great and victorious army.

“ During the 17th the battle was not renewed, except by a distant and partial cannonade. The allies were resolved to have the support of Bernadotte in the decisive contest.

“ At eight in the morning of the 18th it began, and continued until nightfall without intermission. Bonaparte had contracted on the south, as well as on the north, the circuit of his defense ; and never was his generalship, or the gallantry of his troops, more brilliantly displayed than throughout this terrible day. Calm and collected, the emperor again presided in person on the southern side, and again, where he was present, in spite of the vast superiority of the enemy's numbers, the French maintained their ground to the end. On the north, the arrival of Bernadotte enabled Blucher to push his advantages with irresistible effect ; and the situation of Marmont and Ney was further

perplexed by the shameful defection of ten thousand Saxons, who went over with all their artillery to the enemy, in the very midst of the battle. The two marshals, therefore, were compelled to retire from point to point, and at nightfall lay almost close to the walls of Leipsic. Three cannon shots, as before, marked the general termination of the battle.

“ The loss on either side had been great. Napoleon's army consisted chiefly of very young men—many were merely boys—the produce of his fore-stalled conscriptions ; yet they fought as bravely as the guard. The behavior of the Germans, on the other hand, at length considering their freedom and independence as hanging on the fortune of a single field, had been answerable to the deep enthusiasm of that thoughtful people. The burghers of Leipsic surveyed from their towers and steeples one of the longest, sternest, and bloodiest of battles ; and the situation of the King of Saxony, who remained all the while in the heart of his ancient city, may be imagined.

“ Napoleon gave orders at midnight for the commencement of the inevitable retreat ; and while the darkness lasted, the troops continued to file through the town, and across the two bridges, over the Pleisse, beyond its walls. One of these bridges was a temporary fabric, and it broke down ere daylight came to show to the enemy the movement of the French. The confusion necessarily accompanying the march of a whole army through narrow streets and upon a single bridge, was fearful. The allies stormed at the gates on either side, and but for the heroism of Macdonald and Poniatowski, to whom Napoleon intrusted the defense of the suburbs, it is doubted whether he himself could have escaped in safety. At nine in the morning of the 19th, he bade farewell forever to the King of