

voice, "ride to Paris as fast as you can. Inform my brother that I am making a forced march to the capital. Hasten then to Marmont and Mortier; tell them to resist to the last, and leave nothing untried in order to hold out but for two days. In that time I shall be in front of Paris, and it is safe! Marmont is to dispatch a courier to Prince Schwartzberg, and inform him that I have sent an envoy to the Emperor Francis with propositions leading to peace. Schwartzberg will hesitate, and we shall gain time. Haste, Dejean, and remember that the fate of my capital rests with you!"

When General Dejean rode off, Napoleon sought his faithful friend, the Duke de Vicenza. He was by his side before the emperor had uttered his name. "Caulaincourt," he said, in a gentle voice, "you were right. I have lost two days. I might now be in Paris. Fate is behind me, intent on crushing me, and death itself refuses to take me! At the battle of Bar-sur-Aube I did all I could to die while defending my country. I plunged into the thickest of the fight; the balls tore my clothes, and yet not one of them injured me. I am a man doomed to live*—a man that, for the welfare of his people, is to subscribe his own humiliation and disgrace! Caulaincourt, go to the Emperor Francis of Austria. Tell him I accept the ultimatum which the allies offered me at Chatillon. I sign the death-warrant of my glory! Hasten! And now, forward! In two days we must reach Paris!"

CHAPTER L.

DEPARTURE OF MARIA LOUISA.

ON the same day, and nearly at the same hour of the 29th of March, while the emperor was moving with his troops toward Paris, a scene of an entirely different description took place at the rooms of the empress, his consort, in the Tuileries. Napoleon, in his despair, wished for wings to fly to Paris; Maria Louisa, in her anguish, wished for wings to fly away from Paris; for the enemy was at its gates, and it was plain that the city must either capitulate or run the risk of an assault.

As yet Maria Louisa called the allies threatening the throne of her husband, and the inheritance of her son, her enemies,

*Napoleon's words.—Vide Bausset's "Mémoires," vol. ii., p. 246.

although her own father was among them. She deemed herself in duty bound to stand by her husband, to brave the vicissitudes of fortune jointly with him, and obey his will. The emperor desired that his consort and his son should not remain in the city if any danger should menace them. When the news reached the Tuileries that the allies had arrived at the walls of Paris, and it became obvious that the corps of Marmont and Mortier were not strong enough to withstand the armies of the enemy, King Joseph, the lieutenant of the emperor, summoned the regent, Maria Louisa, and the council of state, to deliberate on the grave question whether or not the empress and the King of Rome should remain, or be withdrawn to a place of safety beyond the Loire.

The decision was left with Maria Louisa; but the regent had declared it was not for her to settle this question; it was for the very purpose of advising her and guiding her steps that the emperor had associated the council of state with her. King Joseph produced a letter from Napoleon of a nature to indicate his wishes. It was dated Rheims, 15th of March, and read:

"In accordance with the verbal instructions which I have given, and with the spirit of all my letters, you are in no event to permit the empress and the King of Rome to fall into the hands of the enemy. I am about to manœuvre in such a manner that you may possibly be several days without hearing from me. Should the enemy advance upon Paris with such forces as to render all resistance impossible, send off in the direction of the Loire the empress, the King of Rome, the great dignitaries, the ministers, the officers of the senate, the president of the council of state, the great officers of the crown, and the treasure. Never quit my son; and keep in mind that I would rather see him in the Seine than in the hands of the enemies of France! The fate of Astyanax, a prisoner in the hands of the Greeks, has always appeared to me the most deplorable in history.

"Your brother, NAPOLEON."*

This, of course, put an end to all debate. The emperor's precise and final order, providing for the very case which had occurred, could not be disregarded, and Maria Louisa accordingly determined to leave with her son and her suite for Rambouillet. The morning of the 29th of March was fixed for the departure. The travelling-carriages, loaded with bag-

*Baron de Meneval, "Marie Louise et Napoléon," vol. ii., p. 230.

gage, stood in the court-yard of the Tuileries; but Maria Louisa still hesitated. Her travelling-toilet was completed; her ladies were with her in the reception-room, filled with persons forming the cortege of the empress. All entered in mournful silence, and to their bows the empress responded only with a nod. Her eyes, red with weeping, were fixed on the door; she awaited in suspense the return of King Joseph, who had left the Tuileries at daybreak, and had gone to the gates of Paris to reconnoitre the enemy's position. At first the departure was to have taken place at eight in the morning; now it was past nine, and King Joseph had not yet returned.

This unexpected delay increased the anxiety. None dared interrupt the breathless silence reigning in the apartment; only here and there some one whispered, and, whenever a door opened, all started and turned anxiously toward it, as if expecting a bearer of sad tidings. The face of the empress was pale and agitated; her form trembled; at times she turned toward her ladies, who stood behind her, and addressed to them some almost inaudible question, not waiting for a reply, but looking again toward the door, or inclining her head on her bosom.

Suddenly the door was opened, and on the threshold appeared the little King of Rome, followed by his governess, Madame de Montesquiou. The boy's face did not exhibit today its air of childlike mirth, which usually beamed like sunshine from his beautiful features. No smile was on his fresh lips, and his lustrous eyes were dimmed. With a sullen face and without looking at any one, the child, so intelligent for his years, stepped through the room directly toward his mother. "Mamma empress," he said, in his silvery voice, "my 'Quiou says that we are about to leave Paris, and shall no longer live at the Tuileries. Is that true, mamma?"

"Yes, my son, we must leave," said the empress, in a low voice, "but we shall return."

"We *must* leave?" inquired the little king. "But my papa once said to me, the word 'must' is not for me, and I do not want it either, and I pray my dear mamma not to leave Paris with me."

"But the emperor himself wishes us to leave, Napoleon," said the empress, sighing, and with some displeasure. "Your papa has ordered us to depart if the enemy should come."

"The enemy!" cried the boy; "I am not afraid of the en-

emy. If he comes, we do as my papa emperor always does—we beat the enemy, and then he runs away."

But these words of the brave child, which would have delighted his father's heart, seemed to make a disagreeable impression upon his mother. She murmured a few inaudible words, and slightly shrugged her shoulders.

Madame de Montesquiou took the child by the hand. "Come, sire," she said, in a low voice, "do not disturb her majesty. Come!"

"No, no," cried the boy, violently disengaging himself, "I am sure you want to carry me down to the carriage, and I tell you I will not go! Let me stay here with my mother, dear 'Quiou; I do not disturb her, for you see she is not busy, and she does not want to be alone either, for there are a great many persons with her. Therefore, I may stay here, too, may I not, dear mamma empress!"

"Yes, my son, stay here," said the empress, abstractedly, looking again at the door.

"I am not afraid of the enemy," cried the little king, proudly throwing back his head. "My papa will soon come and drive him away. But tell me, mamma, what is the name of the enemy who wants to rob us of our beautiful palace? What is his name?"

"Hush, Napoleon!" said the empress, almost indignantly; "what good would it do you to hear what you do not understand?"

"Oh, dear mamma," cried the child, with a triumphant air, "I can understand very well, for my papa has often played war on the floor with me, and we have built fortresses. And not long ago, papa emperor told me, too, that he was going to the army, and he spoke of his enemies. I remember them very well: they are the Emperor of Russia, who once kissed my papa's hand, and thanked God that papa emperor consented to be his friend; the King of Prussia, from whom my papa could have taken all his states; the crown prince of Sweden, who learned the art of war from my papa, and is a faithless servant; and last, the Emperor of Austria. But tell me, mamma, is not he your father? And did you not tell me that I ought to pray every night for my grandfather, the Emperor of Austria?"

"I did tell you so, Napoleon," whispered the empress, whose eyes filled with tears.

The boy looked down for a moment musingly; and then,

lifting his large blue eyes to his mother, "Mamma," he said, "henceforth I shall never again pray for the Emperor of Austria, for he is now my papa's enemy, and, therefore, no longer my grandfather. No, no, I shall not pray for him, but only as my papa likes me to do." And the boy knelt down, lifting up his hands, and exclaiming in a loud voice, "Good God, I pray to Thee for France and for my father!"

Expressions of deep emotion were heard in the room. The empress covered her face with her handkerchief, and wept bitterly. The little king was still on his knees, with his eyes raised toward heaven. Suddenly the door at which the empress had looked so long and anxiously, opened. It was not King Joseph who entered, but the adjutant of General Clarke, the regent's minister of war. Approaching the empress, he begged leave to communicate a message from the minister.

"Speak," said Maria Louisa, hastily, "and loud enough for every one to hear the news."

"His excellency, the minister of war, has commissioned me to implore your majesty in his name to leave without a moment's delay. He believes that every minute increases the danger, and that an hour hence it might be impossible for you to get away, because your majesty would then run the risk of falling into the hands of roving bands of Cossacks. The Russian corps are already near, and we shall soon hear their cannon thunder at the very gates of Paris." *

"Well, then," said Maria Louisa, with quivering lips, "be it so! Let us set out."

All felt that the decisive hour was at hand. The empress quickly advanced a few steps. "Come!" she exclaimed, in feverish agitation. "Let us set out for Rambouillet!"

Suddenly her son grasped her hand and endeavored to draw her back. "Dear mamma," he cried, anxiously, "do not go! Rambouillet is an ugly old castle. Let us not go, but stay here!" †

"It cannot be, my son; we must go!"

But little Napoleon pushed back her hand with a gesture of indignation. "Well, then, mamma," he said, "go! I will not go. I will not leave my house! As papa is not here, I am the master! and I say I *will* not go!" ‡

The empress motioned to the equerry on service. "M. de

* Meneval, "Marie Louise," vol. ii, p. 266.

† The little king's words—*Ibid.*

‡ Meneval, "Marie Louise."

Comisy," she ordered, "take the prince in your arms and carry him to the carriage."

"The prince! I am no prince, I am the King of Rome," cried the boy, in the most violent anger. "I will not go! I will not leave my house; I do not want you to betray my dear papa!" * The empress took no longer any notice of him; M. de Comisy lifted the crying, struggling boy into his arms. "'Quiou, dear 'Quiou!" cried the child, "oh, come to my assistance! I will not leave my house!"

"Sire," said Madame de Montesquiou, weeping, "we must leave: the emperor has ordered us to do so!"

"It is false!" cried the prince, bursting into a flood of tears, and still trying to disengage himself. "My papa never ordered any such thing, for he says that one ought never to flee from the enemy. I will not go, I will not flee!"

"Come, sire; come!" exclaimed M. de Comisy.

"I will not go!" said the boy, and clung to the door. But Madame de Montesquiou, vainly trying to comfort the prince by gentle words, disengaged his tiny hands, and M. de Comisy hurried on. The whole court, the whole travelling cortege thronged forward, following the empress and the King of Rome.

Soon the brilliant apartment was empty; but the deserted rooms echoed the distant cries of the little King of Rome. All his struggles were in vain. M. de Comisy was not allowed to have pity on him; the will of the empress had to be fulfilled.

At length the preparations were completed, and all had taken their seats. The large clock on the tower of the Tuileries struck eleven as the empress's carriage rolled slowly across the spacious court-yard. The crying of the little king, who sat by the side of his mother, was still heard. With them were also the mistress of ceremonies, the Duchess de Montebello, and the governess. Nine other carriages followed, decorated with the imperial coat-of-arms, and numerous baggage-wagons, and the whole train of a brilliant court. The procession filled the whole length of the court-yard of the Tuileries.

When the carriage of the empress drove through the large iron enclosure, a small crowd of spectators stood near, and gazed in mournful silence. Not a hand was raised to salute the fugitives; not a voice shouted farewell. The sad train

* The king's words.—Vide "Mémoires du Duc de Rovigo," vol. vii, p. 5.

passed along, while the people looked after it, as if the funeral procession of the empire. The imperial party disappeared among the trees of the *Champs Elysées*, and left Paris by the "Gate of Victory."

CHAPTER LI.

THE CAPITULATION OF PARIS.

THE roar of cannon, which continued all the day long of the 30th of March, began now to cease; but the great battle which the allies fought under the walls of Paris with the corps of Marmont and Mortier, was not finished. Before resorting to a bombardment, and an assault on the city, conciliation was once more to be tried. Delegates of the monarchs, therefore, repaired to the marshals, and requested them to consent to an honorable capitulation.

"This is another instance of our foolish generosity!" growled Blucher, leaning back in his carriage. "The whole rats'-nest ought to be demolished; Bonaparte and the French would then have to submit. But I see already how it will be. The peace will be unsatisfactory, and our demands will be as modest as possible, lest we incur the displeasure of the dear French.—Pipe-master, hand me a short pipe! I must smoke, to stifle my anger."

"Your excellency," said Christian, riding up to the carriage, "you have promised the surgeon general not to smoke much, and least of all a short pipe, because the hot smoke is injurious to the eyes. Your excellency has smoked six pipes to-day!"

"And it seems to me that is very little! What are six pipes for a general-in-chief, who has to reflect so much as I have to-day? Give me a pipe, Christian; it is bad enough that I have to sit in such a monkey-box of a carriage, instead of riding on horseback at the head of my troops."

"Nevertheless, every thing passed off very well," said Christian, calmly. "You shouted your orders out of the carriage like a madman, and the generals and adjutants heard and executed all as if you had been on horseback among them. In fact, it would have been only necessary for you to order, 'Forward!' It would have been just as well, for your hussars were intent on nothing else; and, like their field-marshal, they wished only to reach Paris."

"And now we have to wait here without firing a gun," replied Blucher. "Moreover, my eyes ache as if they were burning. The sun has been blazing all day, as though curious to see whether or not we should take Paris; he has poured his rays on me since daybreak, and I had no protection for my old eyes. On looking out of the carriage early this morning I lost my shade; the wind carried it off as though it were a kite. I have lost it, and, what is worse, I cannot even enter Paris, for we shall of course sign a capitulation."

"Here is the pipe, your excellency," said Christian, "and now, good-by, field-marshal; I have to attend to a little private matter."

He galloped off, and Blucher looked after him. "Happy fellow!" he said, sighing; "he can gallop as light as a bird, while I must sit here as a poor old prisoner!" At this moment his adjutant, Major von Nostiz, rode up to the field-marshal's carriage. "Well, Nostiz, tell me how things look in the outer world. What is the news?"

"Bad and good, your excellency," said Nostiz. "A murderous battle has taken place to-day, and we have sustained heavy losses. About eight thousand men were killed on our side, but in return we have gained a large number of trophies, field-pieces, caissons, and stands of colors."

"We ought to have taken all their colors!" cried Blucher, eagerly. "What say the monarchs now, Nostiz? Will they still leave the Parisians the choice to suffer a bombardment or not?"

"The negotiations are still pending."

"Are the monarchs themselves taking part in them? Do they condescend to negotiate in person?"

"No, your excellency. The monarchs have returned to their quarters; the King of Prussia has gone to the village of Pantin, the Emperor of Russia to Bondy, and their representatives have repaired to the suburb of La Chapelle, where they are treating with Marshals Mortier and Marmont and their two adjutants in regard to the capitulation of Paris."

"Would that their negotiations were unsuccessful—that we might have the pleasure of bombarding this infamous city which, for twenty years past, has brought so much misery on Europe!"

"There is some prospect of it," said Nostiz, smiling. "The allies have demanded that the French corps should surrender as prisoners of war. To this the marshals refused to

accede, declaring that they would perish first in the streets, so the allies agreed to abandon this article. A discussion next rose as to the route by which the corps of Marmont and Mortier should retire, so as to be prevented from joining the approaching forces of the emperor, the allies insisting for that of Brittany, the French for any that they might choose. The marshals refused positively to agree to these demands."

"They did!" cried Blucher, in an angry voice. "Well, I am glad of it, for I see now that we shall have a bombardment. Let us immediately make all necessary dispositions for it, in order that when the fun commences we may be ready. Bring me my horse!" With the activity of a youth Blucher opened his carriage and vaulted on the horse, which the groom led close to the carriage. For a moment he reeled in the saddle; for he felt as if red-hot daggers were piercing his eyes, but he overcame his faintness and pain. "Where are the members of my staff, Nostiz?" he asked, eagerly.

"They are near, your excellency, at La Villette."

"Let us ride, then, to La Villette, and thence up the Montmartre. Nostiz, you will have immediately eighty or ninety pieces planted on the Montmartre, that, when the bombardment commences early in the morning, there may be no delay.* Make haste, Nostiz! There must be at least eighty pieces! We shall startle the Parisians out of their slumber," growled Blucher, riding along the road to La Villette, attended by his orderlies; "let them see that another state of affairs exists, and that they are no longer the masters of the world, and able to trample others in the dust!"

At La Villette, Blucher met the members of his staff, and, with Gneisenau and Muffling by his side, and followed by the other officers, rode up the heights of Montmartre. The sun had set, but his last beams still lingered in the evening clouds. The silence reigning around them after the uproar of the day, made upon their minds a solemn impression. At first the party engaged in an animated conversation, but it gradually ceased. Peaceful nature in this spring eventide contrasted the noise and bloodshed of the day with her own indifference, so that even Blucher himself was deeply moved.

They reached the crest of the Montmartre. Paris—the long-feared, but now vanquished Paris, which for centuries had not seen a conquering enemy near its walls—lay at their feet. The steeples of Notre-Dame, of St. Genevieve, the

* Varnhagen von Ense, "Life of Blucher," p. 380.

large cupola of the Hotel des Invalides, the countless spires proudly looming up, the vast pile of the Tuileries, the Louvre, the Palais-Royal, where for twenty years Napoleon had given laws to trembling Europe, were plainly discerned. And this great city, with its temples and palaces, was in the hands of the enemy. They were Prussian generals who looked down from the heights of the Montmartre, and who for seven years had borne the disgrace of their country with sad yet courageous hearts; but this moment was a sufficient indemnity for the long years of wretchedness.

"This, then, is Paris," said Blucher, after a long pause, and his voice was gentle and tremulous. "This is Paris, for which I have longed during seven years—the city which I knew my eyes would see, that I might die in peace! Good God," he cried, lifting his blue eyes toward heaven, and taking off his cap, "I thank Thee for having permitted us to be here, for lending us Thy assistance in attaining our object, and hurling from the throne the man who has so long been a terror to humanity. I thank Thee for having called us, the men who saw the disastrous day of Jena, to participate in the day of liberation! Blessed spirit of our Queen Louisa! if thou, with thine heavenly eyes that wept so much on earth, now lookest down upon us, behold our hearts full of gratitude toward God, and of love for thee as when thou wast among us! Thou hast assisted us in gaining the victory; assist us now, too, in profiting by it in a manner worthy ourselves, and for the welfare of the fatherland!" He paused, and, shading his face with his cap, prayed in a low voice. The generals followed his example; removing their hats, they offered silent prayers of gratitude to God. "Now," cried Blucher, putting on his cap again, "we have paid homage to Heaven, let us think a little of ourselves. I am still in hope that there will be a bombardment, and that we shall send our balls to the Parisians for breakfast to-morrow. I will, therefore, remain on the Montmartre, and establish here my quarters for the night."

"Field-marshal!" shouted a voice at a distance. "Field-Marshal Blucher, where are you?"

"Here I am!" shouted Blucher.

"And here I am!" cried Hennemann, galloping up.

"Pipe-master, is it you?" asked Blucher, in amazement. "Well, what do you want, and where have you been so long?"

"I have just brought an eye-shade for you, and here it is," said Christian, handing with profound gravity a lady's bonnet of green silk, with a broad green brim.

"A bonnet!" exclaimed Blucher, laughing. "What am I to do with it?"

"Put it on," said Christian, composedly. "We can cut off the crown, then it will be a good shade; your excellency will put it on, and wear your general's hat over it."

"That will do," said Blucher. "But tell me, my boy, where did you get it?"

"I saw this afternoon a lady with a green bonnet at a villa near which I passed, and when you told me you ought to have an eye-shade, I thought immediately of the bonnet. Well, I rode to the house, and knocked so long at the door that they opened it. There were none but women at the house, and they cried and wailed dreadfully on seeing me. Well, I told them at once that I would not hurt them, but was only desirous of getting the green bonnet. While the women were raising such a hue-and-cry, another door opened, and the lady who owned the house came in, with the bonnet on. Well, I went directly to her, made her an obeisance, and said, 'Madame, be so kind as to give me your green bonnet for my field-marshal, who has sore eyes.'"

"Well, and did she understand your good Mecklenburg German?" inquired Blucher, smiling.

"No, she did not understand me apparently, but I made myself understood, your excellency."

"Well, what did you do?"

"Oh, your excellency, I simply stepped near her, took hold of the large knot by which her bonnet was tied under her chin, loosened it, seized the bonnet by the brim, and took it very gently from her head. She cried a little, and fainted away—but that will not hurt a woman; I know she will soon be better. I secured my prize, and here I am, and here is your excellency's eye-shade."

"And a good one it is. I thank you, my boy; I will wear it in honor of you, for my eyes are aching dreadfully, and I have need of a shade. I will raise this standard when we make our entrance into Paris, and I believe, pipe-master, the fair Parisians will rejoice at seeing me dressed in the latest Parisian fashion. But now, milliner, cut off the crown, else I cannot use it."

"I will do so at once," said Christian, taking a pair of scis-

sors from his dressing-pouch, and transforming a lady's bonnet into an eye-shade.

A few hours afterward, all was quiet on the Montmartre, and on all the other heights around Paris. After the battle the armies needed sleep, and it was undisturbed, for there was no longer an enemy to dispute their possession of the French capital.

CHAPTER LII.

NIGHT AND MORNING NEAR PARIS.

So the allied armies encamped and rested round the bivouac-fires, while, at a house in the suburbs of La Chapelle, the plenipotentiaries of the sovereigns were still negotiating with the French marshals the terms on which the city was to be surrendered. But he who now rode along the road to Paris at a gallop in an open carriage knew no peace or rest. His quivering features were expressive of alarm; ruin sat enthroned on his forehead, covered with perspiration. By his side sat Caulaincourt; behind him, Berthier and Flahault. The carriage thundered along at the utmost speed. "Caulaincourt, I shall arrive at Paris in time," murmured the emperor; "we are already at Fromenteau; in an hour we shall be there. The watch-fires of the enemy are seen on the opposite bank of the Seine. Ah, I shall extinguish them; to-morrow night the enemy will not be so near.—But what is that? Do you hear nothing? Have the carriage stopped!"

Berthier shouted to the driver—the carriage stopped. They all heard a sort of hollow noise.

"It is a squad of cavalry riding along this road," whispered Caulaincourt.

"It is artillery," murmured Napoleon. "Forward! They can only be our own men. But why are they retreating from Paris? Forward!"

The carriage rolled on. And from the other side of the road a dark mass, with a rumbling noise, moved toward them. Napoleon was not mistaken, nor was Caulaincourt mistaken.

"Who is there?" shouted the emperor to the horsemen at the head of the column. "Halt!"

"It is the emperor!" cried a voice, in amazement, and a horseman dismounting in a moment approached the carriage.