

"Yes, a pedigree," said the Emperor Francis, merrily, "but a very precious and beautiful one, which you may put into the cradle of the little King of Rome, and from which he may learn his letters. Sire," he then added, turning to Napoleon, "your majesty must allow me to add another jewel to your imperial crown. I mean, this pedigree. It proves irrefutably that your majesty is the descendant of a glorious old sovereign family, which ruled over Treviso during the middle ages. Signor Giacamonte, the most renowned genealogist in all Italy, devoted himself, at my request, for a whole year to this study, and succeeded in proving that the Bonaparte family is of ancient and sovereign origin."

"That is a splendid discovery," exclaimed Maria Louisa, with delight; "my little King of Rome, consequently, has a very respectable number of distinguished ancestors?"

"More than fifty!" exclaimed her father, proudly. "Look here; this is the founder of the whole family, the Duca di Buon et Malaparte; he lived in the twelfth century."

He pointed to the genealogical trunk of the beautifully painted and ornamented pedigree, of which Maria Louisa held the lower end, while the King and Queen of Saxony obligingly took hold of the upper end. The King of Prussia stood beside them and witnessed this strange scene with a scarcely perceptible smile, while the Empress Ludovica looked with undisguised scorn into the joy-excited countenance of her step-daughter. Napoleon surveyed the faces of all present with a rapid glance, and an expression of sublime pride overspread his countenance.

"Look," exclaimed the Emperor Francis, bending over the pedigree, "there is his name! There is the founder of Napoleon's family."

At this moment Napoleon laid his hand gently on his shoulder. "Oh, no," he said, "the founder of that family stands here."

"Where, then?" asked Francis, eagerly, still bending over and looking for the name.

"If your majesty desires to see him, you must be so kind as to avert your eyes from that piece of parchment, and turn them toward me," said Napoleon, raising his voice.

Francis looked up and gazed wonderingly upon his son-in-law. Napoleon smiled; it was a triumphant smile. "I, and I alone, am the founder of Napoleon's family," he said, slowly and solemnly. "I am the ancestor of those who bear my

name. The King of Rome needs no other, unless it be that your majesty should count every victory which his father gained an ancestor, and compose his pedigree from the laurels I have obtained in Europe and Africa. My son has a right to despise ancestors invisible in the darkness of by-gone centuries, whom history does not mention, while the vainest genealogy can scarcely discover that they lived and died. My grandsons and great-grandsons need not seek the name of the founder of their family on decayed parchments and confused pedigrees; they only need read the pages of history. They will also find it at night in the marshalled host of heaven, where twinkles a star which science names Napoleon. I think, sire, that star will never set; it will illuminate the path of your grandson better than the lamp flickering in the tombs of mouldering ancestors."

Maria Louisa at the first words of Napoleon withdrew her hands from the pedigree, and stood half sullen and ashamed by the side of her husband. The royal couple of Saxony hastened to roll up the pedigree as quickly as possible, and put it back into the golden box.

Napoleon offered his arm to his consort. "Come, madame," he said, "let us go to the ball-room." While he was walking away with her, the Emperor Francis turned to Ludovica, and, tapping his forehead, whispered cautiously, "I was right! There is something wrong in Napoleon's head."

CHAPTER VI.

NAPOLEON'S DEPARTURE FROM DRESDEN.

THE brilliant court ball ended, and Napoleon retired to his cabinet. He seemed more careworn than he had ever allowed any of his attendants to notice. He was slowly walking his room, casting an occasional glance on the map marked with the positions of the various corps now near the frontiers of Russia. "Narbonne has not yet arrived," he muttered to himself. "Alexander seems really to hesitate whether to make peace or not. My four hundred thousand men, who have reached the Niemen, will frighten him, and he will submit as all the others. He will not dare to bid me defiance! He will yield! He—" Suddenly Napoleon paused and stepped hastily to the window on which he had happened to

fix his eyes. A strange spectacle presented itself. The large square directly in front of his windows, which on the day of his arrival had been so splendidly lit up, was dark and silent; but, on the other side of the river, the Neustadt was now in a flood of light, and it seemed to him as if he heard cheers. He opened the window, and, leaning out, saw the houses illuminated—even the residences of the neighboring Palace Street. These houses, like those in the other parts of the city, had given previously no token of joy, and remained in darkness. The emperor shut the window angrily and rang the bell. "Tell the grand marshal I wish to see him," he said to the footman.

A few minutes afterward Duroc entered. "Duroc," exclaimed the emperor, in an angry voice, and pointing his arm at the window, "what is the meaning of that illumination? In whose honor is it?"

"Sire," said Duroc, slowly, "I suppose it is in honor of the King of Prussia, who arrived to-day."

The emperor stamped on the floor, and his eyes flashed. "The inhabitants of Dresden are rebels, and ought to be brought to their senses by bomb-shells!" he shouted, in a thundering voice. "What does the King of Prussia concern them? And why do they show him this honor?"

"Sire," said Duroc, smiling, "the people, as the King of Prussia said to-day, know but little of etiquette, and are not so wise as courtiers."

"'People!'" growled Napoleon. "There are no 'people;' there are only subjects, and they ought to be punished with fire and sword if they think of playing the part of 'the people.' Did I not issue orders to-day to the effect that all demonstrations should be prohibited? Why were my orders disobeyed?"

"Sire, they were obeyed so far as it was in our power. The police managed to prevent the populace from gathering and shouting in the street, but they are unable forcibly to enter the houses, because the inmates, without making any further demonstration, placed a few lights at their windows. Our agents, nevertheless, went to the proprietors of some of the houses, and asked for the reason of this sudden and unexpected demonstration. They replied that it was in honor of the Emperor Napoleon, the guest of their king."

"The villains! They dare to falsify!" exclaimed Napoleon. "The facts are against them. On the day when they

were to illuminate in honor of my arrival, all the houses were gloomy as the grave, on account of hostility to me. The same feeling is the reason of to-day's illumination. It seems, then, that the king of Prussia is exceedingly popular in Saxony?"

"Yes, sire. The king, as I positively know, had instructed the inhabitants of the Prussian places through which he had to pass on his journey to Dresden, not to receive him in any formal manner whatever; but, of course, he was unable to issue such orders in regard to the cities and villages of Saxony. Well, so soon as he crossed the Saxon frontier, he was everywhere received in the most ardent manner. All the bells were rung in the towns of Jüterbogk and Grossenhayn on his arrival, and the whole population, headed by the municipal authorities, and all the other functionaries, came to meet him on the outskirts of the towns, and cheered him in the most jubilant manner."

"And how did he receive these honors?"

"He thanked the citizens, in plain and simple words, for the disinterested respect they were good enough to pay to a German prince."

"A German prince?" repeated Napoleon, vehemently; "ah, this little King of Prussia still braves me! I was too generous at Tilsit! I must cut his wings still shorter! I will show him what the French emperor can do with a German prince, when he dares to bid me defiance!"

"Sire," said Duroc, in a suppliant voice, "I beseech your majesty not to go too far! The King of Prussia is backed by the sympathies of the whole German nation. His misfortunes cause the people to look on him as a martyr. They also believe that he participates but reluctantly in this Russian war, and this increases the love with which they regard him, for I venture to say to your majesty that this nation is opposed to the war."

"I have not appointed the German nation my secretary of war," exclaimed Napoleon, "and I have not asked my grand marshal to give me his advice. Carry out my orders, and do your duty. Tell Berthier to come to me!"

Duroc hung his head mournfully, and turned toward the door. The flaming eyes of Napoleon followed him. Just as the grand marshal opened the door, he heard the emperor calling him. "Sire?" he asked, turning, and standing at the door. There was now beaming so much love and mildness

the citizens, but take up their quarters at the barracks, and, if these should be insufficient for their accommodation, encamp in the open field. You will constantly keep some field-pieces ready for immediate use, in order to suppress any seditious movements that might take place. Every insult heaped upon a Frenchman will be punished by a court-martial according to the laws of war. Besides, it is necessary that the governor-general of Berlin should organize a secret police, that he may know what is going on, and have a vigilant eye on all dangerous attempts at disturbing the public peace. You will inform the Duke de Belluno that the administration of the country will be entirely left to the king's ministers, but that the surveillance of the newspapers, as well as all other publications, and the whole organization of the police, must be in the duke's hands, that nothing may give a dangerous impulse to the people, and that they may have no opportunities of entering into a rebellion. Prussia must be kept down by all means at our command. You will tell the Duke de Belluno that I have given orders that three or four well-informed French officers should stay at Colberg and Graudenz. The right of having a Prussian garrison was reserved only to Colberg, and Potsdam is the only city through which the French troops are not allowed to pass; but the inhabitants of Potsdam should be accustomed to see many French officers in their midst. The latter must frequently stop there overnight on the pretext of seeing the city, and, if their own curiosity should not impel them to do so, their commander should induce them to pursue the course I have indicated. The duke shall, under all circumstances, show the greatest deference to the King of Prussia, and even to affectation at festivals and on all public occasions. He shall, besides, frequently invite to his table the Prussian ministers, and what few Prussian officers will be left at Berlin, and always treat them in the most polite and obliging manner. But at all hours a vigilant eye must be had on the king as well as on the authorities and the people, and the duke ought always to be ready to put down the slightest demonstration or disorder. I have done," said Napoleon. "Go, Berthier, and comply carefully with my instructions. No confidence can be reposed in Frederick William or in his people. We have subjugated Prussia, but it may perhaps be necessary to crush her. At the slightest provocation this must be done; if she will not be an honest ally, I will prove to her that I am an honest enemy, and, to

give her this proof, put an end to her existence. Go, Berthier; set out immediately."

Berthier withdrew, while Napoleon returned to the window with a triumphant air. "Ah, my little King of Prussia," he said, scornfully, "they kindle lights here under my eyes in honor of your petty majesty, but my breath can extinguish them and leave you in a profound darkness. Another such provocation, and your throne breaks down. Another—"

The door of the antechamber was hastily opened, and Roustan appeared. "Sire," he said, "his excellency Count de Narbonne requests an audience."

"Narbonne!" ejaculated Napoleon, joyously. "Come in, Narbonne, come in!" And he hastened to meet the count, who entered the cabinet, and, as an experienced cavalier of the court of Louis XVI., made his bows in strict accordance with etiquette.

"Omit these unnecessary ceremonies," said Napoleon, quivering with impatience and anxiety. "I have been looking for you a long time. What results do you bring me?"

"Sire," said the count, with his imperturbable, diplomatic smile, "I am afraid the result of my mission will be war."

"What!" exclaimed Napoleon, eagerly, and, for a moment, a faint blush tinged his cheeks. "What! The Emperor Alexander will not yield? He refuses to comply with my conditions?"

"Sire, your majesty will permit me to repeat to you the emperor's own words," said the count, with composure. "When I had laid your propositions before his majesty, and told him that if the czar should shut his ports against British ships, continue the war with England, lay an embargo on all British goods, and give up all direct and indirect commercial intercourse with England, your majesty then would make peace with Russia, the Emperor Alexander exclaimed vehemently, 'Such a peace I would accept only after having been forced into the interior of Siberia!'"*

"Ah," exclaimed Napoleon, "I will give him the pleasure of that journey. He will become acquainted with Siberia, and there I mean to dictate terms of peace, unless I prefer to leave him there forever. Did you bring any other dispatches?"

"I did, sire. Here is the official reply of Minister Count

* Alexander's own words.—Vide "Mémoires d'un Homme d'État," vol. xiii., p. 375.

Romanzoff to the letter of the Duke de Bassano, of which I was the bearer. It is nothing but a repetition of the phrases which the Russian ambassador at Paris made to us up to the day of his departure. Here is Romanzoff's letter. Will your majesty be so gracious as to read it?"

Napoleon took the paper and glanced over it. "You are right," he said, flinging the paper contemptuously on the table. "Nothing but the same phrase: 'Alexander wants peace, but is unable to fulfil my conditions.' Well, then, he shall have war! The first shot discharged at my soldiers will be answered by a thousand cannon, and they will announce to the world that Napoleon is expelling the barbarians from Europe."

"Sire," said Narbonne, smiling, "if your majesty intends to wait until the Russians fire the first gun, there will be no war, and may it be so! The Emperor Alexander has made up his mind not to take the initiative. Only when the armies of your majesty have crossed the frontier of Russia, when you have forcibly entered his states, will Alexander look upon the war as begun, but he will not carry it beyond the boundaries of his country: he will not meet the enemy, whom he would still like so much to call his friend, outside the frontiers of his empire."

"Ah, I knew well that Alexander is hesitating," exclaimed Napoleon, triumphantly. "He dares not attack me, and his vacillation will give me time to complete my preparations, and surround him so closely that he cannot escape. While he is still dreaming at the Kremlin of the possibility of peace, I shall be at the gates, and ask him in the thunder of my cannon whether he will submit, or bury himself beneath the ruins of his throne."

"He will choose the latter," exclaimed Narbonne, quickly.

"He will not!" said Napoleon, proudly. "He will submit! A terrible blow struck in the heart of the empire, Moscow—holy Moscow—delivers Russia into my hands. I know Alexander; I exerted formerly great influence over him. I must dazzle his imagination by boldness and energy, and he will return to my friendship."

"Heaven grant that it may be so!" said Narbonne, sighing.

"It is so!" said Napoleon, confidently, walking with rapid steps and proud head; "yes, it is so! Fate has intrusted me with the mission of ridding Europe of the barbarians. The logic of events necessitates this war, and even family ties,

such as we proposed to form at our interview at Erfurt, would not have prevented it. The barbarism of Russia is threatening the whole of Europe. Think of Suwarrow and his Tartars in Italy! Our reply ought to be, to hurl them back beyond Moscow; and when would Europe be able to do so, unless now and through me."*

"But, sire, Europe, in the madness of her hatred, would prefer to make common cause with Russia. Suppose she should offer her hand to the Tartars and Cossacks, to deliver herself from the yoke which the glory and greatness of Napoleon have imposed upon her neck? Sire, at this decisive hour you must permit me to tell you the truth: I am afraid the hatred, the cunning malice and rage of your enemies, will this time be stronger than the military skill of your majesty, and the bravery of the hundreds of thousands who have followed you with such enthusiasm. Your majesty says that Alexander is hesitating, and that may, perhaps, be true; but his people are the more resolute, and so is the emperor's suite. They are bent on having war, and with the whole strength of mortal hatred and patriotic fanaticism. The people, instigated by their venomous and impassioned priests, regard this as a holy war, commanded by God Himself. Their priests have told them that the Emperor of the French is coming with his armies to devastate Russia, to destroy the altars and images of the saints, and to dethrone the czar, in order to place himself on the throne. The Russian people, who, in their childlike innocence, believe to be true whatever their priests tell them, feel themselves profoundly wounded in their most sacred sympathies: love for the fatherland, the church, and the czar, and they are rising to a man to save them. Sire, this war which your majesty is about to commence is no ordinary war: the enemy will not oppose you in the open field; like the Parthian, he will seemingly flee from his pursuer; he will decoy you forward, but in the thicket or ravine he will conceal himself, and when you pass by will have you at an advantage. He will never allow you to fight him in a pitched battle, but every village and cottage will be an obstacle, a rampart obstructing your route. Every peasant will regard himself a soldier, and believe it his bounden duty to fight, however sure he may be to die. Sire, the terrible scenes in Spain may be renewed in Russia, for all Russia will be a vast Saragossa; women, children, and old men, will partici-

* Napoleon's own words.—Vide "Souvenirs du Comte Villemain," vol. i., p. 163.

pate in this struggle; they will die eating poisoned bread with the enemy, rather than give him wholesome food."

"You are exaggerating!" exclaimed Napoleon, sneeringly. "In truth, it is mere imagination to compare the Russian serf—the blood in whose veins is frozen by Siberian cold, and whose back is cut up and bowed by the knout—with the Spaniard, passionate and free beneath a torrid sun, and who in his rags still feels himself noble and a grandee. But these exaggerations shall not influence me! The die is cast: I cannot recede! Great Heaven! this tedious old Europe! I will bring from Russia the keys to unlock a new world. Or do you believe, you short-sighted little men, that I have undertaken, merely for the sake of Russia, this greatest expedition that military history will ever engrave upon its tablets? No; Moscow is to me but the gate of Asia! My route to India passes that way. Alexander the Great had as long a route to the Ganges as I shall have from Moscow, and yet he reached his destination. Should I shrink from what he succeeded in accomplishing? Since the days of St. Jean d'Acre I have thought of this scheme; if it had not been for the discontinuance of the siege and the plague, I should at that time have conquered one-half of Asia, and have thence returned to Europe for the thrones of Germany and Italy. Do not look at me so wonderingly, Narbonne. I tell you nothing but my real schemes. They shall be carried into effect, and then you and the world will have to acknowledge that my words are oracles, my actions miracles, and every day a new one!* In the morning I set out early and repair to the headquarters of my army. Do not say a word, Narbonne! I leave Dresden early in the morning. The fate of Russia is decided! Go!" He waved his hand toward the door, and turned his back to Narbonne.

The count left the imperial cabinet with a sigh. In the corridor outside he met Berthier and Duroc, who seemed to await him. "Well," both of them asked eagerly, "were your representations successful? Will the emperor, at the eleventh hour, make peace?"

Narbonne shook his head sadly. "It was all in vain," he replied. "He wishes war, and you do not even dream how far he means to carry it. When listening to him, one believes him to be either a demigod, to whom temples should be built, or a lunatic, who should be sent to Bedlam!" †

* Napoleon's own words.—Vide Villemain, "Souvenirs," vol. i., p. 180.
† Count Louis de Narbonne's own words.—Vide "Souvenirs," vol. i.

THE LAST DAYS OF 1812.

CHAPTER VII.

THE CONSPIRATORS OF HELGOLAND.

THE storm was howling over the ocean, revealing its depths, and hurling its foaming waves to the sky. They dashed wildly against yonder lofty rock that calmly overlooked the anger of the tempest. It was the rock of Helgoland. In times of old, it towered even more proudly above the unruly element surrounding it. It was then a terror to seafaring nations, and when the ships of the rich merchants of Hamburg, Bremen, Holland, and Denmark, passed it at as great a distance as possible, the masters made the sign of the cross, and prayed God would deliver them from this imminent danger. In ancient days Helgoland was ten times larger than it is now, and on this old rocky island, which had been the last asylum of the gods of northern paganism, lived a warlike people, who knew no other laws than those of their own will, no other toil than piracy, and who submitted to no other master than the chieftain chosen from among their most colossal fellows. The pirates of Helgoland were desperate men, who had selected for themselves as a coat of arms a wheel and a gallows, which they wore embroidered on the sleeves of their jackets; and their last chieftain, who especially terrified the hearts of sea-captains passing the island, called himself: "I, by my own grace, and not that of God, Long Peter, Murderer of the Dutch, Destroyer of the Hamburgers, Chastiser of the Danes, and Scourge of the Bremen Ships." But Long Peter, "by his own grace, and not that of God," had at length fallen a victim to the vicissitudes of life. The women of Helgoland, revolting against his cruelty, baseness, and tyranny, surrendered the island, the seat of the ancient gods, to Admiral Paulsen, of the Danish navy. This occurred in 1684, and since then Helgoland remained under the authority of the