

Anxiety of Louis Napoleon for his companions.

the soul, came to calm my senses. Repose does not fly from the couch of the unfortunate. It only avoids those who are consumed by remorse. But how frightful was my awaking. I thought that I had had a dreadful nightmare. The fate of the persons who were compromised caused me the greatest grief and anxiety. I wrote to General Voirol, to say to him that his honor obliged him to interest himself in behalf of Colonel Vaudrey; for it was, perhaps, the attachment of the colonel for him, and the regard with which he had treated him, which were the causes of the failure of my enterprise. I closed in beseeching him that all the rigor of the law might fall upon me, saying that I was the most guilty, and the only one to be feared.

"The general came to see me, and was very affectionate. He said, upon entering, 'Prince, when I was your prisoner, I could find no words sufficiently severe to say to you. Now that you are mine, I have only words of consolation to offer.' Colonel Vaudrey and I were conducted to the citadel, where I, at least, was much more comfortable than in prison. But the civil power claimed us, and at the end of twenty-four hours we were conveyed back to our former abode.

Severe treatment.

"The jailer and the director of the prison at Strasburg did their duty; but they endeavored to alleviate as much as possible my situation, while a certain M. Lebel, who had been sent from Paris, wishing to show his authority, prevented me from opening my windows to breathe the air, took from me my watch, which he only restored to me at the moment of my departure, and, in fine, even ordered blinds to intercept the light.

"On the evening of the 9th I was told that I was to be transferred to another prison. I went out and met the general and the prefect, who took me away in their carriage without informing me where I was to be conducted. I insisted that I should be left with my companions in misfortune. But the Government had decided otherwise. Upon arriving at the hotel of the prefecture, I found two post-chaises. I was ordered into one with M. Cuynat, commander of the gendarmerie of the Seine, and Lieutenant Thiboutot. In the other there were four sub-officers.

"When I perceived that I was to leave Strasburg, and that it was my lot to be separated from the other accused, I experienced anguish difficult to be described. Behold me,

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Sympathy of the guard.

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then, forced to abandon the men who had devoted themselves to me. Behold me deprived of the means of making known in my defense my views and my intentions. Behold me receiving a so-called favor from him upon whom I had wished to inflict the greatest evil. I vented my sorrow in complaints and regrets. I could only protest.

“The two officers who conducted me were two officers of the Empire, intimate friends of M. Parguin. Thus they treated me with the kindest attentions. I could have thought myself travelling with friends. Upon the 11th, at two o'clock in the morning, I arrived at Paris, at the hotel of the Prefecture of Police. M. Delessat was very polite to me. He informed me that you had come to France to claim in my favor the clemency of the king, and that I was to start again in two hours for Lorient, and that thence I was to sail for the United States in a French frigate.

“I said to the prefect that I was in despair in not being permitted to share the fate of my companions in misfortune; that being thus withdrawn from prison before undergoing a general examination (the first had been only a summary one), I was deprived of the means

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Hurried through France.

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of testifying to many facts in favor of the accused. But my protestations were unavailing. I decided to write to the king. And I said to him that, having been cast into prison after having taken up arms against his Government, I dreaded but one thing, and that was his generosity, since it would deprive me of my sweetest consolation, the possibility of sharing the fate of my companions in misfortune. I added that life itself was of little value to me; but that my gratitude to him would be great if he would spare the lives of a few old soldiers, the remains of our ancient army, who had been enticed by me, and seduced by glorious souvenirs.

“At the same time I wrote to M. Odillon Barrot\* the letter which I send with this, begging him to take charge of the defense of Colonel Vaudrey. At four o'clock I resumed my journey, with the same escort, and on the 14th we arrived at the citadel of Port Louis, near Lorient. I remained there until the twenty-first day of November, when the frigate was ready for sea.

“After having entreated M. Odillon Barrot to assume the defense of the accused, and in particular of Colonel Vaudrey, I added:

\* A distinguished advocate in Paris.

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Statement of Louis Napoleon.

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“Monsieur, notwithstanding my desire to remain with my companions in misfortune, and to partake of their lot, notwithstanding my entreaties upon that subject, the king, in his clemency, has ordered that I should be conducted to Lorient, to pass thence to America. Sensible as I ought to be of the generosity of the king, I am profoundly afflicted in leaving my co-accused, since I cherish the conviction that could I be present at the bar, my depositions in their favor would influence the jury, and enlighten them as to their decision. Deprived of the consolation of being useful to the men whom I have enticed to their loss, I am obliged to intrust to an advocate that which I am unable to say myself to the jury.

“On the part of my co-accused there was no plot. There was only the enticement of the moment. I alone arranged all. I alone made the necessary preparations. I had already seen Colonel Vaudrey before the 30th of October, but he had not conspired with me. On the 29th, at eight o'clock in the evening, no person knew but myself that the movement was to take place the next day. I did not see Colonel Vaudrey until after this. M. Parguin had come to Strasburg on his own private business.

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Remarks to Colonel Vaudrey.

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It was not until the evening of the 29th, that I appealed to him. The other persons knew of my presence in France, but were ignorant of the object of my visit. It was not until the evening of the 29th that I assembled the persons now accused; and I did not make them acquainted with my intentions until that moment.

“Colonel Vaudrey was not present. The officers of the engineers had come to join us, ignorant at first of what was to transpire. Certainly, in the eyes of the established Government we are all culpable of having taken up arms against it. But I am the most culpable. It is I who, for a long time meditating a revolution, came suddenly to lure men from an honorable social position, to expose them to the hazards of a popular movement. Before the laws, my companions are guilty of allowing themselves to be enticed. But never were circumstances more extenuating in the eyes of the country than those in their favor. When I saw Colonel Vaudrey and the other persons on the evening of the 29th, I addressed them in the following language:

“GENTLEMEN,—You are aware of all the complaints of the nation against the Govern-

Remarks to Colonel Vaudrey.

ment. But you also know that there is no party now existing which is sufficiently strong to overthrow it; no one sufficiently strong to unite the French of all parties, even if it should succeed in taking possession of supreme power. This febleness of the Government, as well as this febleness of parties, proceeds from the fact that each one represents only the interests of a single class in society. Some rely upon the clergy and nobility; others upon the middle-class aristocracy, and others still upon the lower classes alone.

““In this state of things, there is but a single flag which can rally all parties, because it is the banner of France, and not that of a faction; it is the eagle of the Empire. Under this banner, which recalls so many glorious memories, there is no class excluded. It represents the interests and the rights of all. The Emperor Napoleon held his power from the French people. Four times his authority received the popular sanction. In 1814, hereditary right, in the family of the Emperor, was recognized by four millions of votes. Since then the people have not been consulted.

““As the eldest of the nephews of Napoleon, I can then consider myself as the repre-

The Napoleonic system.

sentative of popular election; I will not say of the Empire because in the lapse of twenty years the ideas and wants of France may have changed. But a principle can not be annulled by facts. It can only be annulled by another principle. Now the principle of popular election in 1804 can not be annulled by the twelve hundred thousand foreigners who entered France in 1815, nor by the chamber of two hundred and twenty-one deputies in 1830.

““The Napoleon system consists in promoting the march of civilization without disorder and without excess; in giving an impulse to ideas by developing material interests; in strengthening power by rendering it respectable; in disciplining the masses according to their intellectual faculties; in fine, in uniting around the altar of the country the French of all parties by giving them honor and glory as the motives of action.”

““No,” exclaimed my brave companions in reply, “you shall not die alone. We will die with you, or we will conquer together for the cause of the French people.”

““You see thus, sir, that it is I who have enticed them, in speaking to them of every thing which could move the hearts of French-

Louis Napoleon's plea for his confederates.

men. They spoke to me of their oaths. But I reminded them that, in 1815, they had taken the oath to Napoleon II. and his dynasty. "Invasion alone," I said to them, "released you from that oath. Well, force can re-establish that which force alone has destroyed."

"I went even so far as to say to them that the death of the king had been spoken of. I inserted this, my mother, as you will understand, in order to be useful to them. You see how culpable I was in the eyes of the Government. Well, the Government has been generous to me. It has comprehended that my position of exile, that my love for my country, that my relationship to the great man were extenuating causes. Will the jury be less considerate than the Government? Will it not find extenuating causes far stronger in favor of my accomplices, in the souvenirs of the Empire; in the intimate relations of many among them to me; in the enticement of the moment; in the example of Labédoyère; in fine, in that sentiment of generosity which rendered it inevitable that, being soldiers of the Empire, they could not see the eagle without emotion; they preferred to sacrifice their own lives rather than abandon the nephew of the Emperor

Scenes at sea.

Napoleon, than to deliver him to his executioners, for we were far from thinking of any mercy in case of failure?

"In view of Madeira, December 12, 1836.

"I remained ten days at the citadel of Port Louis. Every morning I received a visit from the sub-prefect of Lorient, from the commander of the place, and from the officer of the gendarmerie. They were all very kind to me, and never ceased to speak to me of their attachment to the memory of the Emperor. The commander, Cuynat, and Lieutenant Thiboutot, were unfailing in their attentions to me. I could ever believe myself in the midst of my friends, and the thought that they were in a position hostile to me gave me much pain.

"The winds remained contrary and prevented the frigate from leaving port. At last, on the 21st, a steamer towed out the frigate. The sub-prefect came to tell me that it was time to depart. The draw-bridge of the citadel was lowered. I went forth, accompanied by the hospitable officers of the place, in addition to those who brought me to Lorient. I passed between two files of soldiers, who kept off the crowd of the curious, which had gathered to see me.

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Life on board the frigate.

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"We all entered the boats which were to convey us to the frigate, which was waiting for us outside of the harbor. I took leave of these gentlemen with cordiality. I ascended to the deck, and saw with sadness of heart the shores of France disappear behind me.

"I must now give you the details of the frigate. The commander has assigned me a stateroom in the stern of the ship, where I sleep. I dine with him, his son, the second officer, and the aide-de-camp. The commander, captain of the ship, Henry de Villeneuve, is an excellent man, frank and loyal as an old sailor. He pays me every attention. You see that I have much less to complain of than my friends. The other officers of the frigate are also very kind to me.

"There are two other passengers who are two types. The one, an M. D., is a *savant*, twenty-six years of age. He has much intelligence and imagination, mingled with originality, and even with a little eccentricity. For example, he believes in fortune-telling, and undertakes to predict to each one of us his fate. He has also great faith in magnetism, and has told me that a somnambulist had predicted to him, two years ago, that a member

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Uncertainty of the destination.

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of the family of the Emperor would return to France and would dethrone Louis Philippe. He is going to Brazil to make some experiments in electricity. The other passenger is an ancient librarian of Don Pedro, who has preserved all the manners of the ancient court. Maltreated at Brazil, in consequence of his attachment to the Emperor, he returns there to obtain redress.

"The first fifteen days of the voyage were very disagreeable. We were continually tossed about by tempests and by contrary winds, which drove us back almost to the entrance of the Channel. It was impossible during that time to take a single step without clinging to whatever could be seized with one's hand.

"For several days we did not know that our destination was changed. The commander had sealed orders, which he opened and which directed him to go to Rio Janeiro; to remain there as long as should be necessary to re-provision the vessel; to retain me on board during the whole time the frigate remained in the harbor, and then to convey me to New York. Now you know that this frigate was destined to go to the southern seas, where it will remain stationed for two years. It was thus compelled

to make an additional voyage of three thousand leagues; for from New York it will be obliged to return to Rio, making a long circuit to the east in order to take advantage of the trade-winds.

“In view of the Canaries, December 14th.

“Every man carries within himself a world, composed of all which he has seen and loved, and to which he returns incessantly, even when he is traversing foreign lands. I do not know, at such times, which is the most painful, the memory of the misfortunes which you have encountered, or of the happy days which are no more. We have passed through the winter and are again in summer. The trade-winds have succeeded the tempests, so that I can spend most of my time on deck. Seated upon the poop, I reflect upon all which has happened to me, and I think of you and of Arenenberg. Situations depend upon the affections which one cherishes. Two months ago I asked only that I might never return to Switzerland. Now, if I should yield to my impressions, I should have no other desire than to find myself again in my little chamber in that beautiful country, where it seems to me that I ought to be so happy. Alas! when one has a soul

which feels deeply, one is destined to pass his days in the languor of inaction or in the convulsions of distressing situations.

“When I returned, a few months ago, from conducting Matilde,\* in entering the park I found a tree broken by the storm, and I said to myself, our marriage will be broken by fate. That which I vaguely imagined has been realized. Have I, then, exhausted in 1836 all the share of happiness which is to be allotted to me?

“Do not accuse me of feebleness if I allow myself to give you an account of all my impressions. One can regret that which he has lost, without repenting of that which he has done. Besides, our sensations are not so independent of interior causes, but that our ideas should be somewhat modified by the objects which surround us. The rays of the sun or the direction of the wind have a great influence over our moral state. When it is beautiful weather, as it is to-day, the sea being as calm as the Lake of Constance when we used to walk upon its banks in the evening—when the moon, the same moon, illumines us with the

\*The Princess Matilde, his cousin, daughter of Jerome, with whom it is supposed that he then contemplated marriage.

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Crossing the equator.

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same softened brilliance — when the atmosphere, in fine, is as mild as in the month of August in Europe,—then I am more sad than usual. All memories, pleasant or painful, fall with the same weight upon my heart. Beautiful weather dilates the heart and renders it more impressible, while bad weather contracts it. The passions alone are independent of the changes of the seasons. When we left the barracks of Austerlitz, a flurry of snow fell upon us. Colonel Vaudrey, to whom I made the remark, said to me, 'Notwithstanding this squall, we shall have a fine day.'

• "December 29th.

"We passed the line yesterday. The customary ceremony took place. The commander, who is always very polite to me, exempted me from the baptism. It is an ancient usage, but which, nevertheless, is not sensible, to fête the passage of the line by throwing water over one's self and aping a divine office. It was very hot. I have found on board enough books to occupy my time. I have read again the works of M. de Chateaubriand and of J. J. Rousseau. Still, the motion of the ship renders all occupation fatiguing.

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Letter to his mother.

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"January 1, 1837.

"MY DEAR MAMMA, MA CHÈRE MAMAN,— This is the first day of the year. I am fifteen hundred leagues from you in another hemisphere. Happily, thought traverses that space in less than a second. I am near you. I express to you my profound regret for all the sorrows which I have occasioned you. I renew to you the expression of my tenderness and of my gratitude.

"This morning the officers came in a body to wish me a happy new year. I was much gratified by this attention on their part. At half-past four we were at the table. As we were seventeen degrees of longitude west of Constance, it was at that same time seven o'clock at Arenenberg. You were probably at dinner. I drank, in thought, to your health. You perhaps did the same for me. At least I flattered myself in believing so at that moment. I thought, also, of my companions in misfortune. Alas! I think continually of them. I thought that they were more unhappy than I, and that thought renders me more unhappy than they.

"Present my very tender regards to good Madame Salvage, to the young ladies, to that



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Arrival at Rio Janeiro.

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poor little Clairè, and to M. Cottrau, and to Arsène.

“January 5th.

“We have had a squall, which struck us with extreme violence. If the sails had not been torn to pieces by the wind the frigate would have been in great danger. One of the masts was broken. The rain fell so impetuously that the sea was entirely white. To-day the sky is as serene as usual, the damages are repaired, and the tempestuous weather is forgotten. But it is not so with the storms of life. In speaking of the frigate, the commander told me that the frigate which bore your name is now in the South Sea, and is called *La Flora*.

“January 10.

“We have arrived at Rio Janeiro. The *coup d'œil* of the harbor is superb. To-morrow I shall make a drawing of it. I hope that this letter will soon reach you. Do not think of coming to join me. I do not yet know where I shall settle. Perhaps I may find more inducements to live in South America. The labor to which the uncertainty of my lot will oblige me to devote myself, in order to create for myself a position, will be the only consola-

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Remembrance of friends.

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tion which I can enjoy. Adieu, my mother. Remember me to the old servants, and to our friends of Thurgovia and of Constance. I am very well. Your affectionate and respectful son,  
 LOUIS NAPOLEON BONAPARTE.”