

The council, after the departure of Lucien, became a prey to extreme anxiety and the greatest irresolution. Some of the members proposed that they should issue forth in a body and seek an asylum in the midst of the people of Paris. Others were anxious that the national representatives should not abandon their post, but should withstand the interference of military violence to the last. During this discussion, a troop of grenadiers slowly entered the hall, and the officer who commanded it apprized the council that it must disperse. The deputy Prudhon reminded the officers and soldiers of the respect due to the chosen representatives of the people, and general Jourdan depicted to them the enormity of such an attempt. The troop remained for an instant undecided; but a reinforcement entered in close column, and general Leclerc exclaimed, "In the name of general Buonaparte, the legislative body is dissolved; let all good citizens retire. Grenadiers, forward!" Cries of indignation arose from every seat in the hall, but they were drowned by the sound of drums. The grenadiers, presenting bayonets, advanced slowly along the whole length of the Orangery, and thus drove the members before them, who still however made the air ring with the cry of "Long live the republic!" At half-past five o'clock of the 9th of November, 1799, there was no longer a national representation.

Thus was consummated this last violation of law, this final blow against liberty; and from this period military government commenced its dominion. The 8th of November was in effect another 31st of May, as between the army and the representatives, except that it was not directed against a party but against the popular power. On that day the revolution expired: but it is right that we should distinguish the 18th Brumaire from the consequences which resulted from it. It might at that time have been supposed that the army was merely an auxiliary of the revolution, as on the 5th of October, and the 4th of September, and that this indispensable change would not solely turn to the advantage of a single individual, who would soon convert France into a regiment, and who would allow nothing to be heard in the world, which until then had been agitated by so great a moral commotion, but the march of *his* army and the communication of *his* will. (1)

LETTER XXXIII.

State of France consequent on the Appointment of Napoleon to the Consulship—A Provisional Government nominated—The Constitution of the Abbé Siéyes entirely changed in the Constitution of the Year eight—Formation of the Government—Pacific Professions of Napoleon—Campaign of Italy, and celebrated battle of Marengo—Peace of the Continent by the Treaty of Luneville and with England by the Treaty of Amiens. A. D. 1799—1803.

THE events which had recently taken place at Paris, and which I have detailed to you, my son, towards the close of my preceding letter, gave rise to much speculation as to their probable results on the liberties of France. From the party of Siéyes to that of the ancient régime, the royalists of 1788, every one was eager to congratulate himself on the future practical advantages of the change which had taken place. The moderate constitutionalists hoped that a defined liberty would be established; the royalists flattered themselves with the expectation of a similar beneficial result; the mass of the people, ill-informed and desirous of repose, reckoned upon the return of order under a powerful protector; while the proscribed and the ambitious anticipated their amnesty or their elevation. During the three months that followed the singular proceedings of the 8th and 9th of November, 1799, approbation and hope were general. A *provisional* government was nominated, consisting of three consuls, Buonaparte, Siéyes, and Roger Ducos, with two

(1) *Histoire de la Revolution Française*, par A. F. Mignet.—*Planta's History of the Helvetic Confederacy*.—*Memoirs of Talleyrand*, vol. ii.—*Aneodotes Secrètes sur la Revolution*, et *Nouveaux Mémoires des Déportés à la Guiane*.

legislative commissions who were charged with preparing the constitution, and an order of things which should be definitive.

On the 24th of December, 1799, the constitution of the year eight was published; and it was composed of the wreck of that of the abbé Siéyes, which was now regarded as a constitution of slavery. The government was placed in the hands of a first consul, who had for seconds two consuls with a voice in council. The senate, primarily chosen by the consuls, itself now chose from the list of national candidates the members of the tribunate and the legislative body. The government alone had the initiation of laws. This put an end to the body of electors who nominated the candidates of the different lists, the tribunes of the legislators—an end of the independent tribunes, who pleaded the cause of the people before the legislative assembly—an end of the legislative assembly that emanated from the body of the nation, and which was accountable to it alone—and finally, an end of the body politic. In the place of all this there arose, under the new order of things, a consul omnipotent, having the disposal of the army and of power—a general and a dictator; a council of state destined to place itself in the front rank of usurpation; and finally, a senate of twenty-four members, whose solitary function was to abrogate the influence of the people, to choose tribunes without authority, and legislators who should be silent. The spirit of vitality passed from the nation to the government. It deserves to be remarked that, up to this period, all the constitutions had been derived from the social contract; but that subsequently, until the year 1814, they were all derived from the new-modified constitution of the abbé Siéyes.

The new government, however, was regularly installed. Napoleon was appointed first consul, but he now associated with himself as second and third consuls, Cambacérés and Le Brun. The ex-archbishop Talleyrand, and the ex-Mountainist Fouché were appointed ministers of foreign affairs and of police. Considerable objection was started to the making use of the services of the latter, but Buonaparte wished it and his voice prevailed. "We shall form," said he, "a new epoch—of what has passed, we must remember only the good, and forget the bad." In fact, he now gave himself little concern under what banner persons had hitherto served, provided they now ranged themselves under his own, and that they summoned around it the ancient supporters of royalism or the revolution.

One of the first and most popular measures of Buonaparte, on his elevation to the consular dignity, was to make proposals of peace to England. This offer was made early in the year 1800, in a letter, not written, according to etiquette, by one of his ministers to the secretary of state for foreign affairs, but addressed by him to the king himself, whose patriotic virtues he did not omit to applaud. He mentioned the necessity of peace, and the true glory derivable from it; and expressed his hope that two nations so enlightened as France and Great Britain would no longer be actuated by false ideas of glory and greatness. The reply to this singular document was returned by lord Grenville at the king's command, declaring that his majesty had given frequent proofs of his sincere desire for the re-establishment of secure and permanent tranquillity in Europe, denied that he either was or had been engaged in any contest for a vain and false glory, since he had only endeavoured to maintain, against all aggression, the rights and happiness of his subjects; and he added, that it would be useless to negotiate while the French seemed still to cherish those principles which had involved Europe in a long and destructive warfare. The continuation of war was therefore decided; and the consuls issued a proclamation, remarkable for its being addressed to a new class of national feelings. Hitherto France had been summoned to arms for the defence of liberty; the consuls now began to rouse it in the name of honour. "Frenchmen! you desire peace: your government desires it even more anxiously: its first wishes, its constant efforts have been for peace. The English ministry rejects our offers: the English ministry has betrayed the secret of its horrible policy, to sever France, to destroy its marine and its harbours, to blot it from the map of Europe; to degrade it to the

During this space, the other columns of his army were advancing to form a junction with that of the main body, according to the plan of the campaign. Tureau, who had passed the Alps by the route of Mount Cenis, had taken the forts of Susa and La Brunette. On the other hand, the large corps detached by Carnot from Moreau's army, were advancing by Mount St. Gothard and the Simplon, to support the operations of the first consul, of whose army they were to form the left wing. But ere we prosecute the account of Buonaparte's movements during this momentous campaign, it is necessary to trace the previous operations of Melas, and the situation in which that Austrian general now found himself.

It has been already stated, that, at the commencement of this campaign of 1800, the Austrians entertained the highest hopes that their Italian army, having taken Genoa and Nice, might penetrate into Provence by crossing the frontier at the Var, and perhaps make themselves masters of Toulon and Marseilles. To realize these hopes, Melas, having left in Piedmont a sufficient force, as he deemed it, to guard the passes of the Alps, had advanced towards Genoa, which Massena prepared to cover and defend. A number of severe and desperate actions took place between these generals; but being a war of posts, and fought in a very mountainous and difficult country, it was impossible by any skill of combination to secure on any occasion more than partial success, since co-operation of movements upon a great and extensive scale was prohibited by the character of the ground. There was much hard fighting, however, in which, though more of the Austrians were slain, yet the loss was most severely felt by the French, whose numbers were inferior.

In the month of March, the English fleet under lord Keith appeared, as we have already hinted, before Genoa, and commenced a blockade, which strictly prevented access to the port to all vessels loaded with provisions, or other necessaries, for the besieged city. On the 6th of April, Melas, by a grand movement, took Vado, and intersected the French line. Suchet, who commanded Massena's left wing, was cut off from that general, and thrown back on France. Marches, manœuvres, and bloody combats followed each other in close detail; but the French, though obtaining advantages in several of the actions, could never succeed in restoring the communication between Suchet and Massena. Finally, while the former retreated towards France, and took up a line on Borghetta, the latter was compelled to convert his army into a garrison, and to shut himself up in Genoa, or at least encamp in a position close under its ramparts. Melas, in the mean time, approached the city more closely, when Massena, in a desperate sally, drove the Austrians from their advanced posts, forced them to retreat, made prisoners twelve hundred men, and carried off some warlike trophies. But the French were exhausted by their very success, and obliged to remain within or under the walls of the city, where the approach of famine began to be felt. Men were already compelled to have recourse to the flesh of horses, dogs, and other unclean animals, and it was seen that the place must soon be necessarily obliged to surrender. Satisfied with the approaching fall of Genoa, Melas, in the beginning of May, left the prosecution of the blockade to general Ott, and moved himself against Suchet, whom he drove before him in disorder, and who, overborne by numbers, retreated towards the French frontier. On the 11th of May, Melas entered Nice, and thus commenced the purposed invasion of the French frontier. On the 14th, the Austrians again attacked Suchet, who now had concentrated his forces upon the Var, in hopes to protect the French territory. Finding this a more difficult task than he expected, Melas next prepared to pass the Var higher up, and thus to turn the position occupied by Suchet. But on the 21st, the Austrian veteran received intelligence which put a stop to all his operations against Suchet, and recalled him to Italy to face a much more formidable antagonist. Tidings arrived that the first consul of France had crossed St. Bernard, had extricated himself from the valley of Aosta, and was threatening to overrun Piedmont and the Milanese territory. These tidings were as unexpected as embarrassing. The artillery, the equipage, the provisions of Melas, together with his communications with Italy, were all at the mercy

of this unexpected invader, who, though his force was not accurately known, must have brought with him an army more than adequate to destroy the troops left to guard the frontier; who, besides, were necessarily divided, and exposed to be beaten in detail. Yet, if Melas marched back into Piedmont against Buonaparte, he must abandon the attack on Suchet, and raise the blockade of Genoa, when that important city was just on the eve of surrender.

Persevering in the belief that the French army of reserve could not exceed twenty thousand men, or thereabouts, in number, and supposing that the principal, if not the sole, object of the first consul's daring irruption was to raise the siege of Genoa and disconcert the invasion of Provence, Melas resolved on marching himself against Buonaparte with such forces as, united with those he had left in Italy, might be of power to face the French army, according to his computation of its probable strength. At the same time, he determined to leave before Genoa an army sufficient to ensure its fall, and a corps of observation in front of Suchet, by means of which he might easily resume his plans against that general, so soon as the chief consul should be defeated or driven back. The corps of observation already mentioned was under the command of general Ellsnitz, strongly posted upon the Roje, and secured by intrenchments. It served at once to watch Suchet, and to cover the siege of Genoa from any attempts to relieve the city, which might be made in the direction of France. Massena, in the mean time, no sooner perceived the besieging army weakened by the departure of Melas, than he conceived the daring plan of a general attack on the forces of Ott, who was left to carry on the siege. The attempt was unfortunate. The French were defeated, and Soult, who had joined Massena, was wounded, and made a prisoner. Yet Genoa still held out. An officer had found his way into the place, brought intelligence of Buonaparte's descent upon Piedmont, and inspired all with a new spirit of resistance. Still, however, extreme want prevailed in the city, and the hope of deliverance seemed distant. The soldiers received little food, the inhabitants less, the Austrian prisoners, of whom they had about eight thousand in Genoa, almost none. At length, the situation of things seemed desperate. The numerous population of Genoa rose in the extremity of their despair, and called for a surrender. Buonaparte, they said, was not wont to march so slowly; he would have been before the walls sooner, if he was to appear at all; he must have been defeated or driven back by the superior force of Melas. They demanded the surrender of the place, therefore, which Massena no longer found himself in a condition to oppose. Yet could that brave general have suspended this measure a few hours longer, he would have been spared the necessity of making it at all. General Ott had just received commands from Melas to raise the blockade with all despatch, and to fall back upon the Po, in order to withstand Buonaparte, who, in unexpected strength, was marching upon Milan. The Austrian staff-officer, who brought the order, had just received his audience of general Ott, when general Andrieux, presenting himself on the part of Massena, announced the French general's desire to surrender the place, if his troops were permitted to march out with their arms. There was no time to debate upon terms; and those granted to Massena by Melas were so unusually favourable, that perhaps they should have made him aware of the precarious state of the besieging army. He was permitted to evacuate Genoa without laying down his arms, and the convention was signed the 5th of June, 1800. Meantime, at this agitating and interesting period, events of still greater importance than those which concerned the fate of the once princely Genoa were taking place with frightful rapidity.

Melas, with about one-half of his army, had retired from his operations in the Genoese territory, and retreated on Turin by the way of Coni, where he fixed his head-quarters, expecting that Buonaparte would either advance to possess himself of the capital of Piedmont, or that he would make an effort to relieve Genoa. In the first instance, Melas deemed himself strong enough to receive the first consul; in the second, to pursue him; and in either, to assemble such numerous forces as might harass and embarrass either his

advance or his retreat. But Buonaparte's plan of the campaign was different from what Melas had anticipated. He had formed the resolution to pass the rivers Sesia and Tesino, and thus leaving Turin and Melas behind him, to push straight for Milan, and form a junction with the division of about twenty thousand men, detached from the right wing of Moreau's army, which, commanded by Moncey, were on their road to join him, having crossed the mountains by the route of St. Gothard. It was necessary, however, to disguise his purpose from the sagacious veteran. With this view, ere Buonaparte broke up from Ivrea, Lannes, who had commanded his vanguard with so much gallantry, victorious at Romano, seemed about to improve his advantage. He had marched on Chiavaso, and, seizing on a number of boats and small vessels, appeared desirous to construct a bridge over the Po at that place. This attracted the attention of Melas. It might be equally a preliminary to an attack on Turin, or a movement towards Genoa. But as the Austrian general was at the same time alarmed by the descent of general Tureau's division from Mount Cenis, and their capture of Susa and La Brunetta, Turin seemed *ascertained* to be the object of the French; and Melas acted on this idea. He sent a strong force to oppose the establishment of the bridge, and while his attention was thus occupied, Buonaparte was left to take the road to Milan unmolested. Vercelli was occupied by the cavalry under Murat, and the Sesia was crossed without obstacle. The Tesino, a broad and rapid river, offered more serious opposition; but the French found four or five small boats, in which they pushed across an advanced party under general Gerard. The Austrians, who opposed the passage, were in a great measure cavalry, who could not act on account of the woody and impracticable character of the bank of the river. The passage was accomplished; and, upon the 2d of June, Buonaparte entered Milan, where he was received with acclamations by a numerous class of citizens, who looked for the re-establishment of the Cisalpine republic. The Austrians were totally unprepared for this movement. Pavia fell into the hands of the French; Lodi and Cremona were occupied, and Pizzighitone was invested. Meantime, Buonaparte, fixing his residence in the ducal palace of Milan, employed himself in receiving the deputations of various public bodies, and in reorganizing the Cisalpine government, while he waited impatiently to be joined by Moncey and his division, from Mount St. Gothard. They arrived at length, but marching more slowly than accorded with the fiery promptitude of the first consul, who was impatient to relieve the blockade of Genoa, which place, he concluded, still held out. He now issued a proclamation to his troops, in which he described as the result of the efforts he expected from them, "Cloudless glory and solid peace." On the 9th of June his armies were again in motion.

Melas, an excellent officer, had at the same time some of the slowness imputed to his countrymen, or of the irresolution incident to the advanced age of eighty years,—for so old was the opponent of Buonaparte, then in the very prime of human life,—or, as others suspect, it may have been orders from Vienna which detained the Austrian general so long at Turin, where he lay in a great measure inactive. It is true, that on receiving notice of Buonaparte's march on Milan, he instantly despatched orders to general Ott, as we have already stated, to raise the siege of Genoa, and join him with all possible speed; but it seemed, that, in the mean time, he might have disquieted Buonaparte's lines of communication, by acting upon the river Dorea, attacking Ivrea, in which the French had left much baggage and artillery, and relieving the fort of Bard. Accordingly, he made an attempt of this kind, by detaching six thousand men to Chiavaso, who were successful in delivering some Austrian prisoners at that place; but Ivrea proved strong enough to resist them, and the French retaining possession of that place, the Austrians could not occupy the valley of the Dorea, or relieve the besieged fortress of Bard. The situation of Melas now became critical. His communications with the left or north bank of the Po were entirely cut off, and by a line stretching from fort Bard to Placentia, the French occupied the best and

fairest share of the north of Italy, while he found himself confined to Piedmont. The Austrian army, besides, was divided into two parts,—one under Ott, which was still near Genoa, that had so lately surrendered to them, one with Melas himself, which was at Turin. Neither were agreeably situated. That of Genoa was observed on its right by Suchet, whose army, reinforced with the garrison which, retaining their arms, evacuated that city under Massena, might soon be expected to renew the offensive. There was, therefore, the greatest risk, that Buonaparte, pushing a strong force across the Po, might attack and destroy either the division of Ott, or that of Melas himself, before they were able to form a junction. To prevent such a catastrophe, Ott received orders to march forward on the Tesino, while Melas, moving towards Alexandria, prepared to resume his communications with his lieutenant-general. Buonaparte, on his part, was anxious to relieve Genoa: news of the fall of which had not reached him. With this view he resolved to force his passage over the Po, and move against the Austrians, who were found to occupy in strength the villages of Casteggio and Montebello. These troops proved to be the greater part of the very army which he expected to find before Genoa, and which was commanded by Ott, but which had moved westward, in conformity to the orders of Melas.

General Lannes, who led the vanguard of the French, as usual, was attacked early in the morning by a superior force, which he had much difficulty in resisting. The nature of the ground gave advantage to the Austrian cavalry, and the French were barely able to support their charges. At length the division of Victor came up to support Lannes, and the victory became no longer doubtful, though the Austrians fought most obstinately. The fields being covered with tall crops of grain, and especially of rye, the different bodies were frequently hid until they found themselves at the bayonet's point, without having had any previous opportunity to estimate each other's force; a circumstance which led to much close fighting, and necessarily to much slaughter. At length, the Austrians retreated, leaving the field of battle covered with their dead, and above five thousand prisoners in the hands of their enemies.

General Ott rallied the remains of his army under the walls of Tortona. From the prisoners taken at the battle of Montebello, as this action was called, Buonaparte learned, for the first time, the surrender of Genoa, which apprized him that he was too late for the enterprise which he had meditated. He therefore halted his army for three days in the position of Stradella, unwilling to advance into the open plain of Marengo, and trusting that Melas would find himself compelled to give him battle in the position which he had chosen, as most unfavourable for the Austrian cavalry. He despatched messengers to Suchet, commanding him to cross the mountains by the Col de Cadibona, and march on the river Scrivia, which would place him in the rear of the Austrians. Even during the very battle of Montebello, the chief consul was joined by Dessaix, who had just arrived from Egypt. Landed at Frejus, after a hundred interruptions, that seemed as if intended to withhold him from the fate he was about to meet, he had received letters from Buonaparte, inviting him to come to him without delay. The tone of the letters expressed discontent and embarrassment. "He has gained all," said Dessaix, who was much attached to Buonaparte, "and yet he is not happy." Immediately afterward, on reading the account of his march over St. Bernard, he added, "He will leave us nothing to do." He immediately set out post to place himself under the command of his ancient general, and, as it eventually proved, to encounter an early death. They had an interesting conversation on the subject of Egypt, to which Buonaparte continued to cling, as to a matter in which his own fame was intimately and inseparately concerned. Dessaix immediately received the command of the division hitherto under that of Boudet. In the mean while, the head-quarters of Melas had been removed from Turin, and fixed at Alexandria for the space of two days; yet he did not, as Buonaparte had expected, attempt to move forward on the French position at Stradella, in order to force his way to Mantua; so that

rank of secondary powers; to keep all the nations of Europe separated by divisions, to monopolize the commerce of them all, and enrich itself with their spoils. It is to obtain these frightful successes that England expends her treasures, lavishes her promises, and multiplies her intrigues. It is for you to command peace: to command it we must have money, military stores, soldiers: all should be eager to pay the tribute which they owe to the common defence! The young should rush to enrol themselves in the ranks! It is no longer a question of faction! It is no longer for the choice of tyrants that they are going to arm; it is for the guarantee of all that they hold dear; it is for the honour of France; it is for the sacred interests of humanity."

Disappointed in the hope of negotiating a peace with England, Buonaparte thus roused the population of France to renewed exertions, and began in good earnest to address himself for one of the most important campaigns of his life; and in which he added, if that were possible, to the high military reputation he had acquired. Committing the charge of the campaign upon the Rhine to Moreau, the first consul reserved for himself the task of bringing back victory to the French standards on the fields in which he won his earliest laurels. His plan of victory again included a passage of the Alps, as boldly and unexpectedly as in 1795, but in a different direction. That earlier period had this resemblance to the present, that on both occasions the Austrians menaced Genoa; but in 1800 it was only from the Italian frontier and the Col de Tende, whereas, in 1795, the enemy were in possession of the mountains of Savoy, above Genoa. Switzerland, too, formerly neutral, and allowing no passage for armies, was now as open to the march of French troops as any of their own provinces, and of this Buonaparte determined to avail himself. He was aware of the Austrian plan of taking Genoa and entering Provence; and he formed the daring resolution to put himself at the head of the army of reserve, surmount the line of the Alps, even where they are most difficult of access, and descending into Italy, place himself in the rear of the Austrian army, interrupt their communications, carry off their magazines, parks, and hospitals, coop them up between his own army and that of Massena, which was in their front, and compel them to battle, in a situation where defeat must be destruction. But to accomplish this daring movement, it was necessary to march a whole army over the highest chain of mountains in Europe, by roads which afford but a dangerous passage to the solitary traveller, and through passes where one man can do more to defend than ten to force their way. Artillery was to be carried through sheep-paths and over precipices impracticable to wheel-carriages; ammunition and baggage were to be transported at the same disadvantages; and provisions were to be conveyed through a country poor in itself, and inhabited by a nation which had every cause to be hostile to France, and might therefore be expected prompt to avail themselves of any opportunity which should occur of avenging themselves for her late aggressions.

The strictest secrecy was necessary to procure even the opportunity of attempting this audacious plan of operations; and to ensure this secrecy, Buonaparte had recourse to a singular mode of deceiving the enemy. It was made as public as possible, by orders, decrees, proclamations, and the like, that the first consul was to place himself at the head of the army of reserve, and that it was to assemble at Dijon. Accordingly, a numerous staff was sent to that place, and much apparent bustle took place in assembling six or seven thousand men there, with great pomp and fracas. These, as the spies of Austria truly reported to their employers, were either conscripts or veterans unfit for service; and caricatures were published of the first consul reviewing troops composed of children and disabled soldiers, which was ironically termed his army of reserve. When an army so composed was reviewed by the first consul himself with great ceremony, it impressed a general belief that Buonaparte was only endeavouring, by making a show of force, to divert the Austrians from their design upon Genoa, and thus his real purpose was effectually concealed. Bulletins, too, were privately circulated by the agents of police, as if scattered by the royalists, in which specious arguments were

used to prove that the French army of reserve neither did nor could exist—and these also were designed to withdraw attention from the various points on which it was at the very moment collecting.

The pacification of the west of France had placed many good troops at Buonaparte's disposal, which had previously been engaged against the Chouans; the quiet state of Paris permitted several regiments to be detached from the capital. New levies were made with the utmost celerity; and the divisions of the army of reserve were organized separately, and at different places of rendezvous, but ready to form a junction when they should receive the signal for commencing operations.

On the 6th of May, 1800, seeking to renew the fortunes of France, now united with his own, the chief consul left Paris, and having reviewed the pretended army of reserve at Dijon on the 7th, arrived on the 8th at Geneva. Here he had an interview with the celebrated financier Necker; but a more interesting conversation with general Marescot, despatched to survey Mont Bernard, and who had, with great difficulty ascended as far as the convent of the Chartreux. "Is the route practicable?" said Buonaparte.—"It is barely possible to pass," replied the engineer.—"Let us set forward then," said Napoleon, and the extraordinary march was commenced.

On the 13th, arriving at Lausanne, Buonaparte joined the van of his real army of reserve, which consisted of six effective regiments, commanded by the celebrated Lannes. These corps, together with the rest of the troops intended for the expedition, had been assembled from their several positions by forced marches. Carnot, the minister at war, attended the first consul at Lausanne, to report to him that fifteen thousand, or from that to the number of twenty thousand men, detached from Moreau's army, were in the act of descending on Italy by St. Gothard, in order to form the left wing of his army. The whole army, in its various divisions, was now united under the command of Berthier nominally as general-in-chief, though in reality under that of the first consul himself. This was in compliance with a regulation of the constitution, which rendered it inconsistent for the first consul to command in person. It was a form which Buonaparte at present evaded, and afterward laid aside; thinking truly, that the name as well as office of generalissimo was most fittingly vested in his own person, since, though it might not be the loftiest of his titles, it was that which best expressed his power. The army might amount to sixty thousand men, but one-third of the number were conscripts.

During the interval between the 15th and 18th of May, all the columns of the French army were put into motion to cross the Alps. Tureau, at the head of five thousand men, directed his march by Mount Cenis, on Exilles and Susa. A similar division, commanded by Chabran, took the route of the Little St. Bernard. Buonaparte himself, on the 15th, at the head of the main body of his army, consisting of thirty thousand men and upwards, marched from Lausanne to the little village called St. Pierre, at which point there ended every thing resembling a practicable road. An immense and apparently inaccessible mountain reared its head among general desolation and eternal frost; while precipices, glaciers, ravines, and a boundless extent of faithless snows, which the slightest concussion of the air converts into avalanches capable of burying armies in their descent, appeared to forbid access to all living things but the chamois, and his scarce less wild pursuer. Yet foot by foot, and man by man, did the French soldiers proceed to ascend this formidable barrier, which nature had erected in vain to limit human ambition. The view of the valley, emphatically called "of desolation," where nothing is to be seen but snow and sky, had no terrors for the first consul and his army. They advanced up paths hitherto only practised by hunters, or here and there a hardy pedestrian, the infantry loaded with their arms, and in full military equipment, the cavalry leading their horses. The musical bands played from time to time at the head of the regiments, and, in places of unusual difficulty, the drums beat a charge, as if to encourage the soldiers to encounter the opposition of nature herself. The artillery, without which

they could not have done service, were deposited in trunks of trees hollowed out for the purpose. Each was dragged by a hundred men, and the troops, making it a point of honour to bring forward their guns, accomplished this severe duty, not with cheerfulness only, but with enthusiasm. The carriages were taken to pieces, and harnessed on the backs of mules, or committed to the soldiers, who relieved each other in the task of bearing them with levers; and the ammunition was transported in the same manner. While one-half of the soldiers were thus engaged, the others were obliged to carry the muskets, cartridge-boxes, knapsacks, and provisions of their comrades, as well as their own. Each man, so loaded, was calculated to carry from sixty to seventy pounds weight, up icy precipices, where a man totally without encumbrance could ascend but slowly. Probably no troops save the French could have endured the fatigue of such a march; and no other general than Buonaparte would have ventured to require it at their hand.

He set out a considerable time after the march had begun, alone, excepting his guide. He is described by the Swiss peasant who attended him in that capacity, as wearing his usual simple dress, a gray surtout and three-cornered hat. He travelled in silence, save a few short and hasty questions about the country, addressed to his guide from time to time. When these were answered, he relapsed into silence. There was a gloom on his brow corresponding with the weather, which was wet and dismal. His countenance had acquired, during his eastern campaigns, a swarthy complexion, which added to his natural severe gravity; and the Swiss peasant who guided him felt fear as he looked on him. Occasionally, his route was stopped by some temporary obstacle occasioned by a halt in the artillery or baggage; his commands on such occasions were peremptorily given and instantly obeyed, his very look seeming enough to silence all objection, and remove every difficulty.

The army now arrived at that singular convent, where, with courage equal to their own, but flowing from a much higher source, the monks of St. Bernard have fixed their dwellings among the everlasting snows, that they may afford succour and hospitality to the forlorn travellers in those dreadful wastes. Hitherto the soldiers had no refreshment, save when they dipped a morsel of biscuit among the snows. The good fathers of the convent, who possess considerable magazines of provisions, distributed bread and cheese and a cup of wine to each soldier as he passed, which was more acceptable in their situation than, according to one who shared their fatigues, would have been the gold of Mexico.

The descent on the other side of Mont St. Bernard was as difficult to the infantry as the ascent had been, and still more so to the cavalry. It was, however, accomplished without any material loss, and the army took up their quarters for the night, after having marched fourteen French leagues. The next morning, 16th of May, the vanguard took possession of Aosta, a village of Piedmont, from which extends the valley of the same name, watered by the river Dorea, a country pleasant in itself, but rendered delightful by its contrast with the horrors which had been left behind. Thus was achieved the celebrated passage of Mont St. Bernard, on the particulars of which we have dwelt the more willingly, because, although a military operation of importance, they do not involve the unwearied details of human slaughter, to which our narrative must now return.

Where the opposition of nature to Napoleon's march appeared to cease, that of man commenced. A body of Austrians at Chatillon were overpowered and defeated by Lannes; but the strong fortress of Bard offered more serious opposition. This little citadel is situated upon an almost perpendicular rock, rising out of the river Dorea, at a place where the valley of Aosta is rendered so very narrow by the approach of two mountains to each other, that the fort and walled town of Bard entirely closed up the entrance. This formidable obstacle threatened for the moment to shut up the French in a valley, where their means of subsistence must have been speedily exhausted. General Lannes made a desperate effort to carry the fort by assault; but the

advanced-guard of the attacking party were destroyed by stones, musketry, and hand grenades, and the attempt was relinquished.

Buonaparte in person went now to reconnoitre, and for that purpose ascended a huge rock called Albaredo, being a precipice on the side of one of the mountains which form the pass, from the summit of which he could look down into the town and into the fortress. He detected a possibility of taking the town by storm, though he judged the fort was too strong to be obtained by coup-de-main. The town was accordingly carried by escalade; but the French who obtained possession of it had little cover from the artillery of the fort, which fired furiously on the houses where they endeavoured to shelter themselves, and which the Austrians might have entirely demolished but for respect to the inhabitants. Meanwhile, Buonaparte availed himself of the diversion to convey a great part of his army in single files, horse as well as foot, by a precarious path formed by the pioneers over the tremendous Albaredo, and so down on the other side, in this manner avoiding the cannon of fort Bard. Still a most important difficulty remained. It was impossible, at least without great loss of time, to carry the French artillery over the Albaredo, while, without artillery, it was impossible to move against the Austrians, and every hope of the campaign must be given up. In the mean time, the astonished commandant of the fort, to whom the apparition of this large army was like enchantment, despatched messenger after messenger to warn Melas, then opposed to Suchet, that a French army of thirty thousand men and upwards, descending from the Alps by ways hitherto deemed impracticable for military movements, had occupied the valley of Aosta, and were endeavouring to debouch by a path of steps cut in the Albaredo. But he pledged himself to his commander-in-chief, that not a single gun or ammunition-wagon should pass through the town; and as it was impossible to drag these along the Albaredo, he concluded, that, being without his artillery, Buonaparte would not venture to descend into the plain.

But while the commandant of Bard thus argued, he was mistaken in his premises, though right in his inference. The artillery of the French army had already passed through the town of Bard, and under the guns of the citadel, without being discovered to have done so. This important manœuvre was accomplished by previously laying the street with dung and earth, over which the pieces of cannon, concealed under straw and branches of trees, were dragged by men in profound silence. The garrison, though they did not suspect what was going on, fired nevertheless occasionally upon some vague suspicion, and killed and wounded artillerymen in sufficient number to show it would have been impossible to pass under a severe and sustained discharge from the ramparts. It seems singular that the commandant had kept up no intelligence with the town. Any signal previously agreed upon—a light shown in a window, for example—would have detected such a stratagem.

A division of conscripts under general Chabran was left to reduce fort Bard, which continued to hold out, until, at the expense of great labour, batteries were established on the top of Albaredo, by which it was commanded, and a heavy gun placed on the steeple of the church, when it was compelled to surrender. It is not fruitless to observe, that the resistance of this small place, which had been overlooked or undervalued in the plan of the campaign, was very nearly rendering the march over Mont St. Bernard worse than useless, and might have occasioned the destruction of all the chief consul's army. So little are even the most distinguished generals able to calculate with certainty upon all the chances of war.

From this dangerous pass, the vanguard of Buonaparte now advanced down the valley to Ivrea, where Lannes carried the town by storm, and a second time combated and defeated the Austrian division which had defended it, when reinforced and situated on a strong position at Romano. The roads to Turin and Milan were now alike open to Buonaparte—he had only to decide which he chose to take. Meanwhile, he made a halt of four days at Ivrea, to refresh his troops after their fatigues, and to prepare them for future enterprises.