

# Ten Years' Exile

Memoirs of That Interesting Period of the Life of the Baroness De Stael-Holstein, Written by Herself, during the Years 1810, 1811, 1812, and 1813, and Now First Published from the Original Manuscript, by Her Son.

Madame de Staël and baron de Auguste



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**TEN YEARS' EXILE;**

Or

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#### PREFACE BY THE EDITOR (Augustus, Baron de Stael-Holstein.)

The production which is now submitted to the reader, is not a complete work, and ought not to be criticized as such. It consists of Fragments of her Memoirs, which my mother had intended to complete at her leisure, and which would have probably undergone alterations, of the nature of which I am ignorant, if a longer life had been allowed her to revise and finish them.

This reflection was sufficient to make me examine most scrupulously if I was authorized to give them publicity. The fear of any sort of responsibility cannot be present to the mind, when our dearest affections are in question; but the heart is agitated by a painful anxiety when we are left to guess at those wishes, the declaration of which would have been a sacred and invariable rule. Nevertheless, after having seriously reflected on what duty required of me, I am satisfied that I have fulfilled my mother's intentions, in engaging to leave out in this edition of her works\*, no production susceptible of being printed. My fidelity in adhering

to this engagement gives me the right of disavowing beforehand, all which at any future period, persons might pretend to add to this collection, which, I repeat, contains every thing, of which my mother had not formally forbid the publication.

(\* Les Oeuvres completes de Madame la Baronne de Stael, publiees par son Fils. Precedees d'une notice sur le caractere et les ecrits de Madame de Stael, par Madame Necker de Saussure. Paris, 17 vols. 8vo. and 17 vols. in 12mo.)

The title of TEN YEARS' EXILE, is that of which the authoress herself made choice; I have deemed it proper to retain it, although the work, being unfinished, comprises only a period of seven years. The narrative begins in 1800, two years previous to my mother's first exile, and stops at 1804, after the death of M. Necker. It recommences in 1810, and breaks off abruptly at her arrival in Sweden, in the autumn of 1812. Between the first and second part of these Memoirs there is therefore an interval of nearly six years. An explanation of this will be found in a faithful statement of the manner in which they were composed.

I will not anticipate my mother's narrative of the persecution to which she was subjected during the imperial government: that persecution, equally mean and cruel, forms the subject of the present publication, the interest of which I should only weaken. It will be sufficient for me to remind the reader, that after having exiled her from Paris, and subsequently sent her out of France, after having suppressed her work on Germany with the most arbitrary caprice, and made it impossible for her to publish anything, even on subjects wholly unconnected with politics; that government went so far as to make her almost a prisoner in her own residence, to forbid her all kind of travelling, and to deprive her of the pleasures of society and the consolations of friendship. It was while she was in this situation that my mother began her Memoirs, and one may readily conceive what must have been at that time the disposition of her mind.

During the composition of the work, the hope of one day giving it to the world scarcely presented itself in the most distant futurity. Europe was still bent to that degree under the yoke of Napoleon, that no independent voice could make itself be heard: on the Continent the press was completely chained, and the most rigorous measures excluded every work printed in England. My mother thought less, therefore, of composing a book, than of preserving the traces of her recollections and ideas. Along with the narrative of circumstances personal to

herself, she incorporated with it various reflections which were suggested to her, from the beginning of Bonaparte's power, by the state of France, and the progress of events. But if the printing such a work would at that time have been an act of unheard of temerity, the mere act of writing it required a great deal of both courage and prudence, particularly in the position in which she was placed. My mother had every reason to believe that all her movements were narrowly watched by the police: the prefect who had replaced M. de Barante at Geneva, pretended to be acquainted with every thing that passed in her house, and the least pretence would have been sufficient to induce them to possess themselves of her papers. She was obliged therefore, to take the greatest precautions. Scarcely had she written a few pages, when she made one of her most intimate friends transcribe them, taking care to substitute for the proper names those of persons taken from the history of the English Revolution. Under this disguise she carried off her manuscript, when in 1812 she determined to withdraw herself by flight from the rigors of a constantly increasing persecution.

On her arrival in Sweden, after having travelled through Russia, and narrowly escaped the French armies advancing on Moscow, my mother employed herself in copying out fairly the first part of her Memoirs, which, as I have already mentioned, goes no farther than 1804. But prior to continuing them in the order of time, she wished to take advantage of the moment, during which her recollections were still strong, to give a narrative of the remarkable circumstances of her flight, and of the persecution which had rendered that step in a manner a duty. She resumed, therefore, the history of her life at the year 1810, the epoch of the suppression of her work on Germany, and continued it up to her arrival at Stockholm in 1812: from that was suggested the title of Ten Years' Exile. This explains also, why, in speaking of the imperial government, my mother expresses herself sometimes as living under its power, and at other times, as having escaped from it.

Finally, after she had conceived the plan of her Considerations on the French Revolution, she extracted from the first part of Ten Years Exile, the historical passages and general reflections which entered into her new design, reserving the individual details for the period when she calculated on finishing the memoirs of her life, and when she flattered herself with being able to name all the persons of whom she had received generous proofs of friendship, without being afraid of compromising them by the expressions of her gratitude.

The manuscript confided to my charge consisted therefore of two distinct parts:

the first, the perusal of which necessarily offered less interest, contained several passages already incorporated in the Considerations on the French Revolution; the other formed a sort of journal, of which no part was yet known to the public. I have followed the plan traced by my mother, by striking out of the first part of the manuscript, all the passages which, with some modifications, have already found a place in her great political work. To this my labour as editor has been confined, and I have not allowed myself to make the slightest addition.

The second part I deliver to the public exactly as I found it, without the least alteration, and I have scarcely felt myself entitled to make slight corrections of the style, so important did it appear to me to preserve in this sketch the entire vividness of its original character. A perusal of the opinions which she pronounces upon the political conduct of Russia, will satisfy every one of my scrupulous respect for my mother's manuscript; but without taking into account the influence of gratitude on elevated minds, the reader will not fail to recollect, that at that time the sovereign of Russia was fighting in the cause of liberty and independence. Was it possible to foresee that so few years would elapse before the immense forces of that empire should become the instruments of the oppression of unhappy Europe?

If we compare the Ten Years' Exile with the Considerations on the French Revolution, it will perhaps be found that the reign of Napoleon is criticized in the first of these works with greater severity than in the other, and that he is there attacked with an eloquence not always exempt from bitterness. This difference may be easily explained: one of these works was written after the fall of the despot, with the calm and impartiality of the historian; the other was inspired by a courageous feeling of resistance to tyranny; and at the period of its composition, the imperial power was at its height.

I have not selected one moment in preference to another for the publication of Ten Years' Exile; the chronological order has been followed in this edition, and the posthumous works are naturally placed at the end of the collection. In other respects, I am not afraid of the charge of exhibiting a want of generosity, in publishing, after the fall of Napoleon, attacks directed against his power. She, whose talents were always devoted to the defence of the noblest of causes, she, whose house was successively the asylum of the oppressed of all parties, would have been too far above such a reproach. It could only be addressed, at all events, to the editor of the Ten Years' Exile; but I confess it would but very little affect me. It would certainly be assigning too fine a part to despotism, if, after

having imposed the silence of terror during its triumph, it could call upon history to spare it after its destruction.

The recollections of the last government have no doubt afforded a pretence for a great deal of persecution; no doubt men of integrity have revolted at the cowardly invectives which are still permitted against those, who having enjoyed the favors of that government, have had sufficient dignity not to disavow their past conduct;

Finally, there is no doubt but fallen grandeur captivates the imagination. But it is not merely the personal character of Napoleon that is here in question; it is not he who can now be an object of animadversion to generous minds; no more can it be those who, under his reign, have usefully served their country in the different branches of the public administration; but that which we can never brand with too severe a stigma, is the system of selfishness and oppression of which Bonaparte is the author. But is not this deplorable system still in full sway in Europe? and have not the powerful of the earth carefully gathered up the shameful inheritance of him whom they have overthrown? And if we turn our eyes towards our own country, how many of these instruments of Napoleon do we not see, who, after having fatigued him with their servile complaisance, have come to offer to a new power the tribute of their petty machiavelism? Now, as then, is it not upon the basis of vanity and corruption that the whole edifice of their paltry science rests, and is it not from the traditions of the imperial government that the counsels of their wisdom are extracted?

In painting in stronger colours, therefore, this fatal government, we are not insulting over a fallen enemy, but attacking a still powerful adversary; and if, as I hope, the Ten Years' Exile are destined to increase the horror of arbitrary governments, I may venture to indulge the pleasing idea, that by their publication I shall be rendering a service to the sacred cause to which my mother never ceased to be faithful.

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# TEN YEARS' EXILE

## Part The First

### CHAPTER 1.

Causes of Bonaparte's animosity against me.

It is not with the view of occupying the public attention with what relates to myself, that I have determined to relate the circumstances of my ten years' exile; the miseries which I have endured, however bitterly I may have felt them, are so trifling in the midst of the public calamities of which we are witnesses, that I should be ashamed to speak of myself if the events which concern me were not in some degree connected with the great cause of threatened humanity. The Emperor Napoleon, whose character exhibits itself entire in every action of his life, has persecuted me with a minute anxiety, with an ever increasing activity, with an inflexible rudeness; and my connections with him contributed to make him known to me, long before Europe had discovered the key of the enigma.

I shall not here enter into a detail of the events that preceded the appearance of Bonaparte upon the political stage of Europe; if I accomplish the design I have of writing the life of my father, I will there relate what I have witnessed of the early part of the revolution, whose influence has changed the fate of the whole world. My object at present is only to retrace what relates to myself in this vast picture; in casting from that narrow point of view some general surveys over the whole, I flatter myself with being frequently overlooked, in relating my own history.

The greatest grievance which the Emperor Napoleon has against me, is the respect which I have always entertained for real liberty. These sentiments have

been in a manner transmitted to me as an inheritance, and adopted as my own, ever since I have been able to reflect on the lofty ideas from which they are derived, and the noble actions which they inspire. The cruel scenes which have dishonored the French revolution, proceeding only from tyranny under popular forms, could not, it appears to me, do any injury to the cause of liberty: at the most, we could only feel discouraged with respect to France; but if that country had the misfortune not to know how to possess that noblest of blessings, it ought not on that account to be proscribed from the face of the earth. When the sun disappears from the horizon of the Northern regions, the inhabitants of those countries do not curse his rays, because they are still shining upon others more favored by heaven.

Shortly after the 18th Brumaire, Bonaparte had heard that I had been speaking strongly in my own parties, against that dawning oppression, whose progress I foresaw as clearly as if the future had been revealed to me. Joseph Bonaparte, whose understanding and conversation I liked very much, came to see me, and told me, "My brother complains of you. Why, said he to me yesterday, why does not Madame de Stael attach herself to my government? what is it she wants? the payment of the deposit of her father? I will give orders for it: a residence in Paris? I will allow it her. In short, what is it she wishes?" "Good God!" replied I, "it is not what I wish, but what I think, that is in question." I know not if this answer was reported to him, but if it was, I am certain that he attached no meaning to it; for he believes in the sincerity of no one's opinions; he considers every kind of morality as nothing more than a form, to which no more meaning is attached than to the conclusion of a letter; and as the having assured any one that you are his most humble servant would not entitle him to ask any thing of you, so if any one says that he is a lover of liberty,—that he believes in God,—that he prefers his conscience to his interest, Bonaparte considers such professions only as an adherence to custom, or as the regular means of forwarding ambitious views or selfish calculations. The only class of human beings whom he cannot well comprehend, are those who are sincerely attached to an opinion, whatever be the consequences of it: such persons Bonaparte looks upon as boobies, or as traders who outstand their market, that is to say, who would sell themselves too dear. Thus, as we shall see in the sequel, has he never been deceived in his calculations but by integrity, encountered either in individuals or nations.

## CHAPTER 2.

Commencement of opposition in the Tribunate—My first persecution on that account—Fouche.

Some of the tribunes, who attached a real meaning to the constitution, were desirous of establishing in their assembly an opposition analogous to that of England; as if the rights, which that constitution professed to secure, had anything of reality in them, and the pretended division of the bodies of the state were anything more than a mere affair of etiquette, a distinction between the different anti-chambers of the first consul, in which magistrates under different names could hold together, I confess that I saw with pleasure the aversion entertained by a small number of the tribunes, to rival the counsellors of state in servility. I had especially a strong belief that those who had previously allowed themselves to be carried too far in their love for the republic would continue faithful to their opinions, when they became the weakest, and the most threatened.

One of these tribunes, a friend of liberty, and endowed with one of the most remarkable understandings ever bestowed upon man, M. Benjamin Constant, consulted me upon a speech which he purposed to deliver, for the purpose of signalizing the dawn of tyranny: I encouraged him in it with all the strength of my conviction. However, as it was well known that he was one of my intimate friends, I could not help dreading what might happen to me in consequence. I was vulnerable in my taste for society. Montaigne said formerly, I am a Frenchman through Paris: and if he thought so three centuries ago, what must it be now, when we see so many persons of extraordinary intellect collected in one city, and so many accustomed to employ that intellect in adding to the pleasures of conversation. The demon of ennui has always pursued me; by the terror with which he inspires me, I could alone have been capable of bending the knee to tyranny, if the example of my father, and his blood which flows in my veins, had

not enabled me to triumph over this weakness. Be that as it may, Bonaparte knew this foible of mine perfectly: he discerns quickly the weak side of any one; for it is by their weaknesses that he subjugates people to his sway. To the power with which he threatens, to the treasures with which he dazzles, he joins the dispensation of ennui, and that is a source of real terror to the French. A residence at forty leagues from the capital, contrasted with the advantages collected in the most agreeable city in the world, fails not in the long run to shake the greater part of exiles, habituated from their infancy to the charms of a Parisian life.

On the eve of the day when Benjamin Constant was to deliver his speech, I had a party, among whom were Lucien Bonaparte, MM. ——— and several others, whose conversation in different degrees possesses that constant novelty of interest which is produced by the strength of ideas and the grace of expression. Every one of these persons, with the exception of Lucien, tired of being proscribed by the directory, was preparing to serve the new government, requiring only to be well rewarded for their devotion to its power. Benjamin Constant came up and whispered to me, "Your drawing room is now filled with persons with whom you are pleased: if I speak, tomorrow it will be deserted:— think well of it." "We must follow our conviction," said I to him. This reply was dictated by enthusiasm; but, I confess, if I had foreseen what I have suffered since that day, I should not have had the firmness to refuse M. Constant's offer of renouncing his project, in order not to compromise me.

At present, so far as opinion is affected, it is nothing to incur the disgrace of Bonaparte: he may make you perish, but he cannot deprive you of respect. Then, on the contrary, France was not enlightened as to his tyrannical views, and as all who had suffered from the revolution expected to obtain from him the return of a brother, or a friend, or the restoration of property, any one who was bold enough to resist him was branded with the name of Jacobin, and you were deprived of good society along with the countenance of the government: an intolerable situation, particularly for a woman, and of which no one can know the misery without having experienced it.

On the day when the signal of opposition was exhibited in the tribunate by my friend, I had invited several persons whose society I was fond of, but all of whom were attached to the new government. At five o'clock I had received ten notes of apology; the first and second I bore tolerably well, but as they succeeded each other rapidly, I began to be alarmed. In vain did I appeal to my

conscience, which advised me to renounce all the pleasures attached to the favour of Bonaparte: I was blamed by so many honorable people, that I knew not how to support myself on my own way of thinking. Bonaparte had as yet done nothing exactly culpable; many asserted that he preserved France from anarchy: in short, if at that moment he had signified to me any wish of reconciliation, I should have been delighted: but a step of that sort he will never take without exacting a degradation, and, to induce that degradation, he generally enters into such passions of authority, as terrify into yielding every thing. I do not wish by that to say that Bonaparte is not really passionate: what is not calculation in him is hatred, and hatred generally expresses itself in rage: but calculation is in him so much the strongest, that he never goes beyond what it is convenient for him to show, according to circumstances and persons. One day a friend of mine saw him storming at a commissary of war, who had not done his duty; scarcely had the poor man retired, trembling with apprehension, when Bonaparte turned round to one of his aides-du-camp, and said to him, laughing, I hope I have given him a fine fright; and yet the moment before, you would have believed that he was no longer master of himself.

When it suited the first consul to exhibit his ill-humour against me, he publicly reproached his brother Joseph for continuing to visit me. Joseph felt it necessary in consequence to absent himself from my house for several weeks, and his example was followed by three fourths of my acquaintance. Those who had been proscribed on the 18th Fructidor, pretended that at that period, I had been guilty of recommending M. de Talleyrand to Barras, for the ministry of foreign affairs: and yet, these people were then continually about that same Talleyrand, whom they accused me of having served. All those who behaved ill to me, were cautious in concealing that they did so for fear of incurring the displeasure of the first consul. Every day, however, they invented some new pretext to injure me, thus exerting all the energy of their political opinions against a defenceless and persecuted woman, and prostrating themselves at the feet of the vilest Jacobins, the moment the first consul had regenerated them by the baptism of his favor.

Fouche, the minister of police, sent for me to say, that the first consul suspected me of having excited my friend who had spoken in the tribunate. I replied to him, which was certainly the truth, that M. Constant was a man of too superior an understanding to make his opinions matter of reproach to a woman, and that besides, the speech in question contained absolutely nothing but reflections on the independence which every deliberative assembly ought to possess, and that there was not a word in it which could be construed into a personal reflection on

the first consul. The minister admitted as much. I ventured to add some words on the respect due to the liberty of opinions in a legislative body; but I could easily perceive that he took no interest in these general considerations; he already knew perfectly well, that under the authority of the man whom he wished to serve, principles were out of the question, and he shaped his conduct accordingly. But as he is a man of transcendant understanding in matters of revolution, he had already laid it down as a system to do the least evil possible, the necessity of the object admitted. His preceding conduct certainly exhibited little feeling of morality, and he was frequently in the habit of talking of virtue as an old woman's story. A remarkable sagacity, however, always led him to choose the good as a reasonable thing, and his intelligence made him occasionally do what conscience would have dictated to others. He advised me to go into the country, and assured me, that in a few days, all would be quieted. But at my return, I was very far from finding it so.

## CHAPTER 3

System of Fusion adopted by Bonaparte—Publication of my work on Literature.

While we have seen the Christian kings take two confessors to examine their consciences more narrowly, Bonaparte chose two ministers one of the old and the other of the new regime, whose business it was to place at his disposal the Machiavelian means of two opposite systems. In all his nominations, Bonaparte followed nearly the same rule, of taking, as it may be said, now from the right, and now from the left, that is to say, choosing alternately his officers among the aristocrats, and among the jacobins: the middle party, that of the friends of liberty, pleased him less than all the others, composed as it was of the small numbers of persons, who in France, had an opinion of their own. He liked much better to have to do with persons who were attached to royalist interests, or who had become stigmatized by popular excesses. He even went so far as to wish to name as a counsellor of state a conventionalist sullied with the vilest crimes of the days of terror; but he was diverted from it by the shuddering of those who would have had to sit along with him. Bonaparte would have been delighted to have given that shining proof that he could regenerate, as well as confound, every thing.

What particularly characterizes the government of Bonaparte, is his profound contempt for the intellectual riches of human nature; virtue, mental dignity, religion, enthusiasm, these, these are in his eyes, the eternal enemies of the continent, to make use of his favorite expression; he would reduce man to force and cunning, and designate every thing else as folly or stupidity. The English particularly irritate him, as they have found the means of being honest, as well as successful, a thing which Bonaparte would have us regard as impossible. This shining point of the world has dazzled his eyes from the very first days of his reign.

I do not believe, that when Bonaparte put himself at the head of affairs, he had



formed the plan of universal monarchy: but I believe that his system was, what he himself described it a few days after the 18th Brumaire to one of my friends: "Something new must be done every three months, to captivate the imagination of the French Nation; with them, whoever stands still is ruined." He flattered himself with being able to make daily encroachments on the liberty of France, and the independence of Europe: but, without losing sight of the end, he knew how to accommodate himself to circumstances; when the obstacle was too great, he passed by it, and stopped short when the contrary wind blew too strongly. This man, at bottom so impatient, has the faculty of remaining immovable when necessary; he derives that from the Italians, who know how to restrain themselves in order to attain the object of their passion, as if they were perfectly cool in the choice of that object. It is by the alternate employment of cunning and force, that he has subjugated Europe; but, to be sure, Europe is but a word of great sound. In what did it then consist? In a few ministers, not one of whom had as much understanding as many men taken at hap-hazard from the nation which they governed.

Towards the spring of 1800, I published my work on Literature, and the success it met with restored me completely to favor with society; my drawing room became again filled, and I had once more the pleasure of conversing, and conversing in Paris, which, I confess has always been to me the most fascinating of all pleasures. There was not a word about Bonaparte in my book, and the most liberal sentiments were, I believe, forcibly expressed in it. But the press was then far from being enslaved as it is at present; the government exercised a censorship upon newspapers, but not upon books; a distinction which might be supported, if the censorship had been used with moderation: for newspapers exert a popular influence, while books, for the greater part, are only read by well informed people, and may enlighten, but not inflame opinion. At a later period, there were established in the senate, I believe in derision, a committee for the liberty of the press, and another for personal liberty, the members of which are still renewed every three months. Certainly the bishopricks in partibus, and the sinecures in England afford more employment than these committees.

Since my work on Literature, I have published Delphine, Corinne, and finally my work on Germany, which was suppressed at the moment it was about to make its appearance. But although this last work has occasioned me the most bitter persecution, literature does not appear to me to be less a source of enjoyment and respect, even for a female. What I have suffered in life, I attribute to the circumstances which associated me, almost at my entry into the world,

with the interests of liberty, which were supported by my father and his friends; but the kind of talent which has made me talked of as a writer, has always been to me a source of greater pleasure than pain. The criticisms of which one's works are the objects, can be very easily borne, when one is possessed of some elevation of soul, and when one is more attached to noble ideas for themselves, than for the success which their promulgation can procure us. Besides, the public, at the end of a certain time, appears to me always equitable; self-love must accustom itself to do credit to praise; for in due time, we obtain as much of that as we deserve. Finally, if we should have even to complain long of injustice, I conceive no better asylum against it than philosophical meditation, and the emotion of eloquence. These faculties place at our disposal a whole world of truths and sentiments, in which we can breathe at perfect freedom.

## CHAPTER 4.

Conversation of my father with Bonaparte.—Campaign of Marengo.

Bonaparte set out in the spring of 1800, to make the campaign of Italy, which was distinguished by the battle of Marengo. He went by Geneva, and as he expressed a desire to see M. Necker, my father waited upon him, more with the hope of serving me, than from any other motive. Bonaparte received him extremely well, and talked to him of his plans of the moment, with that sort of confidence which is in his character, or rather in his calculation; for it is thus we must always style his character. My father, at first seeing him, experienced nothing of the impression which I did; he felt no restraint in his presence, and found nothing extraordinary in his conversation. I have endeavoured to account to myself for this difference in our opinions of the same person; and, I believe, that it arose, first, because the simple and unaffected dignity of my father's manners ensured him the respect of all who conversed with him; and second, because the kind of superiority attached to Bonaparte proceeding more from ability in evil action, than from the elevation of good thoughts, his conversation cannot make us conceive what distinguishes him; he neither could nor would explain his own Machiavelian instinct. My father uttered not a word to him of his two millions deposited in the public treasury; he did not wish to appear interested but for me, and said to him, among other things, that as the first consul loved to surround himself with illustrious names, he ought to feel equal pleasure in encouraging persons of celebrated talent, as the ornament of his power. Bonaparte replied to him very obligingly, and the result of this conversation ensured me, at least for some time longer, a residence in France. This was the last occasion when my father's protecting hand was extended over my existence; he has not been a witness of the cruel persecution I have since endured, and which would have irritated him even more than myself.

Bonaparte repaired to Lausanne to prepare the expedition of Mount St. Bernard;

the old Austrian general could not believe in the possibility of so bold an enterprise, and in consequence made inadequate preparations to oppose it. It was said, that a small body of troops would have been sufficient to destroy the whole French army in the midst of the mountainous passes, through which Bonaparte led it; but in this, as well as in several other instances, the following verses of J. B. Rousseau might be very well applied to the triumphs of Bonaparte:

L'experience indecile  
Du compaignon de Paul Emile,  
Fit tout le succes d'Annibal.

(The unruly inexperience of the colleague of Paulus Emilius, was the cause of all the victories of Hannibal).

I arrived in Switzerland to pass the summer according to custom with my father, nearly about the time when the French army was crossing the Alps. Large bodies of troops were seen continually passing through these peaceful countries, which the majestic boundary of the Alps ought to shelter from political storms. In these beautiful summer evenings, on the borders of the lake of Geneva, I was almost ashamed, in the presence of that beautiful sky and pure water, of the disquietude I felt respecting the affairs of this world: but it was impossible for me to overcome my internal agitation: I could not help wishing that Bonaparte might be beaten, as that seemed the only means of stopping the progress of his tyranny. I durst not, however, avow this wish, and the prefect of the Lemane, M. Eymar (an old deputy to the Constituent Assembly), recollecting the period when we cherished together the hope of liberty, was continually sending me couriers to inform me of the progress of the French in Italy. It would have been difficult for me to make M. Eymar (who was in other respects a most interesting character,) comprehend that the happiness of France required that her army should then meet with reverses, and I received the supposed good news which he sent me, with a degree of restraint which was very little in unison with my character. Was it necessary since that to be continually hearing of the triumphs of him who made his successes fall indiscriminately upon the heads of all? and out of so many victories, has there ever arisen a single gleam of happiness for poor France?

The battle of Marengo was lost for a couple of hours: the negligence of General Melas, who trusted too much to the advantages he had gained, and the audacity of General Desaix, restored the victory to the French arms. While the fate of the

battle was almost desperate, Bonaparte rode about slowly on horseback, pensive, and looking downward, more courageous against danger than misfortune, attempting nothing, but waiting the turn of the wheel. He has behaved several times in a similar way, and has found his advantage in it. But I cannot help always thinking, that if Bonaparte had fairly encountered among his adversaries a man of character and probity, he would have been stopped short in his career. His great talent lies in terrifying the feeble, and availing himself of unprincipled characters. When he encounters honour any where, it may be said that his artifices are disconcerted, as evil spirits are conjured by the sign of the cross.

The armistice which was the result of the battle of Marengo, the conditions of which included the cession of all the strong places in the North of Italy, was most disadvantageous to Austria. Bonaparte could not have gained more by a succession of victories. But it might be said that the continental powers appeared to consider it honorable to give up what would have been worth still more if they had allowed them to be taken. They made haste to sanction the injustice of Napoleon, and to legitimate his conquests, while they ought, if they could not conquer, at least not to have seconded him. This certainly was not asking too much of the old cabinets of Europe; but they knew not how to conduct themselves in so novel a situation, and Bonaparte confounded them so much by the union of promises and threats, that in giving up, they believed they were gaining, and rejoiced at the word peace, as much as if this word had preserved its old signification. The illuminations, the reverences, the dinners, and firing of cannon to celebrate this peace, were exactly the same as formerly: but far from cicatrizing the wounds, it introduced into the government which signed it a most certain and effectual principle of dissolution.

The most remarkable circumstance in the fortune of Napoleon is the sovereigns whom he found upon the throne. Paul I. particularly did him incalculable service; he had the same enthusiasm for him that his father had felt for Frederic the Second, and he abandoned Austria at the moment when she was still attempting to struggle. Bonaparte persuaded him that the whole of Europe would be pacified for centuries, if the two great empires of the East and West were agreed; and Paul, who had something chivalrous in his disposition, allowed himself to be entrapped by these fallacies. It was an extraordinary piece of good fortune in Bonaparte to meet with a crowned head so easily duped, and who united violence and weakness in such equal degrees: no one therefore regretted Paul more than he did, for no one was it so important to him to deceive.

Lucien, the minister of the interior, who was perfectly acquainted with his brother's schemes, caused a pamphlet to be published, with the view of preparing men's minds for the establishment of a new dynasty. This publication was premature, and had a bad effect; Fouche availed himself of it to ruin Lucien. He persuaded Bonaparte that the secret was revealed too soon, and told the republican party, that Bonaparte disavowed what his brother had done. In consequence Lucien was then sent ambassador to Spain. The system of Bonaparte was to advance gradually in the road to power; he was constantly spreading rumours of the plans he had in agitation, in order to feel the public opinion. Generally even he was anxious to have his projects exaggerated, in order that the thing itself, when it took place, might be a softening of the apprehension which had circulated in public. The vivacity of Lucien on this occasion carried him too far, and Bonaparte judged it advisable to sacrifice him to appearances for some time.

## CHAPTER 5.

The infernal machine.—Peace of Luneville.

I returned to Paris in the month of November 1800. Peace was not yet made, although Moreau by his victories had rendered it more and more necessary to the allied powers. Has he not since regretted the laurels of Stockach and Hohenlinden, when France has not been less enslaved than Europe, over which he made her triumph? Moreau recognized only his country in the orders of the first consul; but such a man ought to have formed his opinion of the government which employed him, and to have acted under such circumstances, upon his own view of the real interests of his country. Still, it must be allowed that at the period of the most brilliant victories of Moreau, that is to say, in the autumn of 1800, there were but few persons who had penetrated the secret projects of Bonaparte; what was evident at a distance, was the improvement of the finances, and the restoration of order in several branches of the administration. Napoleon was obliged to begin by the good to arrive at the bad; he was obliged to increase the French army, before he could employ it for the purposes of his personal ambition.

One evening when I was conversing with some friends, we heard a very loud explosion, but supposing it to be merely the firing of some cannon by way of exercise, we paid no attention to it, and continued our conversation. We learned a few hours afterwards that in going to the opera, the first consul had narrowly escaped being destroyed by the explosion of what has been called the infernal machine. As he escaped, the most lively interest was expressed towards him: philosophers proposed the re-establishment of fire and the wheel for the punishment of the authors of this outrage; and he could see on all sides a nation presenting its neck to the yoke. He discussed very coolly at his own house the same evening what would have happened if he had perished. Some persons said that Moreau would have replaced him: Bonaparte pretended that it would have

been General Bernadotte. "Like Antony," said he, "he would have presented to the inflamed populace the bloody robe of Caesar." I know not if he really believed that France would have then called Bernadotte to the head of affairs, but what I am quite sure of is, that he said so for the purpose of exciting envy against that general.

If the infernal machine had been contrived by the jacobins, the first consul might have immediately redoubled his tyranny; public opinion would have seconded him: but as this plot proceeded from the royalist party, he could not derive much advantage from it. He endeavoured rather to stifle, than avail himself of it, as he wished the nation to believe that his enemies were only the enemies of order, and not the friends of another order, that is to say, of the old dynasty. What is very remarkable, is, that on the occasion of a royalist conspiracy, Bonaparte caused, by a *senatus consultum*, one hundred and thirty jacobins to be transported to the island of Madagascar, or rather to the bottom of the sea, for they have never been heard of since. This list was made in the most arbitrary manner possible; names were put upon it, or erased, according to the recommendations of counsellors of state, who proposed, and of senators, who sanctioned it. Respectable people said, when the manner in which this list had been made was complained of, that it was composed of great criminals; that might be very true, but it is the right and not the fact which constitutes the legality of actions. When the arbitrary transportation of one hundred and thirty citizens is submitted to, there is nothing to prevent, as we have since seen, the application of the same treatment to the most respectable persons.—Public opinion, it is said, will prevent this, Opinion! what is it without the authority of law? what is it without independent organs to express it? Opinion was in favor of the Duke d'Enghien, in favor of Moreau, in favor of Pichegru:—was it able to save them? There will be neither liberty, dignity, nor security in a country where proper names are discussed when injustice is about to be committed. Every man is innocent until condemned by a legal tribunal; and the fate of even the greatest of criminals, if he is withdrawn from the law, ought to make good people tremble in common, with others. But, as is the custom in the English House of Commons, when an opposition member goes out, he requests a ministerial member to pair off with him, not to alter the strength of either party, Bonaparte never struck the jacobins or the royalists without dividing his blows equally between them: he thus made friends of all those whose vengeance he served. We shall see in the sequel that he always reckoned on the gratification of this passion to consolidate his government: for he knows that it is much more to be depended on than affection. After a revolution, the spirit of party is so bitter, that a new chief can subdue it more by



serving its vengeance, than by supporting its interests: all abandon, if necessary, those who think like themselves, provided they can sacrifice those who think differently.

The peace of Luneville was proclaimed: Austria only lost in this first peace the republic of Venice, which she had formerly received as an indemnity for Belgium; and this ancient mistress of the Adriatic, once so haughty and powerful, again passed from one master to the other.

## CHAPTER 6.

Corps diplomatique during the Consulate.—Death of the Emperor Paul.

I passed that winter in Paris very tranquilly. I never went to the first consul's—I never saw M. de Talleyrand. I knew Bonaparte did not like me: but he had not yet reached the degree of tyranny which he has since displayed. Foreigners treated me with distinction,—the corps diplomatique were my constant visitors,—and this European atmosphere served me as a safeguard.

A minister just arrived from Prussia fancied that the republic still existed, and began by putting forward some of the philosophical notions he had acquired in his intercourse with Frederick the Great: it was hinted to him that he had quite mistaken his ground, and that he must rather avail himself of his knowledge of courts. He took the hint very quickly, for he is a man whose distinguished powers are in the service of a character particularly supple. He ends the sentence you begin, and begins that which he thinks you will end; and it is only in turning the conversation upon the transactions of former ages, on ancient literature, or upon subjects unconnected with persons or things of the present day, that you discover the superiority of his understanding.

The Austrian Ambassador was a courtier of a totally different stamp, but not less desirous of pleasing the higher powers. The one had all the information of a literary character; the other knew nothing of literature beyond the French plays, in which he had acted the parts of Crispin and Chrysalde. It is a known fact, that when ambassador to Catherine II, he once received despatches from his court, when he happened to be dressed as an old woman; and it was with difficulty that the courier could be made to recognize his ambassador in that costume. M. de C. was an extremely common-place character; he said the same things to almost every one he met in a drawing room: he spoke to every person with a kind of cordiality in which sentiments and ideas had no part. His manners were

engaging, and his conversation pretty well formed by the world; but to send such a man to negotiate \* with the revolutionary strength and roughness that surrounded Bonaparte, was a most pitiable spectacle. An aide-de-camp of Bonaparte complained of the familiarity of M. de C.; he was displeased that one of the first noblemen of the Austrian monarchy should squeeze his hand without ceremony. These new debutans in politeness could not conceive that ease was in good taste. In truth, if they had been at their ease, they would have committed strange inconsistencies, and arrogant stiffness was much better suited to them in the new part they wished to play. Joseph Bonaparte, who negotiated the peace of Luneville, invited M. de C. to his charming country seat of Morfontaine, where I happened to meet him. Joseph was extremely fond of rural occupation, and would walk with ease and pleasure in his gardens for eight hours in succession. M. de C. tried to follow him, more out of breath than the Duke of Mayenne, whom Henry IV. amused himself with making walk about, notwithstanding his corpulence. The poor man talked very much of fishing, among the pleasures of the country, because it allowed him to sit down; he absolutely warmed in speaking of the innocent pleasure of catching some little fish with the line.

When he was ambassador at Petersburg, Paul I. had treated him with the greatest indignity. He and I were playing at backgammon in the drawing room at Morfontaine, when one of my friends came in and informed us of the sudden death of that Sovereign. M. de C. immediately began making the most official lamentations possible on this event. "Although I had reason to complain of him," said he, "I shall always acknowledge the excellent qualities of this prince, and I cannot help regretting his loss." He thought rightly that the death of Paul was a fortunate event for Austria, and for Europe, but he had in his conversation, a court mourning, that was really quite intolerable. It is to be hoped, that the progress of time will rid the world of the courtier spirit, the most insipid of all others, to say nothing more.

Bonaparte was extremely alarmed at the death of Paul, and it is said, that on that occasion he uttered the first—Ah, my God! that was ever heard to proceed from his lips. He had no reason, however, to disturb himself; for the French were then more disposed to endure tyranny than the Russians.

I was invited to general Berthier's one day, when the first consul was to be of the party; and as I knew that he expressed himself very unfavourably about me, it struck me that he might perhaps accost me with some of those rude expressions, which he often took pleasure in addressing to females, even to those who paid

their court to him; I wrote down therefore as they occurred to me, before I went to the entertainment, a variety of tart and piquant replies which I might make to what I supposed he might say to me. I did not wish to be taken by surprise, if he allowed himself to insult me, for that would have been to show a want both of character and understanding; and as no person could promise themselves not to be confused in the presence of such a man, I prepared myself before hand to brave him. Fortunately the precaution was unnecessary; he only addressed the most common questions possible to me; and the same thing happened to all of his opponents, to whom he attributed the possibility of replying to him: at all times, however, he never attacks, but when he feels himself much the strongest. During supper, the first consul stood behind the chair of Madame Bonaparte, and balanced himself sometimes on one leg, and sometimes on the other, in the manner of the princes of the house of Bourbon. I made my neighbour remark this vocation for royalty, already so decided.

## CHAPTER 7.

### Paris in 1801

The opposition in the tribunate still continued; that is to say, about twenty members out of a hundred, tried to speak out against the measures of every kind, with which tyranny was preparing. A grand question arose, in the law which gave to the government the fatal power of creating special tribunals to try persons accused of state crimes; as if the handing over a man to these extraordinary tribunals, was not already prejudging the question, that is to say, if he is a criminal, and a criminal of state; and as if, of all crimes, political crimes were not those which required the greatest precaution and independence in the manner of examining them, as the government is in such causes almost always a party interested.

We have since seen what are the military commissions to try crimes of state; and the death of the Duke d'Eughien marks to all the horror which that hypocritical power ought to inspire, which covers murder with the mantle of the law.

The resistance of the tribunate, feeble as it was, displeased the first consul; not that it was any obstacle to his designs, but it kept up the habit of thinking in the nation, which he wished to stifle entirely. He put into the journals among other things, an absurd argument against the opposition. Nothing is so simple or so proper, was it there said, as an opposition in England, because the king is the enemy of the people; but in a country, where the executive government is itself named by the people, it is opposing the nation to oppose its representative. What a number of phrases of this kind have the scribes of Napoleon deluged the public with for ten years! In England or America the meanest peasant would laugh in your face at a sophism of this nature; in France, all that is desired, is to have a phrase ready, with which to give to one's interest the appearance of conviction.

Very few persons showed themselves strangers to the desire of having places; a

great number were ruined, and the interest of their wives and children, or of their nephews and nieces, if they had no children, or of their cousins, if they had no nephews, obliged them, they said, to seek employment from the government. The great strength of the heads of the state in France, is the prodigious taste that the people have for places; vanity even makes them more sought for, than the emolument attached to them. Bonaparte received thousands of petitions for every office, from the highest to the lowest. If he had not had naturally a profound contempt for the human race, he would have conceived it in running over petitions, signed by names illustrious from their ancestry, or celebrated by revolutionary actions in complete opposition to the new functions they were ambitious of fulfilling.

The winter of 1801 at Paris was made extremely agreeable to me, by the readiness with which Fouché granted the applications I made to him for the return of different emigrants: in this way he left me, in the midst of my disgrace, the pleasure of being useful, and I retain a most grateful recollection to him for it. It must be confessed, that in the actions of women, there is always a little coquetry, and that the greater part of their very virtues are mixed with the desire of pleasing, and of being surrounded by friends, whose attachment to them is heightened by the feeling of obligation. In this point of view only, can our sex be pardoned for being fond of influence: but there are occasions when we ought even to sacrifice the pleasure of obliging to preserve our dignity: for we may do every thing for the sake of others, excepting to degrade our character. Our own conscience is as it were the treasure of the Almighty, which we are not permitted to make use of for the advantage of others.

Bonaparte was still at some expense on account of the Institute, upon which he piqued himself so much when he was in Egypt: but there was among the men of letters, and the savants, a petty philosophical opposition, unfortunately of a very bad description, which was entirely directed against the re-establishment of religion. By a fatal caprice, the enlightened spirits in France wished to console themselves for the slavery of this world, by endeavouring to destroy the hopes of a better: this singular inconsistency would not have happened under the protestant religion; but the catholic clergy had enemies, whom their courage and misfortunes had not yet disarmed; and perhaps, it is really difficult to make the authority of the pope, and of priests subject to the pope, harmonize with the independence of a state. Be that as it may, the Institute exhibited for religion, independant of its ministers, none of that profound respect, inseparable from a lofty combination of mind and genius; and Bonaparte was left to support, against

men of more value than himself, opinions which were of more value than them.

In this year (1801), the first consul ordered the king of Spain to make war upon Portugal, and the feeble monarch of that illustrious nation condemned his army to this expedition, equally servile and unjust, against a neighbour, who had no hostile intentions, and whose only offence was his alliance with that England, which has since shewn itself so true a friend to Spain: and all this in obedience to the man who was preparing to deprive him of his very existence. When we have seen these same Spaniards giving with so much energy the signal of the resurrection of the world, we learn to know what nations are, and what are the consequences of refusing them a legal means of expressing their opinion, and regulating their own destiny.

Towards the spring of 1801, the first consul took it into his head to make a king, and a king of the house of Bourbon: he bestowed Tuscany upon him, designating it by the classical name of Etruria, for the purpose of commencing the grand masquerade of Europe. This infant of Spain was ordered to Paris for the purpose of exhibiting to the French the spectacle of a prince of the ancient dynasty humbled before the first consul; more humbled by his gifts than he ever could have been by his persecution. Bonaparte tried upon this royal lamb the experiment of making a king wait in his antechamber: he allowed himself to be applauded at the theatre, upon the recitation of this verse:

"J'ai fait des rois, madame, et n'ai pas voulu l'être:"

(I have made kings, madam, and have not wished to be one:) promising himself to be more than a king, when the opportunity should offer. Every day some fresh blunder of this poor king of Etruria was the subject of conversation: he was taken to the Museum, to the Cabinet of Natural History, and some of his questions about quadrupeds and fishes, which a well educated child of twelve years old would have been ashamed to put, were quoted as proofs of intelligence. In the evening, he was conducted to entertainments, where the female opera dancers came and mixed with the ladies of the new court; the little monarch, in spite of his devotion, preferred dancing with them, and in return sent them next day presents of elegant and good books for their instruction. This period of transition from revolutionary habits to monarchical pretensions in France, was a most singular one; as there was as little independence in the one, as dignity in the other, their absurdities harmonised perfectly together; each of them in their own way formed a group round the parti-coloured potentate, who at

the same time employed the forcible means of both regimes.

For the last time, the 14th of July, the anniversary of the revolution, was celebrated this year, and a pompous proclamation was put forth to remind the people of the advantages resulting from that day, not one of which advantages the first consul had not made up his mind to destroy. Of all the collections that were ever made, that of the proclamations of this man is the most singular: it is a complete encyclopedia of contradictions; and if chaos itself were employed to instruct the earth, it would doubtless, in a similar way, throw at the heads of mankind, eulogiums of peace and war, of knowledge and prejudices, of liberty and despotism, praises and insults upon all governments and all religions.

It was at this period that Bonaparte sent General Leclerc to Saint Domingo, and designated him in his decree our brother-in-law. This first royal we, which associated the French with the prosperity of this family, was a most bitter pill to me. He obliged his beautiful sister to accompany her husband to Saint Domingo, where her health was completely ruined: a singular act of despotism for a man who is not accustomed to great severity of principles in those about his person; but he makes use of morality only to harass some and dazzle others. A peace was in the sequel concluded with the chief of the negroes, Toussaint-Louverture. This man was, no doubt, a great criminal, but Bonaparte had signed conditions with him, in complete violation of which Toussaint was conducted to a prison in France, where he ended his days in the most miserable manner. Perhaps Bonaparte himself hardly recollects this crime, because he has been less reproached with it than others.

In a great forge, we see with astonishment the violence of the machines which are set in motion by a single will: these hammers, those flatteners seem so many persons, or rather devouring animals. Should you attempt to resist their force, they would annihilate you; notwithstanding, all this apparent fury is calculated beforehand, and a single mover gives action to these springs. The tyranny of Bonaparte is represented to my eyes by this image; he makes thousands of men perish, as these wheels beat the iron, and his agents are the greater part of them equally insensible; the invisible impulse of these human machines proceeds from a will at once violent and methodical, which transforms moral life into its servile instrument. Finally, to complete the comparison, it is sufficient to seize the mover to restore every thing to a state of repose.



## CHAPTER 8.

Journey to Coppet.—Preliminaries of peace with England.

I went, according to my usual happy custom, to spend the summer with my father. I found him extremely indignant at the state of affairs; and as he had all his life been as much attached to real liberty as he detested popular anarchy, he felt inclined to draw his pen against the tyranny of one, after having so long fought against that of the many. My father was fond of glory, and however prudent his character, hazards of every kind did not displease him, when the public esteem was to be deserved by incurring them, I was quite sensible of the danger to which any work of his which should displease the first consul, would expose myself; but I could not resolve to stifle this song of the swan, who wished to make himself heard once more on the tomb of French liberty. I encouraged him therefore in his design, but we deferred to the following year the question whether what he wrote should be published.

The news of the signature of the preliminaries of peace between England and France, came to put the crown to Bonaparte's good fortune. When I learned that England had recognised his power, it seemed to me that I had been wrong in hating it; but circumstances were not long in relieving me from this scruple. The most remarkable article of these preliminaries was the complete evacuation of Egypt: that expedition therefore had had no other result than to make Bonaparte talked of. Several publications written in places beyond the reach of Bonaparte's power, accuse him of having made Kleber be assassinated in Egypt, because he was jealous of his influence; and I have been assured by persons worthy of credit, that the duel in which General D'Estaing was killed by General Regnier was provoked by a discussion on this point. It appears to me, however, scarcely credible that Bonaparte should have had the means of arming a Turk against the life of a French general, at a moment when he was far removed from the theatre of the crime. Nothing ought to be said against him of which there are not proofs;

the discovery of a single error of this kind among the most notorious truths would tarnish their lustre. We must not fight Bonaparte with any of his own weapons.

I delayed my return to Paris to avoid being present at the great fete in honour of the peace. I know no sensation more painful than these public rejoicings in which the heart refuses to participate. We feel a sort of contempt for this booby people which comes to celebrate the yoke preparing for it: these dull victims dancing before the palace of their sacrificer: this first consul designated the father of the nation which he was about to devour: this mixture of stupidity on one side, and cunning on the other: the stale hypocrisy of the courtiers throwing a veil over the arrogance of the master: all inspired me with an insurmountable disgust. It was necessary however to constrain one's feelings, and during these solemnities you were exposed to meet with official congratulations, which at other times it was more easy to avoid.

Bonaparte then proclaimed that peace was the first want of the world: every day he signed some new treaty, therein resembling the care with which Polyphemus counted the sheep as he drove them into his den. The United States of America also made peace with France, and sent as their plenipotentiary, a man who did not know a word of French, apparently ignorant that the most complete acquaintance with the language was barely sufficient to penetrate the truth, in a government which knew so well how to conceal it.

The first consul, on the presentation of Mr. Livingston, complimented him, through an interpreter, on the purity of manners in America, and added "the old world is very corrupt;" then turning round to M. de —, he repeated twice, "explain to him that the old world is very corrupt: you know something of it, don't you?" This was one of the most agreeable speeches he ever addressed in public to this courtier, who was possessed of better taste than his fellows, and wished to preserve some dignity in his manners, although he sacrificed that of the mind to his ambition.

Meantime, however, monarchical institutions were rapidly advancing under the shadow of the republic. A pretorian guard was organized: the crown diamonds were made use of to ornament the sword of the first consul, and there was observable in his dress, as well as in the political situation of the day, a mixture of the old and new regime: he had his dresses covered with gold, and his hair cropped, a little body, and a large head, an indescribable air of awkwardness and

arrogance, of disdain and embarrassment, which altogether formed a combination of the bad graces of a parvenu, with all the audacity of a tyrant. His smile has been cried up as agreeable; my own opinion is, that in any other person it would have been found unpleasant; for this smile, breaking out from a confirmed serious mood, rather resembled an involuntary twitch than a natural movement, and the expression of his eyes was never in unison with that of his mouth; but as his smile had the effect of encouraging those who were about him, the relief which it gave them made it be taken for a charm. I recollect once being told very gravely by a member of the Institute, a counsellor of state, that Bonaparte's nails were perfectly well made. Another time a courtier exclaimed, "The first consul's hand is beautiful!" "Ah! for heaven's sake, Sir," replied a young nobleman of the ancient noblesse, who was not then a chamberlain, "don't let us talk politics." The same courtier, speaking affectionately of the first consul, said, "He frequently displays the most infantine sweetness." Certainly, in his own family, he amused himself sometimes with innocent games; he has been seen to dance with his generals; it is even said that at Munich, in the palace of the king and queen of Bavaria, to whom no doubt this gaiety appeared very odd, he assumed one evening the Spanish costume of the Emperor Charles VII. and began dancing an old French country dance, la Monaco.

## CHAPTER 9.

Paris in 1802.—Bonaparte President of the Italian republic.—My return to Coppet.

Every step of the first consul announced more and more openly his boundless ambition. While the peace with England was negotiating at Amiens, he assembled at Lyons the Cisalpine Consulta, consisting of the deputies from Lombardy and the adjacent states, which had been formed into a republic under the directory, and who now inquired what new form of government they were to assume. As people were not yet accustomed to the idea of the unity of the French republic being transformed into the unity of one man, no one ever dreamt of the same person uniting on his own head the first consulship of France and the presidency of Italy; it was expected therefore that Count Melzi would be nominated to the office, as the person most distinguished by his knowledge, his illustrious birth, and the respect of his fellow citizens. All of a sudden the report got abroad that Bonaparte was to get himself nominated; and at this news a moment of life seemed still perceptible in the public feeling. It was said that the French constitution deprived of the right of citizenship whoever accepted employment in a foreign country; but was he a Frenchman, who only wanted to make use of the great nation for the oppression of Europe, and vice versa? Bonaparte juggled the nomination of president out of all these Italians, who only learned a few hours before proceeding to the scrutiny, that they must appoint him. They were told to join the name of Count Melzi, as vice-president, to that of Bonaparte. They were assured that they would only be governed by the former, who would always reside among them, and that the latter was merely ambitious of an honorary title. Bonaparte said to them himself in his usual emphatic manner, "Cisalpines, I shall preserve only the great idea of your interests." But the great idea meant the complete power. The day after this election, they were seriously occupied in making a constitution, as if any one could exist by the side of this iron hand. The nation was divided into three

classes; the possidenti, the dotti, and the commerrianti. The landholders, to be taxed; the literary men, to be silenced; and the merchants, to have all the ports shut against them. These sounding words in Italian are even better adapted to the purposes of quackery than the corresponding French.

Bonaparte had changed the name of Cisalpine republic into that of Italian republic, thereby giving Europe an anticipation of his future conquests in the rest of Italy. Such a step was every thing but pacific, and yet it did not prevent the signature of the treaty of Amiens; so much did Europe, and even England itself, then desire peace! I was at the English ambassador's at the moment of his receiving the terms of this treaty. He read them aloud to the persons who were dining with him, and it is impossible for me to express the astonishment I felt at every article. England restored all her conquests; she restored Malta, of which it had been said, when it was taken by the French, that if there had been nobody in the fortress, they would never have been able to enter it. In short, she gave up every thing, and without compensation, to a power which she had constantly beaten at sea. What an extraordinary effect of the passion for peace! And yet this man, who had so miraculously obtained such advantages, had not the patience to make use of them for a few years, to put the French navy in a state to meet that of England. Scarcely had the treaty of Amiens been signed, when Napoleon, by a senatus-consultum, annexed Piedmont to France. During the twelve months the peace lasted, everyday was marked by some new proclamation, provoking to a breach of the treaty. The motives of this conduct it is easy to penetrate; Bonaparte wished to dazzle the French nation, now by unexpected treaties of peace, at other times by wars which would make him necessary to it. He believed that a period of disturbance was favourable to usurpation. The newspapers, which were instructed to boast of the advantages of peace in the spring of 1802, said then "We are approaching the moment when systems of politics will become of no effect." If Bonaparte had really wished it, he might at that period have easily bestowed twenty years of peace upon Europe, in the state of terror and ruin to which it was reduced.

The friends of liberty in the tribunate were still endeavouring to struggle against the constantly increasing power of the first consul; but they had not then the advantage of being seconded by public opinion. The greater number of the opposition tribunes were every way deserving of esteem: but there were three or four persons who acted along with them, who had been guilty of revolutionary excesses, and the government took especial care to throw upon all, the blame which could only attach to a few. It is certain, however, that men collected in a

public assembly generally end in electrifying themselves with the sparks of mental dignity; and this tribunate, even such as it was, would, had it been allowed to continue, have prevented the establishment of tyranny. Already the majority of votes had nominated, as a candidate for the senate, Daunou, an honest and enlightened republican, but certainly not a man to be dreaded. This was sufficient, however, to determine the first consul to the elimination of the tribunate; which means to make twenty of the most energetic members of the assembly retire one by one, on the designation of the senators, and to have them replaced by twenty others, devoted to the government. The eighty who remained, were each year to undergo the same operation by fourths. A lesson was in this manner given them of what they were expected to do, to retain their places, or in other words, their salary of fifteen thousand francs; the first consul wishing to preserve some time longer this mutilated assembly, which might serve for two or three years more as a popular mask to his tyrannical acts.

Among the proscribed tribunes were several of my friends; but my opinion was in this instance altogether independent of my attachments. Perhaps, however, I might feel a greater degree of irritation at the injustice which fell upon persons with whom I was connected, and I have no doubt that I allowed myself the expression of some sarcastic remarks on this hypocritical method of interpreting the unfortunate constitution, into which they had endeavoured to prevent the entrance of the smallest spark of liberty.

There was at that time formed round general Bernadotte, a party of generals and senators, who wished to have his opinion, if some means could not be devised to stop the progress of the usurpation, which was now rapidly approaching. He proposed a variety of plans, all founded upon some legislative measure or other, considering any other means as contrary to his principles. But to obtain any such measure, it required a deliberation of at least some members of the senate, and not one of them was found bold enough to subscribe such an instrument. While this most perilous negotiation continued, I was in the habit of seeing general Bernadotte and his friends very frequently; this was more than enough to ruin me, if their designs were discovered. Bonaparte remarked that people always came away from my house less attached to him than when they entered it; in short he determined to single me out as the only culprit, among many, who were much more so than I was, but whom it was of more consequence to him to spare.

Just at this time I set out for Coppet, and reached my father's house in a most painful state of anxiety and mental oppression. My letters from Paris informed

me, that after my departure, the first consul had expressed himself very warmly on the subject of my connections with general Bernadotte. There was every appearance of his being resolved to punish me; but he paused at the idea of sacrificing general Bernadotte; either because his military talents were necessary to him; restrained by the family ties which connected them; afraid of the greater popularity of Bernadotte with the French army; or finally because there is a certain charm in his manners, which renders it difficult even to Bonaparte to become entirely his enemy. What provoked the first consul still more than the opinions which he attributed to me, was the number of strangers who came to visit me. The Prince of Orange, son of the Stadtholder, did me the honour to dine with me, for which he was reproached by Bonaparte. The existence of a woman, who was visited on account of her literary reputation, was but a trifle; but that trifle was totally independant of him, and was sufficient to make him resolve to crush me.

In this year, 1802, the affair of the princes, who had possessions in Germany was settled. The whole of that negociation was conducted at Paris, to the great profit, it was said, of the ministers who were employed in it. Be that as it may, it was at this period that began the diplomatic spoliation of Europe, which was only stopped at its very extremities.

All the great noblemen of feudal Germany, were seen at Paris exhibiting their ceremonial, whose obsequious formalities were much more agreeable to the first consul than the still easy manner of the French; and asking back what belonged to them with a servility which would almost make one lose the right to one's own property, so much had it the air of regarding the authority of justice as nothing.

A nation singularly proud, the English, was not at this time altogether exempt from a degree of curiosity about the person of the first consul, approaching to homage. The ministerial party regarded him in his proper light; but the opposition, which ought to have a greater hatred of tyranny, as it is supposed to be more enthusiastic for liberty, the opposition party, and Fox himself, whose talents and goodness of heart one cannot recollect without admiration, and the tenderest emotion, committed the error of shewing too much attention to Bonaparte, thereby serving to prolong the mistake of those, who wished still to confound with the French revolution, the most decided enemy of the first principles of that revolution.

## CHAPTER 10.

New symptoms of Bonaparte's ill will to my father and myself.  
—Affairs of Switzerland.

At the beginning of the winter 1802-3, when I saw by the papers that so many illustrious Englishmen, and so many of the most intelligent persons in France were collected in Paris, I felt, I confess, the strongest desire to be among them. I do not dissemble, that a residence in Paris has always appeared to me the most agreeable of all others; I was born there—there I have passed my infancy and early youth—and there only could I meet the generation which had known my father, and the friends who had with us passed through the horrors of the revolution. This love of country, which has attached the most strongly constituted minds, lays still stronger hold of us, when it unites the enjoyments of intellect with the affections of the heart, and the habits of imagination. French conversation exists nowhere but in Paris, and conversation has been since my infancy, my greatest pleasure. I experienced such grief at the apprehension of being deprived of this residence, that my reason could not support itself against it. I was then in the full vivacity of life, and it is precisely the want of animated enjoyment, which leads most frequently to despair, as it renders that resignation very difficult, without which we cannot support the vicissitudes of life.

The prefect of Geneva had received no orders to refuse me my passports for Paris, but I knew that the first consul had said in the midst of his circle, that I would do well not to return; and he was already in the habit, on subjects of this nature, of dictating his pleasure in conversation, in order to prevent his being called upon, by the anticipation of his orders. If he had in this manner said, that such and such an individual ought to go and hang himself, I believe that he would have been displeased, if the submissive subject had not in obedience to the hint, bought a rope and prepared the gallows. Another proof of his ill will to me, was the manner in which the French journals criticized my romance of



Delphine, which appeared at this time; they thought proper to denounce it as immoral, and the work which had received my father's approbation was condemned by these courtier criticks. There might be found in that book, that fire of youth, and ardour after happiness, which ten years, and those years of suffering, have taught me to direct in another manner. But my censors were not capable of feeling this sort of error, and merely acted in obedience to that voice which ordered them to pull to pieces the work of the father, prior to attacking that of the daughter. In fact we heard from all quarters, that the true reason of the first consul's anger, was this last work of my father, in which the whole scaffolding of his monarchy was delineated by anticipation. My father, and also my mother, during her life-time, had both the same predilection for a Paris residence that I had. I was extremely sorrowful at being separated from my friends, and at being unable to give my children that taste for the fine arts, which is acquired with difficulty in the country; and as there was no positive prohibition of my return in the letter of the consul Lebrun,\* but merely some significant hints, I formed a hundred projects of returning, and trying if the first consul, who at that time was still tender of public opinion, would venture to brave the murmurs which my banishment would not fail to excite. My father, who condescended sometimes to reproach himself for being partly the cause of spoiling my fortune, conceived the idea of going himself to Paris, to speak to the first consul in my favor. I confess, that at first I consented to accept this proof of my father's attachment; I represented to myself such an idea of the ascendancy which his presence would produce, that I thought it impossible to resist him; his age, the fine expression of his looks, and the union of so much noble mindedness, and refinement of intellect, appeared to me likely even to captivate Bonaparte himself. I knew not at that time, to what a degree the consul was irritated against his book; but fortunately for me, I reflected that these very advantages were only more likely to excite in the first consul a stronger desire of humbling their possessor. Assuredly he would have found means, at least in appearance, of accomplishing that desire; as power in France has many allies, and if the spirit of opposition has been frequently displayed, it has only been because the weakness of the government has offered it an easy victory. It cannot be too often repeated, that what the French love above all things, is success, and that with them, power easily succeeds in making misfortune ridiculous. Finally, thank God! I awoke from the illusion to which I had given myself up, and positively refused the noble sacrifice which my father proposed to make for me. When he saw me completely decided not to accept it, I perceived how much it would have cost him. I lost him fifteen months afterwards, and if he had then executed the journey he proposed, I should have attributed his illness to that

cause, and remorse would have still kept my wound festering.

\* This letter is the same which is spoken of in the 4th part of the Considerations on the French revolution, chap. 7.  
Editor.

It was also during the winter of 1802-3, that Switzerland took arms against the unitarian constitution which had been imposed upon her. Singular mania of the French revolutionists to compel all countries to adopt a political organization similar to that of France! There are, doubtless, principles common to all countries, such as those which secure the civil and political rights of free people; but of what consequence is it whether there should be a limited monarchy, as in England, or a federal republic, like the United States, or the Thirteen Swiss Cantons? and was it necessary to reduce Europe to a single idea, like the Roman people to a single head, in order to be able to command and to change the whole in one day!

The first consul certainly attached no importance to this or that form of constitution, or even to any constitution whatever; but what was of consequence to him, was to make the best use he could of Switzerland for his own interest, and with that view, he conducted himself prudently. He combined the various plans which were offered to him, and drew up a form of constitution which conciliated sufficiently well the ancient habits with the modern pretensions, and in causing himself to be named Mediator of the Swiss Confederation, he drew more persons from that country, than he could have driven from it, if he had governed it directly. He made the deputies nominated by the cantons and principal cities of Switzerland come to Paris; and on the 9th of January 1803, he had a conference of seven hours with ten delegates, chosen from the general deputation. He dwelt upon the necessity of re-establishing the democratic cantons in their former state, pronouncing on this occasion some declamations on the cruelty of depriving shepherds dispersed among the mountains, of their sole amusement, namely, popular assemblies; stating also, (what concerned him more nearly,) the reasons he had for mistrusting the aristocratic cantons. He insisted strongly on the importance of Switzerland to France. These were his words, as they are given in a narrative of this conference: "I can declare that since I have been at the head of this government, no power has taken the least interest in Switzerland: 'twas I who made the Helvetic republic be acknowledged at Luneville: Austria cared not the least for it. At Amiens I wished to do the same, and England refused it: but England has nothing to do with Switzerland. If

she had expressed the least apprehension that I wished to be declared your Landamann, I would have been so. It has been said that England encouraged the last insurrection; if the English cabinet had taken a single official step, or if there had been a syllable said about it in the London Gazette, I would have immediately united you with France." What incredible language! Thus, the existence of a people who had secured their independence in the midst of Europe by the most heroic efforts, and maintained it for five centuries by wisdom and moderation, this existence would have been annihilated by a movement of spleen which the least accident might have excited in a being so capricious. Bonaparte added in this same conference, that it was unpleasant to him to have a constitution to make, because it exposed him to be hissed, which he had no partiality for. This expression (*etre siffle*) bears the stamp of the deceitfully affable vulgarity in which he frequently took pleasure in indulging. Roederer and Desmeunier wrote the act of mediation from his dictation, and the whole passed during the time that his troops occupied Switzerland. He has since withdrawn them, and this country, it must be confessed, has been better treated by Napoleon than the rest of Europe, although both in a political and military point of view more completely dependent upon him; consequently it will remain tranquil in the general insurrection. The people of Europe were disposed to such a degree of patience that it has required a Bonaparte to exhaust it.

The London newspapers attacked the first consul bitterly enough; the English nation was too enlightened not to perceive the drift of his actions. Whenever any translations from the English papers were brought to him, he used to apostrophize Lord Whitworth, who answered him with equal coolness and propriety that the King of Great Britain himself was not protected from the sarcasms of newswriters, and that the constitution permitted no violation of their liberty on that score. However, the English government caused M. Peltier to be prosecuted for some articles in his journal directed against the first consul. Peltier had the honour to be defended by Mr. Mackintosh, who made upon this occasion one of the most eloquent speeches that has been read in modern times; I will mention farther on, under what circumstances this speech came into my hands.

## CHAPTER 11.

Rupture with England.—Commencement of my Exile.

I was at Geneva, living from taste and from circumstances in the society of the English, when the news of the declaration of war reached us. The rumour immediately spread that the English travellers would all be made prisoners: as nothing similar had ever been heard of in the law of European nations, I gave no credit to it, and my security was nearly proving injurious to my friends: they contrived however, to save themselves. But persons entirely unconnected with political affairs, among whom was Lord Beverley, the father of eleven children, returning from Italy with his wife and daughters, and a hundred other persons provided with French passports, some of them repairing to different universities for education, others to the South for the recovery of their health, all travelling under the safeguard of laws recognised by all nations, were arrested, and have been languishing for ten years in country towns, leading the most miserable life that the imagination can conceive. This scandalous act was productive of no advantage; scarcely two thousand English, including very few military, became the victims of this caprice of the tyrant, making a few poor individuals suffer, to gratify his spleen against the invincible nation to which they belong.

During the summer of 1803 began the great farce of the invasion of England; flat-bottomed boats were ordered to be built from one end of France to the other; they were even constructed in the forests on the borders of the great roads. The French, who have in all things a very strong rage for imitation, cut out deal upon deal, and heaped phrase upon phrase: while in Picardy some erected a triumphal arch, on which was inscribed, "the road to London," others wrote, "To Bonaparte the Great. We request you will admit us on board the vessel which will bear you to England, and with you the destiny and the vengeance of the French people." This vessel, on board of which Bonaparte was to embark, has had time to wear herself out in harbour. Others put, as a device for their flags in the roadstead, "a

good wind, and thirty hours". In short, all France resounded with gasconades, of which Bonaparte alone knew perfectly the secret.

Towards the autumn I believed myself forgotten by Bonaparte: I heard from Paris that he was completely absorbed in his English expedition, that he was preparing to set out for the coast, and to embark himself to direct the descent. I put no faith in this project; but I flattered myself that he would be satisfied if I lived at a few leagues distance from Paris, with the small number of friends who would come that distance to visit a person in disgrace. I thought also that being sufficiently well known to make my banishment talked of all over Europe, the first consul would wish to avoid this eclat. I had calculated according to my own wishes; but I was not yet thoroughly acquainted with the character of the man who was to domineer over Europe. Far from wishing to keep upon terms with persons who had distinguished themselves, in whatever line that was, he wished to make all such merely a pedestal for his own statue, either by treading them underfoot, or by making them subservient to his designs.

I arrived at a little country seat, I had at ten leagues from Paris, with the project of establishing myself during the winter in this retreat, as long as the system of tyranny lasted. I only wished to see my friends there, and to go occasionally to the theatre, and to the museum. This was all the residence I wished in Paris, in the state of distrust and espionage which had begun to be established, and I confess I cannot see what inconsistency there would have been in the first consul allowing me to remain in this state of voluntary exile. I had been there peaceably for a month, when a female, of that description which is so numerous, endeavouring to make herself of consequence at the expense of another female, more distinguished than herself, went and told the first consul that the roads were covered with people going to visit me. Nothing certainly could be more false. The exiles whom the world went to see, were those who in the eighteenth century were almost as powerful as the monarchs who banished them; but when power is resisted, it is because it is not tyrannical; for it can only be so by the general submission. Be that as it may, Bonaparte immediately seized the pretext, or the motive that was given him to banish me, and I was apprized by one of my friends, that a gendarme would be with me in a few days with an order for me to depart. One has no idea, in countries where routine at least secures individuals from any act of injustice, of the terror which the sudden news of arbitrary acts of this nature inspires. It is besides extremely easy to shake me; my imagination more readily lays hold of trouble than hope, and although I have often found my chagrin dissipated by the occurrence of novel circumstances, it always appears to

me, when it does come, that nothing can deliver me from it. In fact it is very easy to be unhappy, especially when we aspire to the privileged lots of existence.

I withdrew immediately on receiving the above intimation to the house of a most excellent and intelligent lady\*, to whom I ought to acknowledge I was recommended by a person who held an important office in the government\*; I shall never forget the courage with which he offered me an asylum himself: but he would have the same good intentions at present, when he could not act in that manner without completely endangering his existence. In proportion as tyranny is allowed to advance, it grows, as we look at it, like a phantom, but it seizes with the strength of a real being. I arrived then, at the country seat of a person whom I scarcely knew, in the midst of a society to which I was an entire stranger, and bearing in my heart the most cutting chagrin, which I made every effort to disguise. During the night, when alone with a female who had been for several years devoted to my service, I sat listening at the window, in expectation of hearing every moment the steps of a horse gendarme; during the day I endeavoured to make myself agreeable, in order to conceal my situation. I wrote a letter from this place to Joseph Bonaparte, in which I described with perfect truth the extent of my unhappiness. A retreat at ten leagues distance from Paris, was the sole object of my ambition, and I felt despairingly, that if I was once banished, it would be for a great length of time, perhaps for ever. Joseph and his brother Lucien generously used all their efforts to save me, and they were not the only ones, as will presently be seen.

\* Madame de Latour.

\* Regnault de Saint-Jean-d'Angely.

Madame Recamier, so celebrated for her beauty, and whose character is even expressed in her beauty, proposed to me to come and live at her country seat at St. Brice, at two leagues from Paris. I accepted her offer, for I had no idea that I could thereby injure a person so much a stranger to political affairs; I believed her protected against every thing, notwithstanding the generosity of her character. I found collected there a most delightful society, and there I enjoyed for the last time, all that I was about to quit. It was during this stormy period of my existence, that I received the speech of Mr. Mackintosh; there I read those pages, where he gives us the portrait of a jacobin, who had made himself an object of terror during the revolution to children, women and old men, and who is now bending himself double under the rod of the Corsican, who ravishes from him, even to the last atom of that liberty, for which he pretended to have taken

arms. This morceau of the finest eloquence touched me to my very soul; it is the privilege of superior writers sometimes, unwittingly, to solace the unfortunate in all countries, and at all times. France was in a state of such complete silence around me, that this voice which suddenly responded to my soul, seemed to me to come down from heaven; it came from a land of liberty. After having passed a few days with Madame Recamier, without hearing my banishment at all spoken of, I persuaded myself that Bonaparte had renounced it. Nothing is more common than to tranquillize ourselves against a threatened danger, when we see no symptoms of it around us. I felt so little disposition to enter into any hostile plan or action against this man, that I thought it impossible for him not to leave me in peace; and after some days longer, I returned to my own country seat, satisfied that he had adjourned his resolution against me, and was contented with having frightened me. In truth I had been sufficiently so, not to make me change my opinion, or oblige me to deny it, but to repress completely that remnant of republican habit which had led me the year before, to speak with too much openness.

I was at table with three of my friends, in a room which commanded a view of the high road, and the entrance gate; it was now the end of September. At four o'clock, a man in a brown coat, on horseback, stops at the gate and rings: I was then certain of my fate. He asked for me, and I went to receive him in the garden. In walking towards him, the perfume of the flowers, and the beauty of the sun particularly struck me. How different are the sensations which affect us from the combinations of society, from those of nature! This man informed me, that he was the commandant of the gendarmerie of Versailles; but that his orders were to go out of uniform, that he might not alarm me; he shewed me a letter signed by Bonaparte, which contained the order to banish me to forty leagues distance from Paris, with an injunction to make me depart within four and twenty hours; at the same time, to treat me with all the respect due to a lady of distinction. He pretended to consider me as a foreigner, and as such, subject to the police: this respect for individual liberty did not last long, as very soon afterwards, other Frenchmen and Frenchwomen were banished without any form of trial. I told the gendarme officer, that to depart within twenty four hours, might be convenient to conscripts, but not to a woman and children, and in consequence, I proposed to him to accompany me to Paris, where I had occasion to pass three days to make the necessary arrangements for my journey. I got into my carriage with my children and this officer, who had been selected for this occasion, as the most literary of the gendarmes. In truth, he began complimenting me upon my writings. "You see," said I to him, "the

consequences of being a woman of intellect, and I would recommend you, if there is occasion, to dissuade any females of your family from attempting it." I endeavoured to keep up my spirits by boldness, but I felt the barb in my heart.

I stopt for a few minutes at Madame Recamier's; I found there General Junot, who from regard to her, promised to go next morning to speak to the first consul in my behalf; and he certainly did so with the greatest warmth. One would have thought, that a man so useful from his military ardor to the power of Bonaparte, would have had influence enough with him, to make him spare a female; but the generals of Bonaparte, even when obtaining numberless favours for themselves, have no influence with him. When they ask for money or places, Bonaparte finds that in character; they are in a manner then in his power, as they place themselves in his dependance; but if, what rarely happens to them, they should think of defending an unfortunate person, or opposing an act of injustice, he would make them feel very quickly, that they are only arms employed to support slavery, by submitting to it themselves.

I got to Paris to a house I had recently hired, but not yet inhabited; I had selected it with care in the quarter and exposition which pleased me; and had already in imagination set myself down in the drawing room with some friends, whose conversation is in my opinion, the greatest pleasure the human mind can enjoy. Now, I only entered this house, with the certainty of quitting it, and I passed whole nights in traversing the apartments, in which I regretted the deprivation of still more happiness than I could have hoped for in it. My gendarme returned every morning, like the man in Blue-beard, to press me to set out on the following day, and every day I was weak enough to ask for one more day. My friends came to dine with me, and sometimes we were gay, as if to drain the cup of sorrow, in exhibiting ourselves in the most amiable light to each other, at the moment of separating perhaps for ever. They told me that this man, who came every day to summon me to depart, reminded them of those times of terror, when the gendarmes came to summon their victims to the scaffold.

Some persons may perhaps be surprized at my comparing exile to death; but there have been great men, both in ancient and modern times, who have sunk under this punishment. We meet with more persons brave against the scaffold, than against the loss of country. In all codes of law, perpetual banishment is regarded as one of the severest punishments; and the caprice of one man inflicts in France, as an amusement, what conscientious judges only condemn criminals to with regret. Private circumstances offered me an asylum, and resources of



fortune, in Switzerland, the country of my parents; in those respects, I was less to be pitied than many others, and yet I have suffered cruelly. I consider it, therefore, to be doing a service to the world, to signalize the reasons, why no sovereign should ever be allowed to possess the arbitrary power of banishment. No deputy, no writer, will ever express his thoughts freely, if he can be banished when his frankness has displeased; no man will dare to speak with sincerity, if the happiness of his whole family is to suffer for it. Women particularly, who are destined to be the support and reward of enthusiasm, will endeavour to stifle generous feelings in themselves, if they find that the result of their expression will be, either to have themselves torn from the objects of their affection, or their own existence sacrificed, by accompanying them in their exile.

On the eve of the last day which was granted me, Joseph Bonaparte made one more effort in my favour; and his wife, who is a lady of the most perfect sweetness and simplicity, had the kindness to come and propose to me to pass a few days at her country seat at Morfontaine. I accepted her invitation most gratefully, for I could not but feel sensibly affected at the goodness of Joseph, who received me in his own house, at the very time that I was the object of his brother's persecution. I passed three days there, and notwithstanding the perfect politeness of the master and mistress of the house, felt my situation very painfully.

I saw only men connected with the government and breathed only the air of that authority which had declared itself my enemy; and yet the simplest rules of politeness and gratitude forbid me from shewing what I felt. I had only my eldest son with me, who was then too young for me to converse with him on such subjects. I passed whole hours in examining the gardens of Morfontaine, among the finest that could be seen in France, and the possessor of which, then tranquil, appeared to me really an object of envy. He has been since exiled upon thrones, where I am sure he has often regretted his beautiful retreat.

## CHAPTER 12.

Departure for Germany.—Arrival at Weimar.

I hesitated about the course I was to adopt on quitting France. Should I return to my father, or should I go into Germany? My father would have welcomed his poor bird, ruffled by the storm, with ineffable goodness; but I dreaded the disgust of returning, sent back in this manner, to a country, which I was accused of finding rather monotonous. I was also desirous of exhibiting myself, by the kind reception which I had been promised in Germany, superior to the outrage I had received from the first consul; and of placing in public contrast the kind reception of the ancient dynasties, with the rude impertinence of that which was preparing to subjugate France. This movement of self-love triumphed, for my misfortune; I should have again seen my father, if I had returned to Geneva.

I requested Joseph to ascertain if I might go into Prussia, for it was necessary for me to be at least certain, that the French ambassador would not reclaim me abroad as a Frenchwoman, while in France I was proscribed as a foreigner. Joseph went in consequence to St. Cloud. I was obliged to wait his answer at a public-house, at two leagues from Paris, not daring to return to my own house in the city. A whole day passed before this answer reached me. Not wishing to attract notice by remaining longer at the house where I was, I made a tour of the walls of Paris in search of another, at the same distance of two leagues, but on a different road. This wandering life, at a few steps from my friends and my own residence, occasioned me such painful sensations as I cannot recollect without shuddering. The room is still present to me; the window where I passed the whole day, looking out for the messenger, a thousand painful details, which misfortune always draws after it, the extreme generosity of some friends, the veiled calculations of others, altogether put my mind in such a cruel state of agitation, as I could not wish to my greatest enemy. At last this message, on which I still placed some hopes, arrived. Joseph sent me some excellent letters of

recommendation for Berlin, and bid me adieu in a most noble and touching manner. I was obliged, therefore, to depart. Benjamin Constant was good enough to accompany me; but as he also was very fond of Paris, I felt extremely for the sacrifice he made me. Every step the horses advanced made me ill, and when the postillions boasted of having driven me quickly, I could not help sighing at the disagreeable service they were rendering me. In this way I travelled forty leagues without being able to regain my self-possession. At last we stopped at Chalons, and Benjamin Constant, rallying his spirits, relieved by his wonderful powers of conversation, at least for some moments, the weight which oppressed me. Next day we continued our route as far as Metz, where I wished to stop to wait for news from my father. There I passed fifteen days, and met one of the most amiable and intelligent men whom France and Germany combined could produce, M. Charles Villers. I was delighted with his society, but it renewed my regret for that first of pleasures, a conversation, in which there reigns the most perfect harmony in all that is felt, with all that is expressed.

My father was extremely indignant at the treatment I had received at Paris; he considered that his family were in this manner proscribed, and driven as criminals out of that country which he had so faithfully served. He recommended me to pass the winter in Germany, and not to return to him until the spring. Alas! alas! I calculated on then carrying back to him the harvest of new ideas which I was going to collect in this journey. For several years preceding he was frequently telling me that my letters and conversation were all that kept up his connection with the world. His mind had so much vivacity and penetration, that one was excited to think by the pleasure of talking to him. I made observations to report to him,—I listened, to repeat to him. Ever since I have lost him, I see and feel only half what I did, when I had the object in view of giving him pleasure by the picture of my impressions. At Frankfort, my daughter, then five years old, fell dangerously ill. I knew nobody in that city, and was entirely ignorant of the language; even the physician to whose care I entrusted my child scarcely spoke a word of French. Oh! how much my father shared with me in all my trouble! what letters he wrote me! what a number of consultations of physicians, all copied with his own hand, he sent me from Geneva! Never were the harmony of sensibility and reason carried further; never was there any one like him, possessed of such lively emotion for the sufferings of his friends, always active in assisting them, always prudent in the choice of the means of being so; in short, admirable in every thing. My heart absolutely requires this declaration, for what is now to him even the voice of posterity!

I arrived at Weimar, where I resumed my courage, on seeing, through the difficulties of the language, the immense intellectual riches which existed out of France. I learned to read German; I listened attentively to Goethe and Wieland, who, fortunately for me, spoke French extremely well. I comprehended the mind and genius of Schiller, in spite of the difficulty he felt in expressing himself in a foreign language. The society of the duke and duchess of Weimar pleased me exceedingly, and I passed three months there, during which the study of German literature gave all the occupation to my mind which it requires to prevent me from being devoured by my own feelings.

## CHAPTER 13.

Berlin.—Prince Louis-Ferdinand.

I left Weimar for Berlin, and there I saw that charming queen, since destined to so many misfortunes. The king received me with great kindness, and I may say that during the six weeks I remained in that city, I never heard an individual who did not speak in praise of the justice of his government. This, however does not prevent me from thinking it always desirable for a country to possess constitutional forms, to guarantee to it, by the permanent co-operation of the nation, the advantages it derives from the virtues of a good king. Prussia, under the reign of its present monarch, no doubt possessed the greater part of these advantages; but the public spirit which misfortune has developed in it did not then exist; the military regime had prevented public opinion from acquiring strength, and the absence of a constitution, in which every individual could make himself known by his merit, had left the state unprovided with men of talent, capable of defending it. The favor of a king, being necessarily arbitrary, cannot be sufficient to excite emulation; circumstances which are peculiar to the interior of courts, may keep a man of great merit from the helm of affairs, or place there a very ordinary person. Routine, likewise, is singularly powerful in countries where the regal power has no one to contradict it; even the justice of a king leads him to place barriers around him, by keeping every one in his place; and it was almost without example in Prussia, to find a man deprived of his civil or military employments on account of incapacity. What an advantage therefore ought not the French army to have, composed almost entirely of men born of the revolution, like the soldiers of Cadmus from the teeth of the dragon! What an advantage it had over those old commanders of the Prussian fortified places and armies, to whom every thing that was new was entirely unknown! A conscientious monarch who has not the happiness, and I use the word designedly, the happiness to have a parliament as in England, makes a habit of every thing, in order to avoid making too much use of his own will: and in the

present times we must abandon ancient usages, and look for strength of character and understanding, wherever they can be found. Be that as it may, Berlin was one of the happiest and most enlightened cities in the world.

The writers of the eighteenth century were certainly productive of infinite good to Europe, by the spirit of moderation, and the taste for literature, with which their works inspired the greater part of the sovereigns: it must be admitted, however, that the respect which the friends of knowledge paid to French intellect has been one of the causes which has ruined Germany for such a length of time. Many people regarded the French armies as the propagators of the ideas of Montesquieu, Rousseau, and Voltaire; while the fact was, that, if any traces of the opinions of these great men remained in the instruments of the power of Bonaparte, it was only to liberate them from what they called prejudices, and not to establish a single regenerating principle. But there were at Berlin and in the North of Germany, at the period of the spring of 1804, a great many old partizans of the French revolution, who had not yet discovered that Bonaparte was a much more bitter enemy of the first principles of that revolution, than the ancient European aristocracy.

I had the honor to form an acquaintance with Prince Louis-Ferdinand, the same whose warlike ardor so transported him, that his death was almost the precursor of the first reverses of his country. He was a man full of ardor and enthusiasm, but who, for want of glory, cultivated too much the emotions which agitate life. What particularly irritated him against Bonaparte was his practice of calumniating all the persons he dreaded, and even of degrading in public opinion those whom he employed, in order, at all risks, to keep them more strongly dependant on him. Prince Louis said to me frequently, "I will allow him to kill, but, moral assassination is what revolts me." And in truth let us only consider the state in which we have seen ourselves placed, since this great libeller became master of all the newspapers of the European continent, and could, as he has frequently done, pronounce the bravest men to be cowards, and the most irreproachable women to be subjects of contempt, without our having any means of contradicting or punishing such assertions.

## CHAPTER 14.

### Conspiracy of Moreau and Pichegru.

The news had just arrived at Berlin of the great conspiracy of Moreau, of Pichegru, and of George Cadoudal. There was certainly among the principal heads of the republican and royalist parties a strong desire to overturn the authority of the first consul, and to oppose themselves to the still more tyrannical authority which he resolved to establish on making himself be declared emperor: but it has been said, and perhaps not without foundation, that this conspiracy, which has so well served Bonaparte's tyranny, was encouraged by himself, from his wish to take advantage of it, with a Machiavelian art, of which it is of consequence to observe all the springs. He sent an exiled jacobin into England, who could only obtain his return to France by services to be performed for the first consul. This man presented himself, like Sinon in the city of Troy describing himself as persecuted by the Greeks. He saw several emigrants who had neither the vices nor the faculties necessary to detect a certain kind of villainy. He found it therefore a matter of great ease to entrap an old bishop, an old officer, in short some of the wrecks of a government, under which it was scarcely known what factions were. In the sequel he wrote a pamphlet in which he mystified, with a great deal of wit, all who had believed him, and who in truth ought to have made up what they wanted in sagacity by firmness of principle, that is to say, never to place the least confidence in a man capable of bad actions. We have all our own way at looking at things; but from the moment that a person has shewn himself to be treacherous or cruel, God alone can pardon, for it belongs to him only to read the human heart sufficiently to know if it is changed; man ought to keep himself for ever at a distance from the person who has lost his esteem. This disguised agent of Bonaparte pretended that the elements of revolt existed in France to a great extent; he went to Munich to find an English envoy, Mr. Drake, whom he also contrived to deceive. A citizen of Great Britain ought to have kept clear of this web of artifice, composed of the crossed threads of

jacobinism and tyranny.

George and Pichegru, who were entirely devoted to the Bourbon party, came into France secretly, and concerted with Moreau, whose wish was to rid France of the first consul, but not to deprive the French nation of its right to choose that form of government by which it desired to be ruled. Pichegru wished to have a conversation with General Bernadotte, who refused it, being dissatisfied with the manner in which the enterprise was conducted, and desiring first of all, to have a guarantee for the constitutional freedom of France. Moreau, whose moral character is most excellent, whose military talent is unquestionable, and whose understanding is just and enlightened, allowed himself in conversation, to go to great lengths in blaming the first consul, before he could be at all certain of overthrowing him. It is a defect very natural to a generous mind to express its opinion, even inconsiderately; but General Moreau attracted too much the notice of Bonaparte, not to make such conduct the cause of his destruction. A pretext was wanting to justify the arrest of a man who had gained so many battles, and this pretext was found in his conversation, if it could not be in his actions.

Republican forms were still in existence; people called each other citizen, whilst the most terrible inequality, that which liberates some from the yoke of the law, while others are under the dominion of despotism, reigned over all France. The days of the week were still reckoned according to the republican calendar; boasts were made of being at peace with the whole of continental Europe; reports were, (as they still continue to be,) continually presenting upon the making of roads and canals, the building of bridges and fountains; the benefits of the government were extolled to the skies; in short, there was not the least apparent reason for endeavouring to change a state of things, with which the nation was said to be so perfectly satisfied. A plot therefore, in which the English, and the Bourbons should be named, was a most desirable event to the government, in order to stir up once more the revolutionary elements of the nation, and to turn those elements to the establishment of an ultra-monarchical power, under the pretence of preventing the return of the ancient regime. The secret of this combination, which appears very complicated, is in fact very simple: it was necessary to alarm the revolutionists as to the danger to which their interests would be exposed, and to propose to complete their security, by a final abandonment of their principles; and so it was done.

Pichegru was become a decided royalist, as he had formerly been a republican; his opinion had been completely turned; his character was superior to his



understanding; but the one was as little calculated as the other to draw men after him. George had more elasticity about him, but he was not fitted either by nature or education for the rank of chief. As soon as it was known that these two were at Paris, Moreau was immediately arrested, the barriers were shut, death was denounced to any one who should give an asylum to Pichegru or George, and all the measures of jacobinism were put in force to protect the life of one man. This man is not only of too much importance in his own eyes to stick at any thing, when his own interests are in question, but it likewise entered into his calculations to alarm men's minds, to recall the days of terror, in short to inspire the nation, if possible, with the desire of throwing itself entirely upon him, in order to escape the troubles which it was the tendency of all his measures to increase. The retreat of Pichegru was discovered, and George was arrested in a cabriolet; for, being unable to live longer in any house, he in this manner traversed the streets night and day, to keep himself out of sight of his pursuers. The police agent who seized him, was recompensed with the legion of honour. I imagine that French soldiers would have wished him any reward but that.

The Moniteur was filled with addresses to the first consul, congratulating him on his escape from this danger; this incessant repetition of the same phrases, bursting from every corner of France, offers such a concord in slavery as is perhaps unexampled in the history of any other people. You may in turning over the Moniteur, find, according to the different epochs, exercises upon liberty, upon despotism, upon philosophy, and upon religion, in which the departments and good cities of France strive to say the same thing in different terms; and one feels astonished that men so intelligent as the French, should attach themselves entirely to success in the style, and never once have had the desire of exhibiting ideas of their own; one might say that the emulation of words was all that they required. These hymns of dictation, however, with the points of admiration which accompany them, announced that France was completely tranquil, and that the small number of the emissaries of perfidious Albion were seized. One general, it is true, amused himself with reporting, that the English had thrown bales of Levant cotton on the coast of Normandy, to give France the plague; but these inventions of grave buffoonery were only regarded as pieces of flattery addressed to the first consul; and the chiefs of the conspiracy, as well as their agents, being in the power of the government, there was reason for believing that calm was restored in France; but Bonaparte had not yet attained his object.

## CHAPTER 15.

### Assassination of the Duke d'Enghien.

I resided at Berlin on the Spree Quay, and my apartment was on the ground floor. One morning I was awoke at eight o'clock, and told that Prince Louis-Ferdinand was on horseback under my windows, and wished me to come and speak to him. Much astonished at this early visit, I hastened to get up and go to him. He was a singularly graceful horseman, and his emotion heightened the nobleness of his countenance. "Do you know," said he to me, "that the Duke d'Enghien has been carried off from the Baden territory, delivered to a military commission, and shot within twenty four hours after his arrival in Paris?" "What nonsense!" I answered, "don't you see that this can only be a report spread by the enemies of France?" In fact I confess that my hatred of Bonaparte, strong as it was, never went the length of making me believe in the possibility of his committing such an atrocity. "As you doubt what I tell you," replied Prince Louis, "I will send you the *Moniteur*, in which you will read the sentence." He left me at these words, and the expression of his countenance was the presage of revenge or death. A quarter of an hour afterwards, I had in my hands this *Moniteur* of the 21st March, (30th Pluviose), which contained the sentence of death pronounced by the military commission sitting at Vincennes, against the person called Louis d'Enghien! It is thus that the French designated the descendant of heroes, who were the glory of their country. Even if they abjured all the prejudices of illustrious birth, which the return of monarchical forms would necessarily recall, could they blaspheme in thus manner the recollection of the battles of Lens and Rocroi? This Bonaparte who has gained so many battles, does not even know how to respect them; with him there is neither past nor future; his imperious and contemptuous soul will recognize nothing for opinion to hold sacred; he admits only respect for the force which is in existence. Prince Louis wrote to me, beginning his note in these words, "The person called Louis of Prussia begs to know of Madame de Stael, &c." He felt the insult offered to the royal blood from

which he sprung, to the recollection of the heroes, in the roll of whom he burned to place his name. How was it possible, after this horrible action, for a single monarch in Europe to connect himself with such a man? Necessity, will it be said? There is a sanctuary in the soul to which his empire never ought to penetrate; if there were not, what would virtue be upon this earth? a mere liberal amusement which could only suit the peaceful leisure of private individuals.

A lady of my acquaintance related to me, that a few days after the death of the Duke d'Enghien, she went to take a walk round the castle of Vincennes; the ground, still fresh, marked the spot where he had been buried; some children were playing with little quoits upon this mound of turf, the only monument for the ashes of such a man. An old invalid, with silvered locks, was sitting at a little distance, and remained some time looking at these children; at last he arose, and leading them away by the hand, said to them, shedding some tears, "Do not play there, my children, I beseech you." These tears were all the honors that were paid to the descendant of the great Conde, and the earth did not long bear the impression of them.

For a moment at least, public opinion seemed to awaken in France, and indignation, was general. But when these generous flames were extinguished, despotism was but the more easily established, from the vain efforts which had been made to resist it. The first consul was for some days rather uneasy at the disposition of men's minds. Fouché himself blamed this action; he made use of this expression, so characteristic of the present regime: "It is worse than a crime; it is a fault." There are many ideas in this short phrase; but fortunately we may reverse it with truth, by affirming that the greatest of faults is crime. Bonaparte asked an honest senator, what was thought of the death of the Duke d'Enghien. "General," replied he, "it has given great affliction." "I am not astonished at it," said Bonaparte, "a house which has long reigned in a country always interests:" thus wishing to connect with motives of party interest the most natural feeling that the human heart can experience. Another time he put the same question to a tribune, who, from the desire of pleasing him, answered: "Well, general, if our enemies take measures against us, we are in the right to do the same against them;" not perceiving that this was tantamount to a confession that the deed was atrocious. The first consul affected to consider this act as dictated by reasons of state. One day, about this period, in a discussion with an intelligent man about the plays of Corneille, he said, "You see that the public safety, or to express it better, that state necessity, has with the moderns been substituted in the place of the fatality of the ancients: there is, for instance, such a man, who naturally

would be incapable of a crime, but political circumstances impose it upon him as a law. Corneille is the only one who has shewn, in his tragedies, an acquaintance with state necessity; on that account, if he had lived in my time, I would have made him my prime minister." All this appearance of good humour in the discussion was intended to prove that there was nothing of passion in the death of the Duke d'Enghien, and that circumstances, meaning such as the head of the state is exclusively the judge of, might cause and justify every thing. That there was nothing of passion in his resolution about the Duke d'Enghien, is perfectly true; people would have it that rage inspired the crime,—it had nothing to do with it. By what could this rage have been provoked? The Duke d'Enghien had in no way provoked the first consul: Bonaparte hoped at first to have got hold of the Duke de Berry, who it was said, was to have landed in Normandy, if Pichegru had given him notice that it was a proper time. This prince is nearer the throne than the Duke d'Enghien, and besides, he would by coming into France have infringed the existing laws. It therefore suited Bonaparte in every way better to have sacrificed him than the Duke d'Enghien; but as he could not get at the first, he chose the second, in discussing the matter in cold blood. Between the order for carrying him off, and that for his execution, more than eight days had elapsed, and Bonaparte ordered the punishment of the Duke d'Enghien long beforehand, as coolly, as he has since sacrificed millions of men to the caprices of his ambition. We now ask, what were the motives of this horrible action, and I believe it is very easy to penetrate them. First, Bonaparte wished to secure the revolutionary party, by contracting with it an alliance of blood. An old jacobin, when he heard the news, exclaimed, "So much the better! General Bonaparte is now become one of the convention." For a long time the jacobins would only have a man who had voted for the death of the king, for the first magistrate of the republic; that was what they termed, giving pledges to the revolution. Bonaparte fulfilled this condition of crime, substituted for that of property required in other countries; he thus afforded the certainty that he would never serve the Bourbons; and thus such of that party as attached themselves to his, burnt their vessels, never to return.

On the eve of causing himself to be crowned by the same men who had proscribed royalty, and of re-establishing a noblesse composed of the partisans of equality, he believed it necessary to satisfy them by the horrible guarantee of the assassination of a Bourbon. In the conspiracy of Pichegru and Moreau, Bonaparte knew that the republicans and royalists had united against him; this strange coalition, of which the hatred he inspired was the sole bond, had astonished him. Several persons who held places under him, were marked out for

the service of that revolution which was to break his power, and it was of consequence to him that henceforward all his agents should consider themselves ruined beyond redemption, if their master was overturned; and, finally, above all, he wished at the moment of his seizing the crown to inspire such terror, that no one in future should think of resisting him. Every thing was violated in this single action: the European law of nations, the constitution such as it then existed, public shame, humanity, and religion. Nothing could go beyond it; every thing was therefore to be dreaded from the man who had committed it. It was thought for some time in France, that the murder of the Duke d'Enghien was the signal of a new system of revolution, and that the scaffolds were about to be re-erected. But Bonaparte only wished to teach the French one thing, and that was, that he dared do every thing; in order that they might give him credit for the evil he abstained from, as others get it for the good they do. His clemency was praised when he allowed a man to live; it had been seen how easy it was for him to cause one to perish. Russia, Sweden, and above all England, complained of this violation of the Germanic empire; the German princes themselves were silent, and the weak sovereign on whose territory the outrage had been committed, requested in a diplomatic note, that nothing more should be said of the event that had happened. Did not this gentle and veiled expression, applied to such an act, characterize the meanness of those princes, who made their sovereignty consist only in their revenues, and treated a state as a capital, of which they must get the interest paid as quietly as they could?

## CHAPTER 16.

Illness and death of M. Necker.

My father lived long enough to hear of the assassination of the Duke d'Enghien, and the last lines which I received, that were traced by his own hand, expressed his indignation at this atrocity.

In the midst of the most complete security, I found one day upon my table two letters, announcing to me that my father was dangerously ill. The courier who brought them was concealed from me, as well as the news of his death. I set out immediately with the strongest hope, which I preserved in spite of all the circumstances which ought to have extinguished it. When the real truth became known to me at Weimar, I was seized with a mingled sensation of inexpressible terror and despair. I saw myself without support in the world, and compelled to rely entirely on myself for sustaining my soul against misfortune. Many objects of attachment still remained to me, but the sentiment of affectionate admiration which I felt for my father, exercised a sway over me with which no other could come in competition. Grief, which is the truest of prophets, predicted to me that I should never more be happy at heart, as I had been, whilst this man of all-powerful sensibility watched over my fate; and not a single day has elapsed since the month of April 1804, in which I have not connected all my troubles with his loss. So long as my father lived, I suffered only from imagination; for in the affairs of real life, he always found means to be of service to me; after I lost him, I came in direct communication with destiny. It is nevertheless still to the hope that he is praying for me in heaven, that I am indebted for the fortitude I retain. It is not merely the affection of a daughter, but the most intimate knowledge of his character which makes me affirm that I have never seen human nature carried nearer to perfection than it was in his soul; if I was not convinced of the truth of a future state, I should become mad with the idea that such a being could have ceased to exist. There was so much of immortality in his thoughts

and feelings, that it happens to me a hundred times, whenever I feel emotions that elevate me above myself, I believe I still hear him.

During my melancholy journey from Weimar to Coppet, I could not help envying the existence of every object that circulated in nature, even the birds and insects which were flying round me; I asked only a day, a single day, to talk to him once more, to excite his compassion; I envied those forest trees whose existence is prolonged for centuries; but the inexorable silence of the grave has something in it which confounds the human intellect; and although it is the truth of all others the best known to us, the strength of the impression it leaves can never be effaced. As I approached my father's residence, one of my friends pointed out to me on the mountain some clouds which bore the resemblance of an immense human figure, which would disappear towards the evening: it seemed to me that the heavens thus offered me the symbol of the loss I had just sustained. He was a man truly great: a man, who in no circumstances of his life ever preferred the most important of his interests to the least of his duties;—a man, whose virtues were inspired to that degree by his goodness, that he could have dispensed with principles, and whose principles were so strict that he might have dispensed with goodness.

On my arrival at Coppet, I learned that my father, during the illness of nine days which had deprived me of him, had been continually and anxiously occupying himself about my fate. He reproached himself for his last book, as the cause of my exile; and with a trembling hand, he wrote, during his fever, a letter to the first consul, in which he assured him that I had nothing whatever to do with the publication of his last work, but that on the contrary, I had desired that it should not be printed. This voice of a dying man had so much solemnity! this last prayer of a man who had played so important a part in France, asking as an only favor, the return of his children to the place of their birth, and an act of oblivion to the imprudences which a daughter, then young, might have committed,—all this appeared to me irresistible: and well as I ought to have known the character of the man, that happened to me, which I believe is in the nature of all who ardently desire the cessation of a great affliction:—I hoped contrary to all expectation. The first consul received this letter, and doubtless must have thought me an extreme simpleton to flatter myself for a moment that he would be in the least moved by it. Certainly, I am in that point quite of his opinion.

## CHAPTER 17.

### Trial of Moreau.

The trial of Moreau still proceeded, and although the journals preserved the most profound silence on the subject, the publicity of the pleadings was sufficient to rouse the minds, and never did the public opinion in Paris show itself so strongly against Bonaparte as it did at that period. The French have more need than any other people of a certain degree of liberty of the press; they require to think and to feel in common; the electricity of the emotions of their neighbours is necessary to make them experience the shock in their turn, and their enthusiasm never displays itself in an isolated manner. Whoever wishes to become their tyrant therefore does well to allow no kind of manifestation to public opinion; Bonaparte joins to this idea, which is common to all despots, an artifice peculiar to the present time, to wit, the art of proclaiming some factitious opinion in journals which have the appearance of being free, they make so many phrases in the sense which they are ordered. It must be confessed that our French writers are the only ones who can in this manner every morning embellish the same sophism, and who hug themselves in the very superfluity of servitude. While the instruction of this famous affair was in progress, the journals informed Europe that Pichegru had strangled himself in the Temple; all the gazettes were filled with a surgical report, which appeared very improbable, notwithstanding the care with which it was drawn up. If it is true that Pichegru had perished the victim of assassination, let us figure to ourselves the situation of a brave general, surprised by cowards in the bottom of his dungeon,—defenceless,—condemned for several days to that prison solitude which sinks the courage of the soul,—ignorant even if his friends will ever know in what manner he perished,—if his death will be revenged,—if his memory will not be outraged! Pichegru had, in his first interrogatory, exhibited a great deal of courage, and threatened, it was said, to exhibit proofs of the promises which Bonaparte had made to the Vendéans of effecting the return of the Bourbons. Some persons pretend that he



had been subjected to the torture, as well as two other conspirators, (one of whom, named Picot, shewed his mutilated hands at the tribunal), and that they dared not expose to the eyes of the French people one of its old defenders subjected to the torture of slaves. I give no credit to this conjecture; we must always, in the actions of Bonaparte, look for the calculation which has dictated them, and we shall find none in this latter supposition: while it is, perhaps, true, that the appearance of Moreau and Pichegru together at the bar of a tribunal would have inflamed public opinion to its highest pitch. Already the crowd in the tribunes was immense; several officers, at the head of whom was a loyal man, General Lecourbe, exhibited the most lively and courageous interest for General Moreau. When he repaired to the tribunal, the gendarmes who guarded him always respectfully presented arms to him. Already it had begun to be felt that honor was on the side of the persecuted; but Bonaparte, by his all at once making himself be declared emperor, in the midst of this fermentation, entirely diverted mens' minds by this new perspective, and concealed his progress better in the midst of the storm by which he was surrounded, than he could have done in the calm.

General Moreau pronounced before the tribunal one of the best speeches which history presents to us; he recalled, with perfect modesty, the battles which he had gained since Bonaparte governed France; he excused himself for having frequently expressed himself, perhaps with too much freedom, and contrasted in an indirect manner the character of a Breton with that of a Corsican; in short, he exhibited at Once a great deal of mind, and the most perfect presence of mind, at a moment so critical. Regnier at that time united the ministry of police with that of justice, in the room of Fouchc, who had been disgraced. He repaired to Saint Cloud on leaving the tribunal. The emperor asked him what sort of speech Moreau had made: "Contemptible," said he. "In that case," said the emperor, "let it be printed, and distributed all over Paris." When Bonaparte found afterwards how much his minister had been mistaken, he returned at last to Fouchc, the only man who could really second him, from his carrying, unfortunately for the world, a sort of skilful moderation into a system that had no limits.

An old jacobin, one of Bonaparte's condemned spirits, was employed to speak to the judges, to induce them to condemn Moreau to death. "That is necessary" said he to them, "to the consideration due to the emperor, who caused him to be arrested; but you ought to make the less scruple in consenting to it, as the emperor is resolved to pardon him." "And who will enable us to pardon ourselves, if we cover ourselves with such infamy?" replied one of the judges,\*

whose name I am not at liberty to mention, for fear of exposing him. General Moreau was condemned to two years' imprisonment; George and several others of his friends to death; one of the MM. de Polignac to two, and the other to four years' imprisonment: and both of them are still confined, as well as several others, of whom the police laid hold, when the period of their sentence had expired. Moreau requested to have his imprisonment commuted for perpetual banishment; perpetual in this instance should be called for life, for the misery of the world is placed on the head of one man. Bonaparte readily consented to this banishment, which suited his views in all respects. Frequently, on Moreau's passage to the place where he was to embark, the mayors of the towns, whose business it was to vider his passport of banishment, shewed him the most respectful attention. "Gentlemen," said one of them to his audience, "make way for General Moreau," and he made an obeisance to him as he would have done to the emperor. There was still a France in the hearts of men, but the idea of acting according to one's opinion had already ceased to exist, and at present it is difficult to know if there remains any, it has been so long stifled. When he arrived at Cadiz, these same Spaniards, who were a few years after destined to give so great an example, paid every possible homage to a victim of tyranny. When Moreau passed through the English fleet, their vessels saluted him as if he had been the commander of an allied army. Thus the supposed enemies of France took upon them to acquit her debt to one of her most illustrious defenders. When Bonaparte caused Moreau to be arrested, he said, "I might have made him come to me, and have told him: 'Listen, you and I cannot remain upon the same soil; go therefore, as I am the strongest;' and I believe he would have gone. But these chivalrous manners are puerile in public matters." Bonaparte believes, and has had the art to persuade several of the Machiavelian apprentices of the new generation, that every generous feeling is mere childishness. It is high time to teach him that virtue also has something manly in it, and more manly than crime with all its audacity.

\* M. Clavier.

## CHAPTER 18.

### Commencement of the Empire.

The motion to call Bonaparte to the Empire was made in the tribunate by a conventionalist, formerly a jacobin, supported by Jaubert, an advocate, and deputy from the merchants of Bourdeaux, and seconded by Simeon, a man of understanding and good sense, who had been proscribed as a royalist under the republic. It was Bonaparte's wish that the partisans of the old regime, and those of the permanent interests of the nation, should unite in choosing him. It was settled that registers should be opened all over France, to enable every one to express his wish regarding the elevation of Bonaparte to the throne. But without waiting for the result of this, prepared as it was before-hand, he took the title of emperor by a senatus consultum, and this unfortunate senate had not even the strength to put constitutional limits to this new monarchy. A tribune, whose name I wish I dared mention,\* had the honor to make a special motion for that purpose. Bonaparte, in order to anticipate this idea, adroitly sent for some of the senators, and told them, "I feel very much at thus being placed in front; I like my present situation much better. The continuation of the republic is, however, no longer possible; people are quite tired out with it: I believe that the French wish for royalty. I had at first thought of recalling the old Bourbons, but that would have only ruined them, and myself. It is my thorough conviction, that there must be at last a man at the head of all this; perhaps, however, it would be better to wait some time longer I have made France a century older in the last five years; liberty, that is a good civil code, and modern nations care little for any thing but property. However, if you will believe me, name a committee, organise the constitution, and, I tell you fairly." added he smiling, "take precautions against my tyranny; take them, believe me." This apparent good nature seduced the senators, who, to say the truth, desired nothing better than to be seduced. One of them, a man of letters, of some distinction, but one of those philosophers who are always finding philanthropic motives for being satisfied with power, said to

one of my friends, "It is wonderful! with what simplicity the emperor allows himself to be told every thing! The other day, I made him a discourse an hour long, to prove the absolute necessity of founding the new dynasty on a charter which should secure the rights of the nation." And what reply did he make you? was asked. "He clapped me on the shoulder with the most perfect good humour, and told me: 'You are quite right, my dear senator; but trust me, this is not the moment for it'." And this senator, like many others, was quite satisfied with having spoken, though his opinion was not in the least degree acted upon. The feelings of self-importance have a prodigiously greater influence over the French than those of character.

\* M. Gallois.

A very odd peculiarity in the French, and which Bonaparte has penetrated with great sagacity, is, that they, who are so ready to perceive what is ridiculous in others, desire nothing better than to render themselves ridiculous, as soon as their vanity finds its account in it in some other way. Nothing certainly presents a greater subject for pleasantry, than the creation of an entirely new noblesse, such as Bonaparte established for the support of his new throne. The princesses and queens, citizenesses of the day before, could not themselves refrain from laughing at hearing themselves styled, your majesty. Others, more serious, delighted in having their title of monseigneur repeated from morning to night, like Moliere's City Gentleman. The old archives were rummaged for the discovery of the best documents on etiquette; men of merit found a grave occupation in making coats of armour for the new families; finally, no day passed which did not afford some scene worthy of the pen of Moliere; but the terror, which formed the back ground of the picture, prevented the grotesque of the front from being laughed at as it deserved to be. The glory of the French generals illustrated all, and the obsequious courtiers contrived to slide themselves in under the shadow of military men, who doubtless deserved the severe honors of a free state, but not the vain decorations of such a court. Valor and genius descend from heaven, and whoever is gifted with them has no need of other ancestors. The distinctions which are accorded in republics or limited monarchies ought to be the reward of services rendered to the country, and every one may equally pretend to them; but nothing savours so much of Tartar despotism as this crowd of honors emanating from one man, and having his caprice for their source.

Puns without end were darted against this nobility of yesterday; and a thousand

expressions of the new ladies were quoted, which presumed little acquaintance with good manners. And certainly there is nothing so difficult to learn, as the kind of politeness which is neither ceremonious nor familiar: it seems a trifle, but it requires a foundation in ourselves; for no one acquires it, if it is not inspired by early habits or elevation of mind. Bonaparte himself is embarrassed on occasions of representation; and frequently in his own family, and even with foreigners, he seems to feel delighted in returning to those vulgar actions and expressions which remind him of his revolutionary youth. Bonaparte knew very well that the Parisians made pleasantries on his new nobility; but he knew also that their opinions would only be expressed in vulgar jokes, and not in strong actions. The energy of the oppressed went not beyond the equivoque of a pun; and as in the East they have been reduced to the apologue, in France they sunk still lower, namely, to the clashing of syllables. A single instance of a *jeu de mots* deserves, however, to survive the ephemeral success of such productions; one day as the princesses of the blood were announced, some one added, of the blood of Enghien. And in truth, such was the baptism of this new dynasty.

Several of the old nobility who had been ruined by the revolution, were not unwilling to accept employments at court. It is well known by what a gross insult Bonaparte rewarded their complaisance. "I proposed to give them rank in my army, and they declined it; I offered them places in the administration, and they refused them; but when I opened my anti-chambers, they rushed into them in crowds." They had no longer any asylum but in his power. Several gentlemen, on this occasion, set an example of the most noble resistance; but how many others have represented themselves as menaced before they had the least reason for apprehension! and how many more have solicited for themselves or their families, employments at court, which all of them, ought to have spurned at! The military or the administrative careers are the only ones in which we can flatter ourselves with being useful to our country, whoever may be the chief who governs it; but employments at court render you dependant on the man, and not on the state.

Registers were made to receive votes for the empire, like those which had been opened for the consulship for life; even all those who did not sign, were, as in the former instance, reckoned as voting for; and the small number of individuals who thought proper to write no, were dismissed from their employments. M. de Lafayette, the constant friend of liberty, again exhibited an invariable resistance; he had the greater merit, because already in this country of bravery, they no longer knew how to estimate courage. It is quite necessary to make this

distinction, as we see the divinity of fear reign in France over the most intrepid warriors. Bonaparte would not even subject himself to the law of hereditary monarchy, but reserved the power of adopting and choosing his successor in the manner of the East. As he had then no children, he wished not to give his own family the least right; and at the very moment of his elevating them to ranks to which assuredly they had no pretensions, he subjected them to his will by profoundly combined decrees, which entwined the new thrones with chains.

The fourteenth of July was again celebrated this year, (1804) because it was said the empire consecrated all the benefits of the revolution. Bonaparte had said that storms had strengthened the roots of government; he pretended that the throne would guarantee liberty: he repeated in all manner of ways, that Europe would be tranquillized by the re-establishment of monarchy in the government of France. In fact, the whole of Europe, with the exception of illustrious England, recognized his new dignity: he was styled my brother, by the knights of the ancient royal brotherhood. We have seen in what manner he has rewarded them for their fatal condescension. If he had been sincerely desirous of peace, even old King George himself, whose reign has been the most glorious in the English annals, would have been obliged to recognize him as his equal. But, a very few days after his coronation, Bonaparte pronounced some words which disclosed all his purposes: "People laugh at my new dynasty; in five years time it will be the oldest in all Europe." And from that moment he has never ceased tending towards this end.

A pretext was required, to be always advancing, and this pretext was the liberty of the seas. It is quite incredible how easy it is to make the most intelligent people on earth swallow any nonsense for gospel. It is still one of those contrasts which would be altogether inexplicable, if unhappy France had not been stripped of religion and morality by a fatal concurrence of bad principles and unfortunate events. Without religion no man is capable of any sacrifice, and as without morality no one speaks the truth, public opinion is incessantly led astray. It follows therefore, as we have already said, that there is no courage of conscience, even when that of honor exists: and that with admirable intelligence in the execution, no one even asks himself what all this is to lead to?

At the time that Bonaparte formed the resolution to overturn the thrones of the Continent, the sovereigns who occupied them were all of them very honorable persons. The political and military genius of the world was extinct, but the people were happy; although the principles of free constitutions were not

admitted into the generality of states, the philosophical ideas which had for fifty years been spreading over Europe had at least the merit of preserving from intolerance, and mollifying the reign of despotism. Catherine II. and Frederic II. both cultivated the esteem of the French authors, and these two monarchs, whose genius might have subjected the world, lived in presence of the opinion of enlightened men and sought to captivate it. The natural bent of men's minds was directed to the enjoyment and application of liberal ideas, and there was scarcely an individual who suffered either in his person or in his property. The friends of liberty were undoubtedly in the right, in discovering that it was necessary to give the faculties an opportunity of developing themselves; that it was not just that a whole people should depend on one man; and that a national representation afforded the only means of guaranteeing the transitory benefits that might be derived from the reign of a virtuous sovereign. But what came Bonaparte to offer? Did he bring a greater liberty to foreign nations? There was not a monarch in Europe who would in a whole year have committed the acts of arbitrary insolence which signalized every day of his life. He came solely to make them exchange their tranquillity, their independence, their language, their laws, their fortunes, their blood, and their children, for the misfortune and the shame of being annihilated as nations, and despised as men. He began finally that enterprize of universal monarchy, which is the greatest scourge by which mankind can be menaced, and the certain cause of eternal war.

None of the arts of peace at all suit Bonaparte: he finds no amusement but in the violent crises produced by battles. He has known how to make truces, but he has never said sincerely, enough; and his character, irreconcilable with the rest of the creation, is like the Greek fire, which no strength in nature has been known to extinguish.

**END OF THE FIRST PART.**

## ADVERTISEMENT BY THE EDITOR.

There is at this place in the manuscript a considerable vacuum, of which I have already given an explanation\*, and which I am not sufficiently informed to make the attempt to fill up. But to put the reader in a situation to follow my mother's narrative, I will run over rapidly the principal circumstances of her life during the five years which separate the first part of these memoirs from the second.

\* See the Preface.

On her return to Switzerland after the death of her father, the first desire she felt was to seek some alleviation of her sorrow in giving to the world the portrait of him whom she had just lost, and in collecting the last traces of his thoughts. In the Autumn of 1804, she published the MSS. of her father, with a sketch of his public and private character.

My mother's health, impaired by misfortune, necessitated her to go and breathe the air of the South. She set out for Italy. The beautiful sky of Naples, the recollections of antiquity, and the chefs-d'oeuvre of art, opened to her new sources of enjoyment, to which she had been hitherto a stranger; her soul, overwhelmed with grief, seemed to revive to these new impressions, and she recovered sufficient strength to think and to write. During this journey, she was treated by the diplomatic agents of France without favor, but without injustice. She was interdicted a residence at Paris; she was banished from her friends and her habits; but tyranny had not, at least at that time, pursued her beyond the Alps; persecution had not as yet been established as a system, as it was afterwards. I even feel a real pleasure in mentioning that some letters of recommendation sent her by Joseph Bonaparte, contributed to render her residence at Rome more agreeable.

She returned from Italy in the summer of 1805, and passed a year at Coppet and Geneva, where several of her friends were collected. During this period she began to write *Corinne*.



During the following year, her attachment to France, that feeling which had so much power over her heart, made her quit Geneva and go nearer to Paris, to the distance of forty leagues from it, which was still permitted to her. I was then pursuing my studies, preparatory to entering into the Polytechnic school; and from her great goodness to her children, she wished to watch over their education, as near as her exile could allow her. She went in consequence to settle at Auxerre, a little town where she had no acquaintance, but of which the prefect, M. de la Bergerie, behaved to her with great kindness and delicacy.

From Auxerre she went to Rouen: this was approaching some leagues nearer the centre to which all the recollections and all the affections of her youth attracted her. There she could at least receive letters daily from Paris; she had penetrated without any obstacle the inclosure, entrance into which had been forbidden to her; she might hope that the fatal circle would progressively be contracted. Those only who have suffered banishment will be able to understand what passed in her heart. M. de Savoie-Rollin was then prefect of the Lower Seine; it is well known by what glaring injustice he was removed some years afterwards, and I have reason to believe that his friendship for my mother, and the interest which he shewed for her, during her residence at Rouen, were no slight causes of the rigor of which he became the object.

Fouche was still minister of police. His system was, as my mother has said, to do as little evil as possible, the necessity of the object admitted. The Prussian monarchy had just fallen; there was no longer any enemy upon the Continent to struggle with the government of Napoleon; no internal resistance shackled his progress, or could afford the least pretext for the employment of arbitrary measures; what motive, therefore, could he have for prolonging the most gratuitous persecution of my mother? Fouche then permitted her to come and settle at the distance of twelve leagues from Paris, upon an estate belonging to M. de Castellane. There she finished *Corinne*, and superintended the printing of it. In other respects, the retired life she there led, the extreme prudence of her whole conduct, and the very small number of persons who were not prevented by the fear of disgrace from coming to visit her, might have been sufficient to tranquillize the most suspicious despotism. But all this did not satisfy Bonaparte; he wanted my mother to renounce entirely the employment of her talents, and to interdict her from writing even upon subjects the most unconnected with politics. It will be seen that even at a later period this abnegation was not sufficient to preserve her from a continually increasing persecution.

Scarcely had Corinne made her appearance, when a new exile commenced for my mother, and she saw all the hopes vanish, with which she had for some months been consoling herself. By a fatality which rendered her grief more pungent, it was on the 9th of April, the anniversary of her father's death, that the order which again banished her from her country, and her friends, was signified to her. She returned to Coppet, with a bleeding heart, and the prodigious success of Corinne afforded very little diversion to her sorrow.

Friendship, however, succeeded in accomplishing what literary glory had failed to do; and, thanks to the proofs of affection which she received on her return to Switzerland, the summer passed more agreeably than she could have hoped. Several of her friends left Paris to come to see her, and Prince Augustus of Prussia, to whom peace had restored his liberty, did us the honor to stop several months at Coppet, prior to his return to his native country.

Ever since her journey to Berlin, which had been so cruelly interrupted by the death of her father, my mother had regularly continued the study of the German literature and philosophy; but a new residence in Germany was necessary to enable her to complete the picture of that country, which she proposed to present to France. In the autumn of 1807, she set out for Vienna, and she there once more found, in the society of the Prince de Ligne, of the Princess Lubomirski, &c. &c. that urbanity of manners and ease of conversation, which had such charms in her eyes. The Austrian government, exhausted by the war, had not then the strength to be an oppressor on its own account, and notwithstanding preserved towards France, an attitude which was not without dignity and independence. The objects of Napoleon's hatred might still find an asylum at Vienna; the year she passed in that city, was therefore, the most tranquil one she had enjoyed since the commencement of her exile.

On her return to Switzerland, where she spent two years in writing her reflections upon Germany, she was not long in perceiving the progress which the imperial tyranny was every day making, and the contagious rapidity with which the passion for places, and the fear of disgrace, were spreading. No doubt several friends, both at Geneva and in France, preserved to her during her misfortunes, a courageous and unshaken fidelity; but, whoever had any connection with the government, or aspired to any employment, began to keep at a distance from her house, and to dissuade timid people from approaching it. My mother suffered a great deal from all these symptoms of servitude, which she detected with incomparable sagacity; but the more unhappy she was, the more she felt the

desire of diverting from the persons who were about her, the miseries of her situation, and of diffusing around her that life and intellectual movement, which solitude seemed to exclude.

Her talent for declamation was the means of amusement which had the greatest influence over herself, at the same time that it varied the pleasures of her society. It was at this period, and while she was still laboring on her great work on Germany, that she composed and played at Coppet, the greater part of the little pieces which are collected in the 16th volume of her works\*, under the title of Dramatic Essays.

\* Or the Second Volume of her OEuvres inedites.

Finally, at the beginning of summer, 1810, having finished the three volumes of Germany, she wished to go and superintend the printing of them, at 40 leagues distance from Paris, a distance which was still permitted to her, and where she might hope to see again those of her old friends, whose affections had not bent before the disgrace of the Emperor.

She went, therefore, to reside in the neighbourhood of Blois, in' the old castle of Chaumont-sur-Loire, which had in former times been inhabited by the Cardinal d'Amboise, Diana of Poitiers, and Catherine de Medicis. The present proprietor of this romantic residence, M. Le Ray, with whom my parents were connected by the ties of friendship and business, was then in America. But just at the time we were occupying his chateau, he returned from the United States with his family, and though he was very urgent in wishing us to remain in his house, the more he pressed us politely to do so, the more anxiety we felt, lest we should incommode him. M. de Salaberry relieved us from this embarrassment with the greatest kindness, by placing at our disposal his house at Fosse. At this period my mother's narrative recommences.

## Part The Second

### CHAPTER 1.

Suppression of my Work on Germany.—Banishment from France.

Being unable to remain longer in the castle of Chaumont, the proprietors of which had returned from America, I went and fixed myself at a farm called Fosse, which a generous friend lent me.\* The house was inhabited by a Vendean soldier, who certainly did not keep it in the nicest order, but who had a loyal good nature that made every thing easy, and an originality of character that was very amusing. Scarcely had we arrived, when an Italian musician, whom I had with me to give lessons to my daughter, began playing upon the guitar; my daughter accompanied upon the harp the sweet voice of my beautiful friend Madame Recamier; the peasants collected round the windows, astonished to see this colony of troubadours, which had come to enliven the solitude of their master. It was there I passed my last days in France, with some friends, whose recollection lives in my heart. Certainly this intimate assemblage, this solitary residence, this agreeable occupation with the fine arts did no harm to any one. We frequently sung a charming air composed by the Queen of Holland, and of which the burden is: 'Do what you ought, happen what may'. After dinner, we had imagined the idea of seating ourselves round a green table and writing letters to each other, instead of conversing. These varied and multiplied tetes-a-tete amused us so much, that we were impatient to get from table, where we were talking, in order to go and write to one another. When any strangers came in accidentally, we could not bear the interruption of our habits; and our penny post (it is thus we called it) always went its round. The inhabitants of the neighbouring town were somewhat astonished at these new manners, and looked upon them as pedantic, while there was nothing in this game, but a resource

against the monotony of solitude. One day a gentleman of the neighbourhood who had never thought of any thing in his life but the chase, came to take my boys with him into the woods; he remained sometime seated at our active but silent table; Madame Recamier wrote a little note with her beautiful hand to this jolly sportsman, in order that he might not be too much a stranger to the circle in which he was placed. He excused himself from receiving it, assuring us that he could never read writing by day-light: we laughed a little at the disappointment which the benevolent coquetry of our beautiful friend had met with, and thought that a billet from her hand would not have always had the same fate. Our life passed in this manner, without any of us, if I may judge from myself, finding the time at all burdensome.

\* M. de Salaberry.

The opera of Cinderella was making a great noise at Paris; I wished to go and see it represented at a paltry provincial theatre at Blois. Coming out of the theatre on foot, the people of the place followed me in crowds from curiosity, more desirous of knowing me because I was an exile, than from any other motive. This kind of celebrity which I derived from misfortune, much more than from talent, displeased the minister of police, who wrote sometime after to the prefect of Loir and Cher, that I was surrounded by a court. "Certainly," said I to the prefect\* "it is not power at least which gives it me."

\* M. de Corbigny, an amiable and intelligent man.

I had always the intention of repairing to England by the way of America; but I was anxious to terminate my work on Germany. The season was now advancing; we were already at the fifteenth of September, and I began to foresee that the difficulty of embarking my daughter with me would detain me another winter, in some town, I knew not where, at forty leagues from Paris. I was then desirous that it should be Vendome, where I knew several clever people, and where the communication with the capital was easy. After having formerly had one of the most brilliant establishments in Paris, I was now contented to anticipate considerable pleasure from establishing myself at Vendome; fate however denied me even this modest happiness.

On the 23d of September I corrected the last proof of Germany; after six years' labor, I felt the greatest delight in putting the word End to my three volumes. I made a list of one hundred persons to whom I wished to send copies, in different

parts of France and Europe; I attached great importance to this book, which I thought well adapted to communicate new ideas to France; it appeared to me that a sentiment elevated without being hostile, had inspired it, and that people would find in it a language which was no longer spoken.

Furnished with a letter from my publisher, which assured me that the censorship had authorised the publication of my work, I believed that I had nothing to apprehend, and set out with my friends for an estate of M. Mathieu de Montmorency, at five leagues from Blois. The house belonging to this estate is situated in the middle of a forest; there I walked about with the man whom I most respect in the world, since I have lost my father. The fineness of the weather, the magnificence of the forest, the historical recollections which the place recalled, being the scene of the battle of Fretteval, fought between Philip Augustus and Richard Coeur-de-Lion, all contributed to fill my mind with the most quiet and delightful impressions. My worthy friend, who is only occupied in this world with rendering himself worthy of heaven, in this conversation, as in all those we have had together, paid no attention to affairs of the day, and only sought to do good to my soul. We resumed our journey the next day, and in these plains of the Vendomois, where you meet not with a single habitation, and which like the sea seem to present every where the same appearance, we contrived to lose ourselves completely. It was already midnight, and we knew not what road to take, in a country every where the same, and where fertility is as monotonous as sterility is elsewhere, when a young man on horseback, perceiving our embarrassment, came and requested us to pass the night in the chateau of his parents.\* We accepted his invitation, which was doing us a real service, and we found ourselves all of a sudden in the midst of the luxury of Asia, and the elegance of France. The masters of the house had spent a considerable time in India, and their chateau was adorned with every thing they had brought back from their travels. This residence excited my curiosity, and I found myself extremely comfortable in it. Next day M. de Montmorency gave me a note from my son which pressed me to return home, as my work had met with fresh difficulties from the censorship. My friends who were with me in the chateau conjured me to go; I had not the least suspicion of what they were concealing from me, and thinking there was nothing but what Augustus's letter mentioned,\* whiled away the time in examining the Indian curiosities without any idea of what was in store for me. At last I got into the carriage, and my brave and intelligent Vendean whom his own dangers had never moved, squeezed my hand, with tears in his eyes: I guessed immediately that they were making a mystery to me of some new persecution, and M. de Montmorency, in reply to my

interrogations, at last acquainted me that the minister of the police had sent his myrmidons to destroy the ten thousand copies which had been printed of my book, and that I had received an order to quit France within three days. My children and friends had wished me not to hear this news while I was among strangers; but they had taken every possible precaution to prevent the seizure of my manuscript, and they succeeded in saving it, some hours before I was required to deliver it up. This new blow affected me most severely, I had flattered myself with an honorable success by the publication of my book: if the censors had in the first instance refused to authorise its being printed, that would have appeared to me very simple; but after having submitted to all their observations, and made all the alterations required of me, to learn that my work was destroyed, and that I must separate my self from the friends who had supported my courage, all this made me shed tears. But I endeavored once more to get the better of my feelings, in order to determine what was best to be done in a crisis where the step I was about to take might have so much influence on the fortunes of my family. As we drew near my habitation, I gave my writing desk, which contained some further notes upon my book, to my youngest son; he jumped over a wall to get into the house by the garden. An English lady\*, my excellent friend, came out to meet me and inform me of all that had happened. I observed at a distance some, gendarmes who were wandering round residence, but it did not appear that they were in search of me: they were no doubt in pursuit of some other unfortunates, conscripts, exiles, persons in surveillance, or, in short, of some of the numerous classes of oppressed which the present government of France has created.

\* (Note of the Editor.) Uneasy at not seeing my mother arrive, I took horse to go and meet her, in order to soften as much as was in my power, the news which she had to learn upon her return; but I lost myself like her, in the uniform plains of the Vendomois, and it was only in the middle of the night that a fortunate chance conducted me to the gate of the chateau where the rites of hospitality had been given to her. I caused M. de Montmorency to be awakened, and after having informed him of this new instance of the persecution which the imperial police directed against my mother, I set off again to finish putting her papers in safety, leaving to M. de Montmorency the charge of preparing her for the new blow with which she was threatened.

\* Miss Randall.

The prefect of Loir and Cher came to require the delivery of my manuscript: I

gave him, merely to gain time, a rough copy which remained with me, and with which he was satisfied. I have learned that he was extremely ill-treated a few months afterwards, to punish him for having shewn me some attention: and the chagrin he felt at having incurred the disgrace of the emperor, was, it is said, one of the causes of the illness which carried him off in the prime of life.

Unfortunate country, where the circumstances are such, that a man of his understanding and talent should sink under the chagrin of disgrace!

I saw in the papers, that some American vessels had arrived in the ports of the Channel, and I determined to make use of my passport for America, in the hope that it would be possible to touch at an English port. At all events I required some days to prepare for this voyage, and I was obliged to address myself to the minister of police to ask for that indulgence. It has been already seen that the custom of the French government is to order women, as well as soldiers, to depart within twenty-four hours. Here follows the minister's reply: it is curious to observe his style\*.

\* (Note of the Editor.)

This is the same letter which was printed in the Preface to Germany,

"GENERAL POLICE.

MINISTER'S CABINET.

Paris, 3d October, 1810.

"I have received the letter, madam, which you did me the honor to write to me. Your son will have informed you that I saw no impropriety in your delaying your departure for seven or eight days: I hope they will be sufficient for the arrangements which you have yet to make, as I cannot grant you any more.

"You must not seek for the cause of the order which I have signified to you, in the silence which you have observed with regard to the emperor in your last work; that would be a great mistake; he could find no place there which was worthy of him; but your exile is a natural consequence of the line of conduct you have constantly pursued for several years past. It has appeared to me that the air of this country did not at all agree with you, and we are not yet reduced to seek for models in the nations whom you admire.

"Your last work is not at all French; it is by my orders that the impression has been seized. I regret the loss which it will occasion to the bookseller; but it is not



possible for me to allow it to appear.

"You know, madam, that you would not have been permitted to quit Coppet but for the desire you had expressed to go to America. If my predecessor allowed you to reside in the department of Loir and Cher, you had no reason to look upon this license as any revocation of the arrangements which had been fixed with regard to you. At present you compel me to make them be strictly executed; for this you have no one to blame but yourself.

"I have signified to M. Corbigny\* to look to the punctual execution of the order I have given him, as soon as the term I grant you is expired.

\* Prefect of Loir and Cher.

"I regret extremely, madam, that you have forced me to begin my correspondence with you by an act of severity; it would have been much more agreeable to me to have only had to offer you the assurance of the high consideration with which I have the honor to be, madam,

"Your most humble, and most obedient servant,  
Signed the DUKE of ROVIGO.

"P. S, I have reasons, madam, for mentioning to you that the ports of Lorient, La Rochelle, Bourdeaux, and Rochefort, are the only ones in which you can embark. I request you to let me know which of them you select\*."

\* This postscript is easily understood; its object was to prevent me from going to England.

The stale hypocrisy with which I was told that the air of this country did not agree with me, and the denial of the real cause of the suppression of my book, are worthy of remark. In fact, the minister of police had shown more frankness in expressing himself verbally respecting me: he asked, why I never named the emperor or the army in my work on Germany? On its being objected that the work being purely literary, I could not well have introduced such subjects, "Do you think," then replied the minister, "that we have made war for eighteen years in Germany, and that a person of such celebrity should print a book upon it, without saying a word about us? This book shall be destroyed, and the author deserves to be sent to Vincennes."

On receiving the letter of the minister of police, I paid no attention to any part but that passage of it which interdicted me the ports of the Channel. I had already learned, that suspecting my intention of going to England, they would endeavour to prevent me. This new mortification was really above my strength to bear; on quitting my native country, I must go to that of my adoption; in banishing myself from the friends of my whole life, I required at least to find those friends of whatever is good and noble, with whom, without knowing them personally, the soul always sympathises. I saw at once all that supported my imagination crumbling to pieces; for a moment longer I would have embarked on board any vessel bound for America, in the hope of her being captured on her passage; but I was too much shaken to decide at once on so strong a resolution; and as the two alternatives of America and Coppet were the only ones that were left me, I determined on accepting the latter; for a profound sentiment always attracted me to Coppet, in spite of the disagreeables I was there subjected to.

My two sons both endeavoured to see the emperor at Fontainebleau, where he then was; they were told they would be arrested if they remained there; a fortiori, I was interdicted from going to it myself. I was obliged to return into Switzerland from Blois, where I was, without approaching Paris nearer than forty leagues. The minister of police had given notice, in corsair terms, that at thirty-eight leagues I was a good prize. In this manner, when the emperor exercises the arbitrary power of banishment, neither the exiled persons, nor their friends, nor even their children, can reach his presence to plead the cause of the unfortunates who are thus torn from the objects of their affection and their habits; and these sentences of exile, which are now irrevocable, particularly where women are the objects, and which the emperor himself has rightly termed proscriptions, are pronounced without the possibility of making any justification be heard, supposing always that the crime of having displeased the emperor admits of any.

Although the forty leagues were ordered me, I was necessitated to pass through Orleans, a very dull town, but inhabited by several very pious ladies, who had retired thither for an asylum. In walking about the town on foot, I stopped before the monument erected to the memory of Joan of Arc: certainly, thought I to myself, when she delivered France from the power of the English, that same France was much more free, much more France than it is at present. One feels a singular sensation in wandering through a town, where you neither know, nor are known to a soul. I felt a kind of bitter enjoyment in picturing to myself my isolated situation in its fullest extent, and in still looking at that France which I

was about to quit, perhaps for ever, without speaking to a person, or being diverted from the impression which the country itself made upon me.

Occasionally persons passing stopped to look at me, from the circumstance I suppose of my countenance having, in spite of me, an expression of grief; but they soon went on again, as it is long since mankind have been accustomed to witness persons suffering.

At fifty leagues from the Swiss frontier, France is bristled with citadels, houses of detention, and towns serving as prisons; and every where you see nothing but individuals deprived of their liberty by the will of one man, conscripts of misfortune, all chained at a distance from the places where they would have wished to live. At Dijon, some Spanish prisoners, who had refused to take the oath, regularly came every day to the market place to feel the sun at noon, as they then regarded him rather as their countryman; they wrapt themselves up in a mantle, frequently in rags, but which they knew how to wear with grace, and they gloried in their misery, as it arose from their boldness; they hugged themselves in their sufferings, as associating them with the misfortunes of their intrepid country. They were sometimes seen going into a coffee house, solely to read the newspaper, in order to penetrate the fate of their friends through the lies of their enemies; their countenances were then immoveable, but not without expression, exhibiting strength under the command of their will. Farther on, at Auxonne, was the residence of the English prisoners, who had the day before saved from fire, one of the houses of the town where they were kept confined. At Besancon, there were more Spaniards. Among the French exiles to be met with in every part of France, an angelic creature inhabited the citadel of Besancon, in order not to quit her father. For a long period, and amidst every sort of danger, Mademoiselle de Saint Simon shared the fortunes of him who had given her birth.

At the entrance of Switzerland, on the top of the mountains which separate it from France, you see the castle of Joux, in which prisoners of state are detained, whose names frequently never reach the ear of their relations. In this prison Toussaint Louverture actually perished of cold; he deserved his fate on account of his cruelty, but the emperor had the least right to inflict it upon him, as he had engaged to guarantee to him his life and liberty. I passed a day at the foot of this castle, during very dreadful weather, and I could not help thinking of this negro transported all at once into the Alps, and to whom this residence was the hell of ice; I thought of the more noble beings, who had been shut up there, of those who were still groaning in it, and I said to myself also that if I was there, I

should never quit it with life. It is impossible to convey an idea to the small number of free nations which remain upon the earth, of that absence of all security, the habitual state of the human creatures who live under the empire of Napoleon. In other despotic governments there are laws, and customs, and a religion, which the sovereign never infringes, however absolute he may be; but in France, and in Europe France, as every thing is new, the past can be no guarantee, and every thing may be feared as well as hoped according as you serve, or not, the interests of the man who dares to propose himself, as the sole object of the existence of the whole human race.

## CHAPTER 2.

Return to Coppet.—Different persecutions.

In returning to Coppet, dragging my wing like the pigeon in Lafontaine, I saw the rainbow rise over my father's house; I dared take my part in this token of the covenant; there had been nothing in my sorrowful journey to prevent me from aspiring to it. I was then almost resigned to living in this chateau, renouncing the idea of ever publishing more on any subject; but it was at least necessary, in making the sacrifice of talents, which I flattered myself with possessing, to find happiness in my affections, and this is the manner in which my private life was arranged, after having stript me of my literary existence.

The first order received by the prefect of Geneva, was to intimate to my two sons, that they were interdicted going into France without a new permission of the police. This was to punish them for having wished to speak to Bonaparte in favor of their mother. Thus the morality of the present government is to loosen family ties, in order to substitute in all cases the emperor's will. Several generals have been mentioned as declaring, that if Napoleon ordered them to throw their wives and children into the river, they would not hesitate to obey him. The translation of this is, that they prefer the money which the emperor gives them, to the family which they have from nature. There are many instances of this way of thinking, but there are few who would have impudence enough to give utterance to it. I felt a mortal grief at seeing for the first time my situation bear upon my sons, scarcely entered into life. We feel ourselves very firm in our own conduct, when it is founded on sincere conviction; but when others begin to suffer on our account, it is almost impossible to keep from reproaching ourselves. Both my sons, however, most generously diverted this feeling from me, and we supported each other mutually by the recollection of my father.

A few days afterwards the prefect of Geneva wrote me a second letter, to require me, in the name of the minister of police, to deliver up the proof sheets of my

book which were still in my hands; the minister knew exactly the number I had sent and kept, and his spies had done their duty well. In my answer, I gave him the satisfaction of admitting that he had been correctly informed; but I told him at the same time that this copy was not in Switzerland, and that I neither could nor would give it up. I added, however, that I would engage never to have it printed on the Continent, and I had no great merit in making this promise, for what Continental government would then have suffered the publication of any book forbidden, by the emperor?

A short time afterwards, the prefect of Geneva\* was dismissed, and it was generally believed on my account; he was one of my friends, yet he had not deviated one iota from the orders he had received: although he was one of the most honorable and enlightened men in France, his principles led him to the scrupulous obedience of the government, whose servant he was; but no ambitious view, or personal calculation gave him the zeal required. It was another great source of chagrin to be, or to be regarded as being, the cause of the dismissal of such a man. He was generally regretted in his department, and from the moment it was believed that I was the cause of his disgrace, all who had any pretensions to places avoided my house as they would the most fatal contagion. There still remained to me, however at Geneva, more friends than any other provincial town in France could have offered me; for the inheritance of liberty has left in that city much generous feeling; but it is impossible to have an idea of the anxiety one feels, when one is afraid of compromising those who come to visit you. I made a point of getting the most exact information of all the relations of any lady before I invited her; for if she had only a cousin who wanted a place, or had one, it was demanding an act of Roman heroism to expect her to come and dine with me.

At last, in the month of March 1811, a new prefect arrived from Paris. He was a man admirably well adapted to the reigning system: that is to say, having a very general acquaintance with facts, coupled with a total absence of principles in matters of government; calling every fixed rule mere abstraction, and placing his conscience in devotion to the reigning power. The first time I saw him, he told me that talents like mine were made to celebrate the emperor, who was a subject well worthy of the kind of enthusiasm which I had shown in Corinna. I gave him for answer, that persecuted as I was by the emperor, any thing like praise of him coming from me, would have the air of a petition, and that I was persuaded that the emperor himself would find my eulogiums very ridiculous under such circumstances. He combatted this opinion very strongly: he returned to my house

several times to beg me, in the name of my own interest, as he styled it, to write something in favor of the emperor, were it but a sheet of four pages; that would be sufficient, he assured me, to put an end to all the disagreeables I suffered. He repeated what he told me to every person of my acquaintance. Finally, one day he came to propose to me to celebrate in verse the birth of the king of Rome; I told him, laughing, that I had not a single idea on the subject, and that I should confine myself to wishes for his having a good nurse. This joke put an end to the prefect's negotiations with me, upon the necessity of my writing in favor of the present government.

\* M. de Barante, father of M. Prosper de Barante, member of the  
\* Chamber of Peers.

A short time afterwards the physicians ordered my youngest son the baths of Aix, in Savoy, at twenty leagues from Coppet. I chose the early part of May to go there, a time of the year when the waters are quite deserted. I gave the prefect notice of this little journey, and went to shut myself up in a kind of village, where there was not at the time a single person of my acquaintance. I had hardly been there ten days, before a courier arrived from the prefect of Geneva to order me to return. The prefect of Mont-Blanc, in whose department I was, was also afraid lest I should leave Aix to go to England, as he said, to write against the emperor; and although London was not very near to Aix in Savoy, he sent his gendarmes every where about, to forbid my being furnished with post horses on the road. I am at present tempted to laugh at all this prefectorial activity against a poor thing like myself; but at that time the very sight of a gendarme was enough to make me die with fright. I was always alarmed lest from a banishment so rigorous the change might shortly be to a prison, which was to me more terrible than death itself. I knew that if I was once arrested, that if this eclat were once got over, the emperor would not allow himself again to be spoken to about me, even if any one had the courage to do so; which was not very probable at that court, where terror was the prevailing sentiment every minute of the day, and in the most trifling concerns of life.

On my return to Geneva, the prefect signified to me not only that he forbid me from going under any pretence to the countries united to France, but that he advised me not to travel in Switzerland, and never to go in any direction beyond two leagues from Coppet. I objected to him that being domiciliated in Switzerland, I did not clearly understand by what right a French authority could forbid me from travelling in a foreign country. The prefect no doubt thought me

rather a simpleton to discuss at that moment a point of right, repeated his advice to me in a tone singularly approaching to an order. I confined myself my protest: but the very next day I learned that one of the most distinguished literati of Germany, M. Schlegel, who had for eight years been employed in the education of my sons, had received an order not only to leave Geneva, but to quit Coppet. I wished still to represent that in Switzerland the prefect of Geneva had no orders to give; but I was told, that if I liked better to receive this order through the French ambassador, I might be gratified: that the ambassador would address the landamann, and the landamann would apply to the canton of Vaud, who would immediately send M. Schlegel from my house. By making despotism go this roundabout, I might have gained ten days, but nothing more. I then wished to know why I was deprived of the society of M. Schlegel, my own friend, and that of my children. The prefect, who was accustomed, like the greater part of the emperor's agents, to couple very smooth words with very harsh acts, told me that it was from regard to me that the government banished M. Schlegel from my house as he made me an Anti-gallican. Much affected by this proof of the paternal care of the government, I asked what Mr. S. had ever done against France: the prefect objected to his literary opinions, and referred among other things to a pamphlet of his, in which, in a comparison between the Phedra of Euripides and that of Racine, he had given the preference to the former. How very delicate for a Corsican monarch to take in this manner act and cause (sic) for the slightest shades of French literature! But the real truth was, M. Schlegel was banished because he was my friend, because his conversation animated my solitude, and because the system was now begun to be acted upon, which soon became evident, of making a prison of my soul, in tearing from me every enjoyment of intellect and friendship.

I resumed the resolution of leaving Switzerland, which the pain of quitting my friends and the ashes of my parents had made me so often give up; but there remained a very difficult problem to solve, and that was to find the means of departure. The French government threw so many difficulties in the way of a passport for America, that I durst no longer think of that plan. Besides, I had reason to be afraid lest at the moment of my embarkation they should pretend to have discovered that I was going to England, and that the decree might be applied to me, which condemned to imprisonment all who attempted to go there without the authority of the government. It seemed to me, therefore, much preferable to go to Sweden, that honorable country, whose new chief already gave indications of the glorious conduct which he has since known how to sustain. But by what road to get to Sweden? The prefect had given me to



understand in all ways, that wherever France commanded, I should be arrested, and how was I to reach the point where she did not command? I must necessarily pass through Russia, as the whole of Germany was under the French dominion. But to get to Russia, I must cross Bavaria and Austria. I could trust my self in the Tyrol, although it was united to a state of the confederation, on account of the courage which its unfortunate inhabitants had shewn. As to Austria, in spite of the fatal debasement into which she had sunk, I had sufficient confidence in her monarch to believe that he would not deliver me up; but I knew also that he could not defend me. After having sacrificed the ancient honor of his house, what strength remained to him of any kind? I spent my days, therefore, in studying the map of Europe to escape from it, as Napoleon studied it to make himself its master, and my campaign, as well as his, always had Russia for its field. This power was the last asylum of the oppressed; it was therefore that which the conqueror of Europe wished to overthrow.

## CHAPTER 3.

Journey in Switzerland with M. de Montmorency.

Determined to go by the way of Russia, I required a passport to enter it. But a fresh difficulty occurred; I must write to Petersburg to obtain this passport: such was the formality which circumstances rendered necessary; and although I was certain of meeting with no refusal from the known generous character of the emperor Alexander, I had reason to be afraid that in the ministerial offices it might be mentioned that I had asked for a passport, and in that way get to the French ambassador's ears, which would lead to my arrest, and prevent me from executing my project. It was necessary, therefore, to go first to Vienna, to ask for my passport from thence, and there wait for it. The six weeks which would be required to send my letter and receive an answer, would be passed under the protection of a ministry which had given the archduchess of Austria to Bonaparte;-could I trust myself to it? It was clear, however, that by remaining as a hostage, under the hand of Napoleon, I not only renounced the exercise of my own talents, but I prevented my sons from following any public career; they could enter into no service, either for Bonaparte or against him; it was impossible to find an establishment for my daughter, as it was necessary either to separate myself from her, or to confine her to Coppet; and yet if I was arrested in my flight, there was an end of the fortune of my children, who would not have wished to separate themselves from my destiny.

It was in the midst of all these perplexities, that a friend of twenty years standing, M. Mathieu de Montmorency proposed to come and see me, as he had already done several times since my exile. It is true that I was written to from Paris, that the Emperor had expressed his displeasure against everyone who should go to Coppet, and especially against M. de Montmorency, if he again went there. But I confess I made light of these expressions of the Emperor, which he throws out sometimes to terrify people, and struggled very feebly with

M. de Montmorency, who generously sought to tranquillize me by his letters. I was wrong, no doubt; but who could have persuaded themselves that an old friend of a banished woman would have it charged to him as a crime, his going to spend a few days with her. The life of M. de Montmorency, entirely consecrated to works of piety, or to family affections, estranged him so completely from all politics, that unless it would even go the length of banishing the saints, it seemed to me impossible that the government would attack such a man. I asked myself likewise, *cui bono*; a question I have always put to myself whenever any action of Napoleon was in discussion. I know that he will, without hesitation, do all the evil which can be of use to him for the least thing; but I do not always conjecture the lengths to which his prodigious egotism extends in all directions, towards the infinitely little, as well as the infinitely great.

Although the prefect had made me be told that he recommended me not to travel in Switzerland, I paid no attention to an advice which could not be made a formal order. I went to meet M. de Montmorency at Orb, and from thence I proposed to him, as the object of a promenade in Switzerland, to return by way of Fribourg, to see the establishment of female Trappists, at a short distance from that of the men in Val-Sainte.

We reached the convent in the midst of a severe shower, after having been obliged to come nearly a mile on foot. As we were flattering ourselves with being admitted, the Procureur of la Trappe, who has the direction of the female convent, told us that nobody could be received there. I tried, however, to ring the bell at the gate of the cloister; a nun appeared behind the latticed opening through which the portress may speak to strangers.

"What do you want?" said she to me, in a voice without modulation as we might suppose that of a ghost. "I should wish to see the interior of your convent."—"That is impossible."—"But I am very wet, and want to dry myself."—She immediately touched a spring which opened the door of an outer apartment, in which I was allowed to rest myself; but no living creature appeared. I had hardly been seated a few minutes, when becoming impatient at being unable to penetrate into the interior of the house, I rung again; the same person again appeared, and I asked her if no females were ever admitted into the convent; she answered that it was only in cases when any one had the intention of becoming a nun. "But," said I to her, "how can I know if I wish to remain in your house, if I am not permitted to examine it."—"Oh, that is quite useless," replied she, "I am very sure that you have no vocation for our state," and with

these words immediately shut her wicket. I know not by what signs this nun had satisfied herself of my worldly dispositions; it is possible that a quick manner of speaking, so different from theirs, is sufficient to make them distinguish travellers, who are merely curious. The hour of vespers approaching, I could go into the church to hear the nuns sing; they were behind a black plose grating, through which nothing could be seen. You only heard the noise of their wooden shoes, and of the wooden benches as they raised them to sit down. Their singing had nothing of sensibility in it, and I thought I could remark both by their manner of praying, and in the conversation which I had afterwards with the father Trappist, who directed them, that it was not religious enthusiasm, such as we conceive it, but severe and grave habits which could support such a kind of life. The tenderness of piety would even exhaust the strength; a sort of ruggedness of soul is necessary to so rude an existence.

The new Father Abbe of the Trappists, settled in the vallies of the Canton of Fribourg, has added to the austerities of the order. One can have no idea of the minute degrees of suffering imposed upon the monks; they go so far as even to forbid them, when they have been standing for some hours in succession, from leaning against the wall, or wiping the perspiration from their forehead; in short every moment of their life is filled with suffering, as the people of the world fills theirs with enjoyment. They rarely live to be old, and those to whom this lot falls, regard it as a punishment from heaven. Such an establishment would be barbarous if any one was compelled to enter it, or if there was the least concealment of what they suffer there. But on the contrary, they distribute to whoever wishes to read it, a printed statement, in which the rigors of the order are rather exaggerated than softened; and yet there are novices who are willing to take the vows, and those who are received never run away, although they might do it without the least difficulty. The whole rests, as it appears to me, upon the powerful idea of death; the institutions and amusements of society are destined in the world to turn our thoughts entirely upon life; but when the contemplation of death gets a certain hold of the human heart, joined to a firm belief in the immortality of the soul, there are no bounds to the disgust which it may take to every thing which forms a subject of interest in the world; and a state of suffering appearing the road to a future life, such minds follow it with avidity, like the traveller, who willingly fatigues himself, in order to get sooner over the road which leads him to the object of his wishes. But what equally astonished and grieved me, was to see children brought up with this severity: their poor locks shaved off, their young countenances already furrowed, that deathly dress with which they were covered before they knew any thing of life,

before they had voluntarily renounced it, all this made my soul revolt against the parents who had placed them there. When such a state is not the adoption of a free and determined choice on the part of the person who professes it, it inspires as much horror as it at first created respect. The monk with whom I conversed, spoke of nothing but death; all his ideas came from that subject, or connected themselves with it; death is the sovereign monarch of this residence. As we talked of the temptations of the world, I expressed to the father Trappist my admiration of his conduct in thus sacrificing all, to withdraw himself from their influence. "We are cowards" said he to me, "who have retired into a fortress, because we feel we want the courage to meet our enemy in the open field." This reply was equally modest and ingenious\*.

A few days after we had visited these places, the French government ordered the seizure of the father Abbe, M. de L'Estrange; the confiscation of the property of the order, and the dismissal of the fathers from Switzerland.

\* (Note of the Editor.) I accompanied my mother in the excursion here related. Struck with the wild beauty of the place, and interested by the spiritual conversation of the Trappist who had attended us, I besought him to grant me hospitality until the following day, as I proposed going over the mountain on foot, in order to see the great convent of the Val-Sainte, and rejoining my mother and M. de Montmorency at Fribourg. This monk, with whom I continued to converse, had not much difficulty in discovering that I hated the imperial government, and I could guess that he fully participated in that sentiment. Afterwards, after thanking him for his kindness, I entirely lost sight of him, nor did I imagine, that he had preserved the least recollection of me.

Five years afterwards, in the first months of the Restoration, I was not a little surprised at receiving a letter from this same Trappist.

He had no doubt, he said, that now the legitimate monarch was restored to his throne, I must have a number of friends at court, and he requested me to employ their influence in procuring to his order the restoration of the property which it possessed in France. This letter was signed "Father A .... priest and procureur of La Trappe," and he added, as a postscript, "If a twenty-three years' emigration' and four campaigns in a regiment of horse-chasseurs in the army of Conde, give me any claims to the royal favor, I beg you will make use of them."

I could not help laughing, both at the idea which this good monk had of my influence at court, and at the use of it which he required from a protestant. I sent his letter to M. de Montmorency, whose influence was much greater than mine, and I have reason to believe that the petition was granted.

In other respects, these Trappists were not, in the deep vales of the Canton of Fribourg, such strangers to politics as their residence and their habit would lead one to believe.

I have since learned that they served as a medium for the correspondence of the French clergy with the pope, then a prisoner at Savonne. Certainly, although this does not at all excuse the rigor with which they were treated by Bonaparte, it gives a sufficient explanation of it. (End of editor's note.)

I know not of what M. de L'Estrange was accused; but it is scarcely probable that such a man should have meddled with the affairs of the world, much less the monks, who never quitted their solitude. The Swiss government caused search to be made every where for M. de L'Estrange, and I hope for its honor, that it took care not to find him. However, the unfortunate magistrates of countries which are called allies of France, are very often employed to arrest persons designated to them, ignorant whether they are delivering innocent or guilty victims to the great Leviathan, which thinks proper to swallow them up. The property of the Trappists was seized, that is to say, their tomb, for they hardly possessed any thing else, and the order was dispersed. It is said, that a Trappist at Genoa had mounted the pulpit to retract the oath of allegiance which he had taken to the emperor, declaring that since the captivity of the pope, he considered every priest as released from this oath. At his coming out from performing this act of repentance, he was, report also says, tried by a military commission, and shot. One would think that he was sufficiently punished, without rendering the whole order responsible for his conduct.

We regained Vevay by the mountains, and I proposed to M. de Montmorency to proceed as far as the entrance of the Valais, which I had never seen. We stopped at Bex, the last Swiss village, for the Valais was already united to France. A Portuguese brigade had left Geneva to go and occupy the Valais: singular state of Europe, to have a Portuguese garrison at Geneva going to take possession of a part of Switzerland in the name of France! I had a curiosity to see the Cretins of the Valais, of whom I had so often heard. This miserable degradation of man

affords ample subject for reflection; but it is excessively painful to see the human countenance thus become an object of horror and repugnance. I remarked, however, in several of these poor creatures, a degree of vivacity bordering on astonishment, produced on them by external objects. As they never recognize what they have already seen, they feel each time fresh surprise, and the spectacle of the world, with all its details, is thus for ever new to them; it is, perhaps, the compensation for their sad state, for certainly there is one. It is some years since a Cretin, having committed assassination, was condemned to death: as he was led to the scaffold, he took it into his head, seeing himself surrounded with a crowd of people, that he was accompanied in this manner to do him honor, and he laughed, held himself erect, and put his dress in order, with the idea of rendering himself more worthy of the fete. Was it right to punish such a being for the crime which his arm had committed?

There is at three leagues from Bex, a famous cascade, where the water falls from a very lofty mountain. I proposed to my friends to go and see it, and we returned before dinner. It is true that this cascade was upon the territory of the Valais, consequently then upon the French territory, and I forgot that I was not allowed more of that than the small space of ground which separates Coppet from Geneva. When I returned home, the prefect not only blamed me for having presumed to travel in Switzerland, but made it the greatest proof of his indulgence to keep silence on the crime I had committed, in setting my foot on the territory of the French empire. I might have said, in the words of Lafontaine's fable:

\*Je tondu de ce pre la largeur de ma langue

(I grazed of this meadow the breadth of my tongue.) But I confessed with great simplicity the fault I had committed in going to see this Swiss cascade, without dreaming that it was in France.

## CHAPTER 4.

Exile of M. de Montmorency and Madame Recamier—New persecutions.

This continual chicanery upon my most trifling actions, rendered my life odious to me, and I could not divert myself by occupation; for the recollection of the fate of my last work, and the certainty of never being able to publish any thing in future, operated as a complete damper to my mind, which requires emulation to be capable of labor. Notwithstanding, I could not yet resolve to quit for ever the borders of France, the abode of my father, and the friends who remained faithful to me. Every day I thought of departing, and every day I found in my own mind some reason for remaining, until the last blow was aimed at my soul; God knows what I have suffered from it.

M. de Montmorency came to pass several days with me at Coppet, and the wickedness of detail in the master of so great an empire is so well calculated, that by the return of the courier who announced his arrival at Coppet, my friend received his letter of exile. The emperor would not have been satisfied if this order had not been signified to him at my house, and if there had not been in the letter itself of the minister of police, a word to signify that I was the cause of this exile. M. de Montmorency endeavoured, in every possible way, to soften the news to me, but, I tell it to Bonaparte, that he may applaud himself on the success of his scheme, I shrieked with agony on learning the calamity which I had drawn on the head of my generous friend; and never was my heart, tried as it had been for so many years, nearer to despair. I knew not how to lull the rending thoughts which succeeded each other in my bosom, and had recourse to opium to suspend for some hours the anguish which I felt. M. de Montmorency, calm and religious, invited me to follow his example; the consciousness of the devotedness to me which he had condescended to show, supported him: but for me, I reproached myself for the bitter consequences of this devotedness, which now separated him from his family and friends. I prayed to the Almighty without



ceasing, but grief would not quit its hold of me for a moment, and life became a burden to me.

While I was in this state, I received a letter from Madame Recamier, that beautiful person who has received the admiration of the whole of Europe, and who has never abandoned an unfortunate friend. She informed me, that on her road to the waters of Aix in Savoy, to which she was proceeding, she intended stopping at my house, and would be there in two days. I trembled lest the lot of M. de Montmorency should also become hers. However improbable it was, I was ordained to fear every thing from hatred so barbarous and minute, and I therefore sent a courier to meet Madame Recamier, to beseech her not to come to Coppet. To know that she who had never failed to console me with the most amiable attention was only a few leagues distant from me; to know that she was there, so near to my habitation, and that I was not allowed to see her again, perhaps for the last time! all this I was obliged to bear. I conjured her not to stop at Coppet; she would not yield to my entreaties; she could not pass under my windows without remaining some hours with me, and it was with convulsions of tears that I saw her enter this chateau, in which her arrival had always been a fete. She left me the next day, and repaired instantly to one of her relations at fifty leagues distance from Switzerland. It was in vain; the fatal blow of exile smote her also; she had had the intention of seeing me, and that was enough; for the generous compassion which had inspired her, she must be punished. The reverses of fortune which she had met with made the destruction of her natural establishment extremely painful to her. Separated from all her friends, she has passed whole months in a little provincial town, a prey to the extremes of every feeling of insipid and melancholy solitude. Such was the lot to which I was the cause of condemning the most brilliant female of her time; and thus regardless did the chief of the French, that people so renowned for their gallantry, show himself towards the most beautiful woman in Paris. In one day he smote virtue and distinguished birth in M. de Montmorency; beauty in Madame Recamier, and if I dare say it, the reputation of high talents in myself. Perhaps he also flattered himself with attacking the memory of my father in his daughter, in order that it might be truly said that in this world, under his reign, the dead and the living, piety, beauty, wit, and celebrity, all were as nothing. Persons made themselves culpable by being found wanting in the delicate shades of flattery towards him, in refusing to abandon any one who had been visited by his disgrace. He recognises but two classes of human creatures, those who serve him, and those, who without injuring, wish to have an existence independent of him. He is unwilling that in the whole universe, from the details of housekeeping

to the direction of empires, a single will should act without reference to his.

"Madam de Stael," said the prefect of Geneva, "has contrived to make herself a very pleasant life at Coppet; her friends and foreigners come to see her: the emperor will not allow that." And why did he torment me in this manner? that I might print an eulogium upon him: and of what consequence was this eulogium to him, among the millions of phrases which fear and hope were constantly offering at his shrine? Bonaparte once said: "If I had the choice, either of doing a noble action myself, or of inducing my adversary to do a mean one, I would not hesitate to prefer the debasement of my enemy." In this sentence you have the explanation of the particular pains which he took to torment my existence. He knew that I was attached to my friends, to France, to my works, to my tastes, to society; in taking from me every thing which composed my happiness, his wish was to trouble me sufficiently to make me write some piece of insipid flattery, in the hope that it would obtain me my recall. In refusing to lend myself to his wishes, I ought to say it, I have not had the merit of making a sacrifice; the emperor wished me to commit a meanness, but a meanness entirely useless; for at a time when success was in a manner deified, the ridicule would not have been complete, if I had succeeded in returning to Paris, by whatever means I had effected it. To satisfy our master, whose skill in degrading whatever remains of lofty mind is unquestionable, it was necessary that I should dishonor myself in order to obtain my return to France,—that he should turn into mockery my zeal in praise of him, who had never ceased to persecute me,—and that this zeal should not be of the least service to me. I have denied him this truly refined satisfaction; it is all the merit I have had in the long contest which has subsisted between his omnipotence and my weakness.

M. de Montmorency's family, in despair at his exile, were anxious, as was natural, that he should separate himself from the sad cause of this calamity, and I saw that friend depart without knowing if he would ever again honor with his presence my residence on this earth. On the 31st of August, 1811, I broke the first and last of the ties which bound me to my native country; I broke them, at least so far as regards human connections, which can no longer exist between us; but I never lift my eyes towards heaven without thinking of my excellent friend, and I venture to believe also, that in his prayers he answers me. Beyond this, fate has denied me all other correspondence with him.

When the exile of my two friends became known, I was assailed by a whole host of chagrins of every kind; but a great misfortune renders us in a manner

insensible to fresh troubles. It was reported that the minister of police had declared that he would have a soldier's guard mounted at the bottom of the avenue of Coppet, to arrest whoever came to see me. The prefect of Geneva, who was instructed, by order of the emperor he said, to annul me (that was his expression), never missed an opportunity of insinuating, or even declaring publicly, that no one who had any thing either to hope or fear from the government ought to venture near me. M. de Saint-Priest, formerly minister of Louis XVI. and the colleague of my father, honored me with his affection; his daughters who dreaded, and with reason, that he might be sent from Geneva, united their entreaties with mine that he would abstain from visiting me. Notwithstanding, in the middle of winter, at the age of seventy-eight, he was banished not only from Geneva, but from Switzerland; for it is fully admitted, as has been seen in my own case, that the emperor can banish from Switzerland as well as from France; and when any objections are made to the French agents, on the score of being in a foreign country, whose independence is recognised, they shrug up their shoulders, as if you were wearying them with Metaphysical quibbles. And really it is a perfect quibble to wish to distinguish in Europe anything but prefect-kings, and prefects receiving their orders directly from the emperor of France. If there is any difference between the soi-disant allied countries and the French provinces, it is that the first are rather worse treated. There remains in France a certain recollection of having been called the great nation, which sometimes obliges the emperor to be measured in his proceedings; it was so at least, but every day even that becomes less necessary. The motive assigned for the banishment of M. de Saint-Priest was, that he had not induced his sons to abandon the service of Russia. His sons had, during the emigration, met with the most generous reception in Russia; they had there been promoted, their intrepid courage had there been properly rewarded; they were covered with wounds, they were distinguished among the first for their military talents; the eldest was now more than thirty years of age. How was it possible for a father to ask that the existence of his sons, thus established, should be sacrificed to the honor of coming to place themselves en surveillance on the French territory? for that was the enviable lot which was reserved for them. It was a source of melancholy satisfaction to me, that I had not seen M. de Saint-Priest for four months previous to his banishment; had it not been for that, no one would have doubted that it was I who had infected him with the contagion of my disgrace.

Not only Frenchmen, but foreigners, were apprised that they must not go to my house. The prefect kept upon the watch to prevent even old friends from seeing me. One day, among others, he deprived me, by his official vigilance, of the

society of a German gentleman, whose conversation was extremely agreeable to me, and I could not help telling him, on this occasion, that he might have spared himself this extraordinary degree of persecution. "How!" replied he, "it was to do you a service that I acted in this manner; I made your friend sensible that he would compromise you by going to see you." I could not refrain from a smile at this ingenious argument. "Yes," continued he with the most perfect gravity, "the emperor, seeing you preferred to himself, would be displeased with you for it." "So that" I replied, "the emperor expects that my private friends, and shortly, perhaps, my own children, should forsake me to please him; that seems to me rather too much. Besides, I do not well see how a person in my situation can be compromised; and what you say reminds me of a revolutionist who was applied to, in the times of terror, to use his endeavours to save one of his friends from the scaffold. I am afraid, said he, that my speaking in his favor would only injure him." The prefect smiled at my quotation, but continued that train of reasoning, which, backed as it is with four hundred thousand bayonets, always appears the soundest. A man at Geneva said to me, "Do not you think that the prefect declares his opinion with a great deal of frankness?" "Yes," I replied, "he says with sincerity that he is devoted to the man of power; he says with courage that he is of the strongest side; I am not exactly sensible of the merit of such an avowal."

Several independent ladies at Geneva continued to show me marks of the greatest kindness, of which I shall always retain a deep recollection. But even to the clerks in the custom houses, regarded themselves as in a state of diplomacy with me; and from prefects to sub-prefects, and from the cousins of one and the other, a profound terror would have seized them all, if I had not spared them, as much as was in my power, the anxiety of paying or not paying a visit. Every courier brought reports of other friends of mine being exiled from Paris, for having kept up connections with me; it became a matter of strict duty for me to avoid seeing a single Frenchman of the least note; and very often I was even apprehensive of injuring persons in the country where I was living, whose courageous friendship never failed itself towards me. I felt two opposite sensations, and both, I believe, equally natural; melancholy at being forsaken, and cruel anxiety for those who showed attachment to me. It is difficult to conceive a situation in life more painful at every moment; for the space of nearly two years that I endured it, I may say truly that I never once saw the day return without a feeling of desolation at having to support the existence which that day renewed. But why should not you leave it then? will be said, and was said incessantly to me from all quarters. A man whom I ought not to name\*, but who

I trust knows how much I esteem the elevation of his character and conduct, said to me: "If you remain, he will treat you as Elizabeth did Mary Stuart:—nineteen years of misery, and the catastrophe at last." Another person, witty but unguarded in his expressions, wrote to me, that it was dishonorable to remain after so much ill-treatment. I had no need of these recommendations to wish, passionately wish, to depart; from the moment that I could no longer see my friends, that I was only a burden to my children's existence, was it not time to determine? The prefect, however, repeated in every possible way, that if I went off, I should be seized; that at Vienna, as well as at Berlin, I should be reclaimed; and that I could not make the least preparation for departure without his being informed of it; for he knew, he said, every thing that passed in my house. In that respect he was a boaster, and, as the event has proved, exhibited mere fatuity in matters of espionage. But who would not have been terrified at the tone of assurance with which he told all my friends that I could not move a step without being seized by the gendarmes!

\* Count Elzearn de Sabran.

## CHAPTER 5.

### Departure from Coppet.

I passed eight months in a state I cannot describe, every day making a trial of my courage, and every day shrinking at the idea of a prison. All the world certainly fears it; but my imagination has such a dread of solitude, my friends are so necessary to me, to support and animate me, and to turn my attention to a new perspective when I sink under the intensity of painful sensations, that never has death presented itself to me under such terrible features as a prisoner a dungeon, where I might remain for years without ever hearing a friendly voice. I have been told that one of the Spaniards who defended Saragossa with the most astonishing intrepidity, utters the most dreadful shrieks in the tower at Vincennes, where he is kept confined; so much does this frightful solitude affect even the most energetic minds! Besides, I could not disguise from myself that I was not courageous; I have a bold imagination, but a timid character, and all kinds of perils appear to me like phantoms. The species of talent which I possess brings images to me with such living freshness, that if the beauties of nature are improved by it, dangers are made more dreadful. Sometimes I was afraid of a prison, sometimes of robbers, if I was obliged to go through Turkey, in the event of Russia being shut against me by political combinations: sometimes also the immense sea which I must cross between Constantinople and London, filled me with terror for my daughter and myself. Nevertheless I had always the wish to depart; an inward feeling of boldness excited me to it; but I might say, like a well known Frenchman, "I tremble at the dangers to which my courage is about to expose me." In truth, what adds to the horrible barbarity of persecuting females, is, that their nature is both irritable and weak; they suffer more acutely from trouble, and are less capable of the strength required to escape from it.

I was also affected by another kind of terror: I was afraid that the moment the emperor knew of my departure, he would insert in the newspapers one of those

articles which he knows so well how to dictate, when he wishes to commit moral assassination. A senator told me one day, that Napoleon was the best journalist he ever knew; and certainly if this expression meant to designate the art of defaming individuals and nations, he possesses it in the highest degree. Nations are not affected by it; but he has acquired in the revolutionary times he has passed through, a certain tact in calumnies suitable to vulgar comprehension, which makes him find the expressions best adapted for circulation among those whose wit is confined to repeating the phrases published by the government for their use. If the *Moniteur* accused any one of robbing on the highway, no French, German, or Italian journal could admit his justification. It is almost impossible to represent to one's self what a man is, at the head of a million of soldiers, and possessed of ten millions of revenue, having all the prisons of Europe at his disposal, with the keys for his gaolers, and using the press as his mouth-piece, at a time when people have hardly the intimacy of friendship to make a reply; finally, with the ability of turning misfortune into ridicule: execrable power, whose ironical enjoyment is the last insult which the infernal genii can make the human race endure!

Whatever independence of character one had, I believe that no one could refrain from shuddering at the idea of having such power directed against one's self; at least I confess having felt this movement very strongly; and in spite of the melancholy of my situation, I frequently said to myself, that a roof for shelter, a table for sustenance, and a garden for exercise, formed a lot with which one must learn to be contented; but even this lot, such as it was, no one could be certain of retaining in peace; a word might escape, a word might be repeated, and this man, whose power was continually on the increase, to what a point might he not at last be irritated? When the sun shone brightly, my courage returned; but when the sky was covered with clouds, travelling terrified me, and I discovered in myself a taste for indolent pursuits, foreign to my nature, but which fear had given birth to; physical happiness appeared to me then greater than I had previously regarded it, and every sort of exertion alarmed me. My health also, cruelly affected by so many troubles, weakened the energy of my character, so that during this period I put the patience of my friends to a most severe test, by an eternal discussion of the plans in deliberation, and overwhelming them with my uncertainties.

I tried a second time to obtain a passport for America; they made me wait till the middle of winter before they gave me the answer I required, which terminated in a refusal. I then offered to enter into an engagement never to print any thing

upon any subject, not even a bouquet to Iris, provided I was allowed to live at Rome; I had the vanity to remind them that it was the author of *Corinna* who asked permission to go and live in Italy. Doubtless the minister of police had never found a similar motive inscribed upon his registers, and the air of the south, which was so necessary to my health, was mercilessly refused me.

They never ceased declaring to me that my whole life should be spent in the circle of two leagues, which separates Coppet from Geneva. If I remained, I must separate myself from my sons, who were of an age to seek a profession; and if my daughter shared my fortune, I imposed upon her the most melancholy perspective. The city of Geneva, which has preserved such noble traces of liberty, was, notwithstanding, gradually allowing herself to be gained over by the interests which connected her with the distributors of places in France. Every day the number of persons with whom I could be in intelligence diminished; and all my feelings became a weight upon my soul, in place of being a source of life. There was an end of my talents, of my happiness, of my existence, for it is frightful to be of no service to one's children, and to be the cause of injuring one's friends. Finally, the news I received, announced to me from all quarters the formidable preparations of the emperor: it was evident that he wished first to make himself master of the ports of the Baltic by the destruction of Russia, and that afterwards he reckoned on making use of the wrecks of that power to lead them against Constantinople: and his subsequent intention was to make that the point of starting for the conquest of Asia and Africa. A short time before he left Paris, he had said, "I am tired of this old Europe." And in truth she is no longer sufficient for the activity of her master. The last outlets of the Continent might be closed from one moment to another, and I was about to find myself in Europe as in a garrisoned town, where all the gates are guarded by military.

I determined therefore on going off, while there yet remained one means of getting to England, and that means the tour of the whole of Europe. I fixed the 15th of May for my departure, the preparations for which had been arranged long before-hand in the most profound secrecy. On the eve of that day, my strength abandoned me entirely, and for a moment I almost persuaded myself that such a degree of terror as I felt could only proceed from the consciousness of meditating a bad action. Sometimes I consulted all sort of presages in the most foolish manner; at others, which was much wiser, I interrogated my friends and myself on the morality of my resolution. It appears to me that the part of resignation in all things may be the most religious, and I am not surprised that pious men should have gone so far as to feel a sort of scruple about resolutions



proceeding from free will. Necessity appears to bear a sort of divine character, while man's resolution may be connected with his pride. It is certain, however, that none of our faculties have been given us in vain, and that of deciding for one's self has also its use. On another side, all persons of mediocre intellect are continually astonished that talent has different desires from theirs. When it is successful, all the world might do the same; but when it is productive of trouble, when it excites to stepping out of the common track, these same people regard it no longer but as a disease, and almost as a crime. I heard continually buzzing about me the commonplaces with which the world suffers itself to be led: "Has not she plenty of money? Can she not live well and sleep well in a good house?" Some persons of a higher cast felt that I had not even the certainty of my sad situation, and that it might get worse, without ever getting better. But the atmosphere which surrounded me counselled repose, because, for the last six months I had not been assailed by any new persecution, and because men always believe that what is, is what will be. It was in the midst of all these dispiriting circumstances that I was called upon to take one of the strongest resolutions which can occur in the private life of a female. My servants, with the exception of two confidential persons, were entirely ignorant of my secret; the greatest part of those who visited me had not the least idea of it, and by a single action, I was going to make an entire change in my own life and that of my family. Torn to pieces by uncertainty, I wandered over the park of Coppet; I seated myself in all the places where my father had been accustomed to repose himself and contemplate nature; I regarded once more these same beauties of water and verdure which we had so often admired together. I bid them adieu, and recommended myself to their sweet influence. The monument which encloses the ashes of my father and my mother, and in which, if the good God permits, mine also will be deposited, was one of the principal causes of the regret I felt at banishing myself from the place of my residence; but I found almost always on approaching it, a sort of strength which appeared to me to come from on high. I passed an hour in prayer before that iron gate which inclosed the mortal remains of the noblest of human beings, and there, my soul was convinced of the necessity of departure. I recalled the famous verses of Claudian\*, in which he expresses the kind of doubt which arises in the most religious minds when they see the earth abandoned to the wicked, and the destiny of mortals as it were floating at the mercy of chance. I felt that I had no longer the strength necessary to feed the enthusiasm which developed in me whatever good qualities I possessed, and that I must listen to the voice of those of similar sentiments with myself, for the purpose of strengthening my confidence in my own resources, and preserving that self-respect which my father had instilled into me. In this

state of anxiety, I invoked several times the memory of my father, of that man, the Fenelon of politics, whose genius was in every thing opposed to that of Bonaparte; and genius he certainly had, for it requires at least as much of that to put one's self in harmony with heaven, as to invoke to one's aid all the instruments which are let loose by the absence of laws divine and human. I went once more to look at my father's study, where his easy chair, his table, and his papers, still remained in their old situation; I embraced each venerated mark, I took his cloak which till then I had ordered to be left upon his chair, and carried it away with me, that I might wrap myself in it, if the messenger of death approached me. When these adieus were terminated, I avoided as much as I could any other leave-takings, which affected me too much, and wrote to the friends whom I quitted, taking care that my letters should not reach them until several days after my departure.

\* Saepe mihi dubiam traxit isententia mentem,  
Curarent Superi terras, an nullus inesset  
Rector, et incerto fluerent mortalia casu.

Abstulit hunc tandem Rufini poena tumultum,  
Absolvitque Deos. Jam non ad culmina rerum  
Injustos crevisse queror; tolluntur in altum  
Ut lapsu graviore raent.

The next day, Saturday the 23rd of May, 1812, at two o'clock in the afternoon, I got into my carriage, saying that I should return to dinner. I took no packet whatever with me; I had my fan in my hand, and my daughter hers; only my son and Mr. Rocca carried in their pockets what was necessary for some days journey. In descending the avenue of Coppet, in thus quitting that chateau which had become to me like an old and valued friend, I was ready to faint: my son took my hand, and said, "My dear mother, think that you are setting out for England\*." That word revived my spirits: I was still, however, at nearly two thousand leagues distance from that goal, to which the usual road would have so speedily conducted me: but every step brought me at least something nearer to it. When I had proceeded a few leagues, I sent back one of my servants to apprise my establishment that I should not return until the next day, and I continued travelling night and day as far as a farmhouse beyond Berne, where I had fixed to meet Mr. Schlegel, who was so good as to offer to accompany me; there also I had to leave my eldest son, who had been educated, up to the age of fourteen, by the example of my father, whose features he reminds one of. A second time all

my courage abandoned me; that Switzerland, still so tranquil and always so beautiful, her inhabitants, who know how to be free by their virtues, even though they have lost their political independence: the whole country detained me: it seemed to tell me not to quit it. It was still time to return: I had not yet made an irreparable step. Although the prefect had thought proper to interdict me from travelling in Switzerland, I saw clearly that it was only from the fear of my going beyond it. Finally, I had not yet crossed the barrier which left me no possibility of returning; the imagination feels a difficulty in supporting this idea. On the other hand, there was also something irreparable in the resolution of remaining; for after that moment, I felt, and the event has proved the feeling correct, that I could no longer escape. Besides, there is an indescribable sort of shame in recommencing such solemn farewells, and one can scarcely resuscitate for one's friends more than once. I know not what would have become of me, if this uncertainty, even at the very moment of action, had lasted much longer; for my head was quite confused with it. My children decided me, and especially my daughter, then scarcely fourteen years old. I committed myself, in a manner, to her, as if the voice of God had made itself be heard by the mouth of a child\*.

\* England was then the hope of all who suffered for the cause of liberty; how comes it, that after the victory, her ministers have so cruelly deceived the expectation of Europe? (Note by the Editor.)

My son took his leave, and after he was out of my sight, I could say, like Lord Russel: the bitterness of death is past. I got into my carriage with my daughter: uncertainty once terminated, I collected all my strength within myself, and I found sufficient of that for action which had altogether failed me for deliberation.

Note by the Editor: \* It was but a trifle to have succeeded in quitting Coppet, by deceiving\* the vigilance of the prefect of Geneva; it was also necessary to obtain passports for the purpose of going through Austria, and that these passports should be under a name which would attract no attention from the different polices which then divided Germany. My mother entrusted me with this commission, and the emotion which I experienced from it will never cease to be present to my thoughts. It was undoubtedly a decisive step; if the passports were refused, my mother sunk again into a much more cruel situation; her plans were known; flight was thenceforward become impracticable, and the rigors of her exile would have every day been more intolerable. I thought I could not do better than to address myself directly to the Austrian minister, with that confidence in

the feelings of his equals which is the first movement of every honest man. M. de Schraut made no hesitation in granting me the so much desired passports, and I hope he will allow me to express in this place the gratitude which I still retain to him for them. At a period when Europe was still bending under the yoke of Napoleon, during which the persecution directed against my mother estranged from her persons who probably owed to her courageous friendship the preservation of their fortunes, or their lives, I was not surprised, but I was most sensibly affected by the generous proceeding of the Austrian minister.

I left my mother to return to Coppet, to which the interests of her fortune recalled me; and some days afterwards, my brother, of whom a cruel death has deprived us almost at the moment of entrance into his career set off to rejoin my mother at Vienna with her servants and travelling carriage. It was only this second departure which gave the hint to the police of the prefect of the Leman: so true it is, that to the other qualities of espionage we must still add stupidity. Fortunately my mother was already far beyond the reach of the gendarmes, and she could continue the journey of which the narrative follows. (En of Note by the Editor).

## CHAPTER 6.

Passage through Austria;—1812.

In this manner, after ten years of continually increasing persecutions, first sent away from Paris, then banished into Switzerland, afterwards confined to my own chateau, and at last condemned to the dreadful punishment of never seeing my friends, and of being the cause of their banishment: in this manner was I obliged to quit, as a fugitive, two countries, France and Switzerland, by order of a man less French than myself: for I was born on the borders of that Seine where his tyranny alone naturalizes him. The air of this fine country is not a native air to him: can he then comprehend the pain of being banished from it, he who considers this fertile country only as the instrument of his victories? Where is his country? it is the earth which is subject to him. His fellow citizens? they are the slaves who obey his orders. He complained one day of not having had under his command, like Tamerlane, nations to whom reasoning was unknown. I imagine that by this time he is satisfied with Europeans: their manners, like their armies, now bear a sufficient resemblance to those of Tartars.

I had nothing to fear in Switzerland, as I could always prove that I had a right to be there; but to leave it, I had only a foreign passport: I must go through one of the confederated states, and if any French agent had required the government of Bavaria to hinder me from passing, who does not know with what regret, but at the same time, with what obedience it would have executed the orders thus received? I entered into the Tyrol with a great respect for that country, which had fought from attachment to its ancient masters, but with a great contempt for such of the Austrian ministers as had advised the abandonment of men compromised by their attachment to their sovereign. It is said that a subaltern diplomatist, head of the spy department in Austria, thought proper one day, during the war, to maintain at the emperor's table, that the Tyrolese should be abandoned: M. de H., a gentleman of the Tyrol, counsellor of state in the Austrian service, who in his

actions and writings has exhibited the courage of a warrior, and the talents of an historian, replied to these unworthy observations with the contempt they deserved: the emperor signified his entire approbation to M. de H., and showed by that at least that his private feelings were strangers to the political conduct which he was made to adopt. Thus it is that the greater part of the European sovereigns, at the moment of Bonaparte making himself master of France, who were extremely upright persons as individuals, were already become mere cyphers as kings, as the government of their states was entirely committed to circumstances and to their ministers.

The aspect of the Tyrol reminds one of Switzerland: there is not, however, so much vigour and originality in the landscape, nor have the villages the same appearance of plenty; it is in short a fine country, which has been wisely governed, but never been free; and it is only as a mountaineer people, that it has shown itself capable of resistance. Very few instances of remarkable men can be mentioned from the Tyrol: first, the Austrian government is scarcely fit to develop genius; and, besides, the Tyrol, by its manners as well as by its geographical position, should have formed a part of the Swiss confederation: its incorporation with the Austrian monarchy not being conformable to its nature, it has only developed by that union the noble qualities of mountaineers, courage and fidelity.

The postilion who drove us showed us a rock on which the emperor Maximilian, grandfather of Charles the Fifth, had nearly perished: the ardor of the chace had stimulated him to such a degree, that he had followed the chamois to heights from which it was impossible to descend. This tradition is still popular in the country, so necessary to nations is the admiration of the past. The memory of the last war was still quite alive in the bosoms of the people; the peasants showed us the summits of mountains on which they had entrenched themselves: their imagination delighted in retracing the effect of their fine warlike music, when it echoed from the tops of the hills into the vallies. When we were shown the palace of the prince-royal of Bavaria, at Inspruck, they told us that Hofer, the courageous peasant and head of the insurrection, had lived there; they gave us an instance of the intrepidity shown by a female, when the French entered into her chateau: in short, every thing displayed in them the desire of being a nation, much more than personal attachment to the house of Austria.

In one of the churches at Inspruck is the famous tomb of Maximilian. I went to see it, flattering myself with the certainty of not being recognized by any person,

in a place remote from the capitals where the French agents reside. The figure of Maximilian in bronze, is kneeling upon a sarcophagus, in the body of the church, and thirty statues of the same metal ranged on each side of the sanctuary represent the relations and ancestors of the emperor. So much past grandeur, so much of the ambition formidable in its day, collected in a family meeting round a tomb, formed a spectacle which led one to profound reflection: there you saw Philip the Good, Charles the Rash, and Mary of Bergundy; and in the midst of these historical personages Dietrich of Berne, a fabulous hero: the closed visor concealed the countenances of the knights, but when this visor was lifted up a brazen countenance appeared under a helmet of brass, and the features of the knight were of bronze, like his armour. The visor of Dietrich of Berne is the only one which cannot be lifted up, the artist meaning in that manner to signify the mysterious veil which covers the history of this warrior,

From Inspruck I had to pass by Salzburg, from thence to reach the Austrian frontiers.

It seemed as if all my anxieties would be at an end, when I was once entered on the territory of that monarchy which I had known so secure and so good. But the moment which I most dreaded was the passage from Bavaria to Austria, for it was there that a courier might have preceded me, to forbid my being allowed to pass. In spite of this apprehension, I had not been very expeditious, for my health, which had been seriously injured by all I had suffered, did not allow me to travel by night. I have often felt, during this journey, that the greatest terror cannot overcome a sort of physical depression, which makes one dread fatigue more than death. I flattered myself, however, with arriving without any obstacle, and already my fear was dissipated on approaching the object which I thought secured, when on our entrance into the inn at Salzburg, a man came up to Mr. Schlegel who accompanied me, and told him in German, that a French courier had been to inquire after a carriage coming from Inspruck with a lady and a young girl, and that he had left word he would return to get intelligence of them. I lost not a word of what the innkeeper mentioned, and became pale with terror. Mr. Schlegel also was alarmed on my account: he made some farther inquiries, all of which made it certain, that this was a French courier, that he came from Munich, that he had been as far as the Austrian frontier to wait for me, and not finding me there, that he had returned to meet me. Nothing appeared more clear: this was just what I had dreaded before my departure, and during the journey. It was impossible for me now to escape, as this courier, who it was said was already at the post-house, would necessarily overtake me. I determined on the

spur of the moment to leave my carriage, my daughter, and Mr. Schlegel at the inn, and to go alone and on foot into the streets of the town, and take the chance' of entering the first house whose master or mistress had a physiognomy that pleased me. I would obtain of them an asylum for a few days; during this time, my daughter and Mr. Schlegel might say that they were going to rejoin me in Austria, and I should leave Salzburg afterwards in the disguise of a country woman. Hazardous in the extreme as this resource appeared, no other remained to me, and I was preparing for the task, in fear and trembling, when who should enter my apartment but this so much dreaded courier, who was no other than Mr. Rocca. After having accompanied me the first day of my journey, he returned to Geneva to terminate some business, and now came to rejoin me; he had passed himself off as a French courier, in order to take advantage of the terror which the name inspires, particularly to the allies of France, and to obtain horses more quickly. He had taken the Munich road, and had hurried on as far as the Austrian frontier, to make himself sure that no one had preceded or announced me. He returned to meet me, to tell me that I had nothing to fear, and to get upon the box of my carriage as we passed that frontier, which appeared to me the most dreadful, but also the last of my dangers. In this manner my cruel apprehension was changed into a most pleasing sentiment of gratefulness and security.

We walked about the town of Salzburg, which contains many noble edifices, but like the greater part of the ecclesiastical principalities of Germany, now presents a most dreary aspect. The tranquil resources of that kind of government have terminated with it. The convents also were preservers; one is struck with the number of establishments and edifices which have been erected by bachelor masters in their residence: all these peaceable sovereigns have benefited their people. An archbishop of Salzburg in the last century has cut a road which is prolonged for several hundred paces under a mountain, like the grotto of Pausilippo at Naples: on the front of the entrance gate there is a bust of the archbishop, under which is an inscription: *Tesaxa loquuntur*. (The stones speak of thee). There is a degree of grandeur in this inscription.

I entered at last into that Austria, which four years before I had seen so happy; already I was struck by a sensible change, produced by the depreciation of paper-money, and the variations of every kind which the uncertainty of the financial measures had introduced into its value. Nothing demoralizes a people so much as these continual fluctuations which make every man a broker, and hold out to the working classes a means of getting money by sharpening, instead of by their labour. I no longer found in the people the same probity which had



struck me four years before: this paper-money sets the imagination at work with the hope of rapid and easy gains; and the hazardous chances overturn the gradual and certain existence which is the basis of the honesty of the middling classes. During my residence in Austria, a man was hanged for forging notes at the very moment when the government had reduced the value of the old ones; he called out, on his way to execution that it was not he who had robbed, but the state. And, in truth, it is impossible to make the common people comprehend that it is just to punish them for having speculated in their own affairs, in the same way as the government had done in its own. But this government was the ally of the French government, and doubly its ally, as its monarch was the very patient father-in-law of a very terrible son-in-law. What resources therefore could remain to him? The marriage of his daughter had been the means of liberating him from two millions of contributions-at most; the rest had been required with the kind of justice of which the other is so easily capable, and which consists in treating his friends and his enemies alike: from this proceeded the penury of the treasury. Another misfortune also resulted from the last war, and especially from the last peace: the inutility of the generous feeling which had illustrated the Austrian arms in the battles of Essling and Wagram, had cooled the national attachment to the sovereign, which had formerly been very strong. The same thing has happened to all the sovereigns who have treated with the emperor Napoleon; he has made use of them as receivers to levy imposts on his account; he has forced them to squeeze their subjects to pay him the taxes he demanded; and when it has suited him to dethrone these sovereigns, the people, previously alienated from them by the very wrongs they had committed in obedience to the emperor, have not raised an arm to defend them against him. The emperor Napoleon has the art of making countries said to be at peace, so singularly miserable that any change is agreeable to them, and having been once compelled to give men and money to France, they scarcely feel the inconvenience of being wholly united to it. They are wrong, however, for any thing is better than to lose the name of a nation, and as the miseries of Europe are caused by one man, care should be taken to preserve what may be restored when he is no more.

Before I reached Vienna, as I waited for my second son, who was to rejoin me with my servants and baggage, I stopped a day at Molk, that celebrated abbey, placed upon an eminence, from which Napoleon had contemplated the various windings of the Danube, and praised the beauty of the country upon which he was going to pounce with his armies. He frequently amuses himself in this manner in making poetical pieces on the beauties of nature, which he is about to ravage, and upon the effects of war, with which he is going to overwhelm

mankind. After all, he is in the right to amuse himself in all ways, at the expense of the human race, which tolerates his existence. Man is only arrested in the career of evil by obstacles or remorse; no one has yet opposed to Napoleon the one, and he has very easily rid himself of the other. For me, who, solitary, followed his footsteps on the terrace from which the country could be seen to a great distance, I admired its fertility, and felt astonished at seeing how soon the bounty of heaven repairs the disasters occasioned by man. It is only moral riches which disappear altogether, or are at least lost for centuries.

## CHAPTER 7.

### Residence at Vienna.

I arrived at Vienna on the 6th of June, very fortunately just two hours before the departure of a courier whom Count Stackelberg, the Russian ambassador, was dispatching to Wilna, where the emperor Alexander then was. M. de Stackelberg, who behaved to me with that noble delicacy which is so prominent a trait in his character, wrote by this courier for my passport, and assured me that within three weeks I might reckon on having an answer. It then became a question where I was to pass these three weeks; my Austrian friends, who had given me the most amiable reception, assured me that I might remain at Vienna without the least fear. The court was then at Dresden, at the great meeting of all the German princes, who came to present their homage to the emperor of France. Napoleon had stopped at Dresden under the pretext of still negotiating there to avoid the war with Russia, in other words, to obtain by his policy the same result as he could by his arms. He would not at first admit the king of Prussia to his banquet at Dresden; he knew too well what repugnance the heart of that unfortunate monarch must have to what he conceives himself obliged to do. It is said that M. de Metternich obtained this humiliating favor for him. M. de Hardenberg, who accompanied him, made the remark to the emperor Napoleon, that Prussia had paid one third more than the promised contributions. The emperor turning his back to him, replied: "An apothecary's bill,"— for he has a secret pleasure in making use of vulgar expressions, the more to humble those who are the objects of it. He assumed a sufficient degree of coquetry in his way of living with the emperor and empress of Austria as it was of importance to him that the Austrian government should take an active part in his war with Russia. In a conversation with M. de Metternich, I have been assured that he said, "You see very well that I can never have the least interest in diminishing the power of Austria, as it now exists; for, first of all, it suits me that my father-in-law should be a prince of great consideration: besides, I have more confidence in the old

than in the new dynasties. Has not General Bernadotte already taken the side of making peace with England?" And in fact, the Prince Royal of Sweden, as will be seen in the sequel, had courageously declared himself for the interests of the country which he governed.

The emperor of France having left Dresden to review his armies, the empress went to spend some time at Prague with her own family. Napoleon himself, at his departure, regulated the etiquette that was to subsist between the father and the daughter, and one may conjecture that it was not very easy, as he loves etiquette almost as much from suspicion as from vanity, in other words, as a means of isolating individuals among themselves, under the pretence of marking the distinction of their ranks.

The first ten days, which I passed at Vienna, passed unclouded, and I was delighted at thus finding myself again in a pleasing society, whose manner of thinking corresponded with my own; for the public opinion was unfavorable to the alliance with Napoleon, and the government had concluded it without being supported by the national assent. In fact, how could a war, the ostensible object of which was the re-establishment of Poland, be undertaken by the power which had contributed to the partition, and which still retained in its hands with greater obstinacy than ever the third of that same Poland? Thirty thousand men were sent by the Austrian government to restore the confederation of Poland at Warsaw, and nearly as many spies were attached to the movements of the Poles in Galicia, who wished to have deputies at this confederation. The Austrian government was therefore obliged to speak against the Poles, at the very time that it was acting in their cause, and to say to her subjects of Galicia: "I forbid you to be of the opinion which I support." What metaphysics! they would be found very intricate, if fear did not explain every thing.

The Poles are the only nation, of those which Bonaparte drags after him, that create any interest. I believe they know as well as we do, that they are only the pretence for the war, and that the emperor does not care a fig for their independence. He has not even been able to refrain from expressing several times to the emperor Alexander his disdain for Poland, solely because she wishes to be free: but it suits his purposes to put her in the van against Russia, and the Poles avail themselves of that circumstance to restore their national independence. I know not if they will succeed, for it is with difficulty that despotism ever gives liberty, and what they will regain in their own cause, if successful, they will lose in the cause of Europe. They will be Poles, but Poles as

much enslaved as the three nations upon whom they will no longer depend. Be that as it may, the Poles are the only Europeans who can serve under the banners of Napoleon without blushing. The princes of the Rhenish Confederation think to find their interest in it by the loss of their honor; but Austria by a combination truly remarkable, at once sacrifices in it both her honor and her interest. The emperor Napoleon wished the archduke Charles to take the command of these thirty thousand men; but the archduke fortunately saved himself from this insult; and when I saw him walking alone in a brown coat, in the alleys of the Prater, I recovered all my old respect for him.

The same subaltern diplomatist who had so unworthily advised the abandonment of the Tyrolese, was entrusted, during the absence of Prince Metternich from Vienna, with the police of foreigners, and he acquitted himself as you shall see. The first few days he allowed me to remain undisturbed; I had formerly passed a winter at Vienna, and been very well received by the emperor and empress, and by the whole court: it was, therefore, rather awkward to tell me that this time I would not be received, because I was in disgrace with the emperor Napoleon; particularly as this disgrace was partly occasioned by the praises which I had bestowed in my book on the morality and literary genius of the Germans. But what was much more awkward was to run the risk of giving the least umbrage to a power, to which it must be confessed, they might very well sacrifice me, after all they had already done for it. I suppose, therefore, that after I had been some days at Vienna, the chief of the police received some more exact information of the nature of my situation with Bonaparte, and in consequence thought it necessary to watch me; and this was his method of inspection. He placed spies at my gate in the street, who followed me on foot, when my carriage drove slowly, and got into cabriolets in order not to lose sight of me, when I took an airing into the country. This method of exercising the police appeared to me to unite both the French machiavelism, and German clumsiness. The Austrians have persuaded themselves that they have been beat, because they had not so much wit as the French, and that the wit of the French consists in their police system; in consequence they have set about making a methodical espionage, organizing that ostensibly which should it all events be concealed; and although destined by nature to be very honest people, they have made it a kind of duty to imitate a state which unites the extremes of jacobinism and despotism.

I could not help, however, being uneasy at this espionage, when the least common sense was sufficient to see that flight was now my only object. They tried to alarm me about the arrival of my Russian passport; they pretended that I

might have to wait several months for it and that then the war would prevent me from passing. It was easy for me to judge that I could not remain at Vienna after the French ambassador returned to it; what would then become of me? I intreated M. de Stackelberg to give me some means of passing by Odessa, to repair to Constantinople. But Odessa being Russian, a passport from Petersburg was equally necessary to go there; there therefore remained no road open but the direct one to Turkey through Hungary; and this road passing on the borders of Servia was subject to a thousand dangers. I might still reach the port of Salonica by going across the interior of Greece; the archduke Francis had taken this road to get into Sardinia; but the archduke Francis is a good horseman, and of that I was scarcely capable: still less could I think of exposing so young a person as my daughter to such a journey. I was obliged, therefore, although the idea was most painful to me, to determine on parting with her, and sending her by the way of Denmark and Sweden in the charge of persons in whom I could confide. I concluded at all hazards an agreement with an Armenian to take me to Constantinople. From thence I proposed to pass by Greece, Sicily, Cadiz, and Lisbon, and however hazardous was this voyage, it offered a fine perspective to the imagination. I addressed the office for foreign affairs, directed by a subaltern during the absence of M. de Metternich, for a passport which would enable me to leave Austria by Hungary, or by Gallicia, according as I might go to Petersberg or to Constantinople. I was told that I must make my election; that they could not give me a passport to go by two different frontiers, and that even to go to Presburg, which is the first city of Hungary, only six leagues from Vienna, it was necessary to have an authority from the committee of the States. Certainly I could not help thinking that Europe, which was formerly so open to all travellers, is become, under the influence of the emperor Napoleon, like a great net, in which you get entangled at every step. How many restraints and shackles there are upon the slightest movements! And can it be conceived that the unhappy governments which France oppresses, console themselves for it by making the miserable remains of power which has been left them, fall heavy in a thousand ways upon their subjects!

## CHAPTER 8.

### Departure from Vienna.

Obliged to make my election, I decided at last for Gallicia, which would conduct me to the country I preferred, namely, to Russia. I flattered myself, that once at a distance from Vienna, all these vexations, excited no doubt by the French government, would cease; and that at all events, I might, if it was necessary, quit Gallicia, and regain Bucharest by Transylvania. The geography of Europe, such as Napoleon has constituted it, is but too well learned by misfortune; the turnings which I was obliged to take to avoid his power were already near two thousand leagues; and now at my departure even from Vienna I was constrained to borrow the Asiatic territory to escape from it. I departed, therefore, without having received my Russian passport, hoping thereby to quiet the uneasiness which the subaltern police of Vienna appeared to feel about the presence of a female who was in disgrace with the emperor Napoleon. I requested one of my friends to rejoin me, by travelling night and day, as soon as the answer from Russia arrived, and I proceeded on my road. I did very wrong in taking this step, for at Vienna I was protected by my friends and by public opinion; I could there easily address myself to the emperor or to his prime minister: but once confined to a provincial town, I had only to do with the stupid wickedness of a subaltern, who wished to make a merit with the French government, of his conduct towards me; this was the method he took.

I stopped for some days at Brunn, the capital of Moravia, where an English colonel, a Mr. Mills, was detained in exile; he was a man of the most perfect goodness and obliging manners, and according to the English expression, altogether inoffensive. He was made dreadfully miserable, without the least pretence or utility. But the Austrian ministry is apparently persuaded that it will derive an air of strength from turning persecutor; its counsellors are not mistaken; and as was said by a man of wit, their manner of governing in matters

of police, resembles the sentinels placed upon the half destroyed citadel of Brunn,—they keep a strict guard round the ruins. Scarcely had I arrived at Brunn when all sorts of difficulties were started about my passports, and those of my companions. I asked permission to send my son to Vienna, to give the necessary explanations upon these points. I was told that neither myself nor my son would be allowed to go one league backwards. I know not if the emperor, or M. de Metternich were informed of all these absurd acts, but I encountered at Brunn, in the agents of government, a dread of compromising themselves which appeared to me quite worthy of the present French regime; and it must even be admitted that when the French are afraid, they are more excusable, for under the emperor Napoleon they run the risk of exile, imprisonment, or death.

The governor of Moravia, a man in other respects very estimable, informed me that I was ordered to go through Galicia as quickly as possible, and that I was forbid stopping more than twenty-four hours at Lanzut, where I had the intention of going. Lanzut is the estate of the princess Lubomirska, the sister of prince Adam Czartorinski, marshal of the Polish Confederation, which the Austrian troops were going to support. The princess Lubomirska was herself generally respected from her personal character, and the liberal use which she made of her splendid fortune; besides, her attachment to the house of Austria was conspicuous, and although a Pole by birth, she had never participated in the spirit of opposition which has always been exhibited in Poland to the Austrian government. Her nephew and niece, Prince Henry and the princess Theresa, with whom I had the honor to be intimate, are both of them endowed with the most brilliant and amiable qualities; they might no doubt be supposed to entertain a strong attachment to their Polish country, but it was then rather difficult to make a crime of this opinion, when the prince of Schwarzenberg was sent at the head of thirty thousand men to fight for the restoration of Poland. To what miserable shifts are those princes reduced, who are constantly told that they must yield to circumstances? it is proposing to them to govern with every wind. The successes of Bonaparte excite the envy of the greater part of the governors of Germany; they persuade themselves that they were beat because they were too honest, whereas it was because they had not been honest enough. If the Germans had imitated the Spaniards, if they had said:—whatever be the consequences, we will not bear a foreign yoke: they would still be a nation, and their princes would not be dangling, I do not say in the anti-chambers of the emperor Napoleon, but in those of all the persons on whom a ray of his favor is fallen. The emperor of Austria and his intelligent companion certainly preserve as much dignity as they can in their situation; but this situation is so artificial in itself, that it is



impossible to give lustre to it. None of the actions of the Austrian government in favor of French interests can be attributed to any thing but fear; and this new muse inspires very sorrowful strains.

I tried to represent to the governor of Moravia, that if I was thus hurried with so much politeness towards the frontier, I knew not what would become of me, having no Russian passport, and that I should be obliged, from inability to go either forward or backward, to pass my life at Brody, a frontier town between Russia and Austria, inhabited by Jews, who have settled there to carry on the trade of carrying from the one empire to the other. "What you say is very true," replied the governor, "but here is my order." For some time past governments have found the art of inculcating that a civil agent is subject to the same discipline as a military officer; with the latter reflection is altogether forbidden, or at least rarely finds a place; but one would have some difficulty in making men responsible in the eye of the law, such as are all the magistrates of England, comprehend, that they are not allowed to have an opinion upon the order that is given them. And what is the consequence of this servile obedience? If it had only the head of the state for its object, it might still be considered proper in an absolute monarchy; but during the absence of that head, or his representative, a subaltern may abuse at his pleasure those measures of police, the infernal inventions of arbitrary governments, and of which real greatness will never make use.

I departed for Galicia, and this time, I confess, I was completely depressed; the phantom of tyranny followed me every where; I saw those Germans, whom I had known so upright, depraved by the fatal marriage, which seemed to have even altered the blood of the subjects, as it had done that of their sovereign. I thought that Europe existed only beyond the seas, or the Pyrenees, and I despaired of reaching an asylum to my inclination. The spectacle of Galicia was not of a kind to revive any hopes of the destiny of the human race. The Austrians have not acquired the art of making themselves beloved by the foreign nations which are subject to them. During the period they were in possession of Venice, the first thing they did was to put down the Carnival, which had become in a manner an institution, so long a time had elapsed since the Venetian carnival was talked of. The rudest people of the monarchy were selected to govern that gay city; no wonder therefore that the nations of the south should almost prefer being pillaged by the French to being governed by the Austrians.

The Poles love their country as an unfortunate friend: the country is dull and

monotonous, the people ignorant and lazy; they have always wished for liberty; they have never known how to acquire it. But the Poles think that they can and may govern Poland, and the feeling is very natural. The education however of the people is so much neglected, and all kind of industry is so foreign to them, that the Jews have possessed themselves of the entire trade, and make the peasants sell them for a quantity of brandy the whole harvest of the approaching year. The distance between the nobility and the peasantry is so immense, the contrast between the luxury of the one, and the frightful misery of the other is so shocking, that it is probable the Austrians have given them better laws than those which previously existed. But a proud people, and the Poles are so even in their misery, does not wish to be humbled, even when they are benefited, and in that point the Austrians have never failed. They have divided Gallicia into circles, each of which is commanded by a German functionary; sometimes a person of distinction accepts this employment, but it is much more frequently a kind of brute, taken from the subaltern ranks, and who in virtue of his office commands in the most despotic manner the greatest noblemen of Poland. The police, which in the present times has replaced the secret tribunal, authorizes the most oppressive measures. Now let us only imagine what the police can be, namely, the most subtle and arbitrary power in the government, entrusted to the rude hands of the captain of a circle. At every post-house in Gallicia there are to be seen three descriptions of persons who gather round travellers' carriages: the Jew traders, the Polish beggars, and the German spies. The country appears exclusively inhabited by these three classes of men. The beggars, with their long beards and ancient Sarmatian costume, excite deep commiseration; it is very true that if they would work they need not be in that state; but I know not whether it is pride or laziness which makes them disdain the culture of the enslaved earth.

You meet upon the high roads processions of men and women carrying the standard of the cross, and singing Psalms; a profound expression of melancholy reigns upon their countenance: I have seen them, when not money, but food of a better sort than they had been accustomed to was given them, turn up their eyes to heaven with astonishment, as if they considered themselves unfit to enjoy its bounty. The custom of the common people in Poland is to embrace the knees of the nobility when they meet them; you cannot stir a step in a village without having the women, children, and old men saluting you in this manner. In the midst of this spectacle of wretchedness you might see some men in shabby attire, who were spies upon misery: for that was the only object which could offer itself to their eyes. The captains of the circles refused passports to the Polish noblemen, for fear they should see one another, or lest they should go to Warsaw.

They obliged these noblemen to appear before them every eight days, in order to certify their presence. The Austrians thus proclaimed in all manner of ways that they knew they were detested in Poland, and they separated their troops into two equal divisions: the first entrusted with supporting externally the interests of Poland, and the second employed in the interior to prevent the Poles from aiding the same cause. I do not believe that any country was ever more wretchedly governed than Galicia was at that time, at least under political considerations; and it was apparently to conceal this spectacle from general observation that so many difficulties were made in allowing a stranger to reside in, or even to pass through the country.

I return to the manner in which the Austrian police behaved to me to hasten my journey. In this road it is necessary to have your passport examined by each captain of a circle; and every third post you found one of the chief towns of the circle. They had put up placards in the police offices of all these towns that a strict eye must be kept on me as I passed through. If it was not for the singular impertinence of treating a female in this manner, and that a female who had been persecuted for doing justice to Germany, one could not help laughing at the excess of stupidity which could publish in capital letters measures of police, the whole strength of which consists in their secrecy. It reminded me of M. de Sartines, who had formerly proposed to give spies a livery. It is not that the director of all these absurdities is, as some say, devoid of understanding: but he has such a strong desire to please the French government, that he even seeks to do himself honor by his meannesses, as publickly as possible. This proclaimed inspection was executed with as much ingenuity as it was conceived: a corporal, or a clerk, or perhaps both together, came to look at my carriage, smoking their pipes, and when they had gone the round of it, they went their way without even deigning to tell me if there was any thing the matter with it; if they had done that, they would have been at least good for something. I made very slow progress to wait for the Russian passport, now my only means of safety in the circumstances in which I was placed. One morning I turned out of my road to go and see a ruined castle, which belonged to the princess Lubomirska. To get to it, I had to go over roads, of which, without having travelled in Poland, it is impossible to form an idea. In the middle of a sort of desert which I was crossing alone with my son, a person on horseback saluted me in French; I wished to answer him, but he was already at a distance. I cannot express the effect which the sound of that dear language produced upon me, at a moment so cruel. Ah! if the French were but once free, how one would love them! they would then be the first themselves to despise their allies. I descended into the court yard of this

castle, which was entirely in ruins. The keeper, with his wife and children, came to meet me, and embraced my knees. I caused them to be informed by a bad interpreter, that I knew the princess Lubomirska; that name was sufficient to inspire them with confidence; they had no doubt of the truth of what I said, although I travelled with a very shabby equipage. They introduced me into a sort of hall, which resembled a prison, and at the moment of my entrance, one of the women came into it to burn perfumes. They had neither white bread nor meat, but an exquisite Hungarian wine, and every where the wrecks of magnificence stood by the side of the greatest misery. This contrast is of frequent recurrence in Poland: there are no beds, even in houses fitted up with the most finished elegance. Every thing appears sketched in this country, and nothing terminated in it; but what one can never sufficiently praise is the goodness of the people, and the generosity of the great: both are easily excited by all that is good and beautiful, and the agents whom Austria sends there seem like wooden men in the midst of this flexible nation.

At last my Russian passport arrived, and I shall be grateful for it to the end of my life, so great was the pleasure it gave me. My friends at Vienna had succeeded at the same time in dissipating the malignant influence of those who thought to please France by tormenting me. This time I flattered myself with being entirely sheltered from any farther trouble; but I forgot that the circular order to the captains of the circles to keep me under inspection, was not yet revoked, and that it was only direct from the ministry that I had the promise of having these ridiculous torments put an end to. I thought, however, that I might venture to follow my first plan, and stop at Lanzut, that castle of the princess Lubomirska, so famous in Poland for the union of the most perfect taste and magnificence. I anticipated extreme pleasure from again seeing prince Henry Lubomirska, whose society, as well as that of his amiable lady, had made me pass at Geneva many agreeable moments. I proposed to myself to remain there two days, and to continue my journey with great speed, as news came from all quarters that war was declared between France and Russia. I don't quite see what there was in this plan of mine so dreadful to the tranquillity of Austria; it was a most singular idea to be jealous of my connection with the Poles, because they served under Bonaparte. No doubt, and I repeat it, the Poles cannot be confounded with the other nations who are tributary to France: it is frightful to be obliged to hope for liberty only from a despot, and to expect the independence of one's own nation only from the slavery of the rest of Europe. But finally, in this Polish cause, the Austrian ministry was more to be suspected than I was, for it furnished troops to support it, while I only consecrated my poor forces to proclaim the justice of the

cause of Europe, then defended by Russia. Besides, the Austrian ministry, in common with all the governments in alliance with Bonaparte, has no longer any knowledge of what constitutes opinion, conscience, or affection: the one single idea which they retain, the inconsistency of their own conduct and the art with which Napoleon's diplomacy has entangled them, is that of mere brute force; and to please that they do every thing.

## CHAPTER 9.

### Passage through Poland.

I arrived in the beginning of July at the chief town of the circle, in which Lanzut is situated; my carriage stopped before the posthouse, and my son went, as usual, to have my passport examined. I was astonished, at the end of a quarter of an hour, not to see him return, and I requested M. Schlegel to go and ascertain the cause of his delay. They both came back immediately, followed by a man whose countenance I shall never, during my life, forget: an affected smile, upon the most stupid features, gave the most disagreeable expression to his countenance. My son, almost beside himself, informed me that the captain of the circle had declared to him that I could not remain more than eight hours at Lanzut, and that to secure my obedience to this order, one of his commissaries should follow me to the castle, should enter into it with me, and should not quit me until I had left it. My son had represented to this captain, that overcome as I was with fatigue, I required more than eight hours to repose myself, and that the sight of a commissary of police, in my weak state, might give me a very fatal shock. To all these representations the captain replied with a brutality which is quite peculiar to German subalterns; nowhere also do you meet with that obsequious respect for power which immediately succeeds to arrogance towards the weak. The mental movements of these men resemble the evolutions of a review day; they make a half turn to the right, and a half turn to the left, according to the word of command which is given to them.

The commissary intrusted with the inspection of me, fatigued himself in bowing to the very ground, but would not in the least modify his charge. He got into a caleche, the horses of which followed me so close that they touched the hind wheels of my berline. The idea of entering, escorted in this manner, into the residence of an old friend, into a paradise of delight, where I had been feasting my ideas by anticipation, with spending several days; this idea I say made me so

ill, that I could not get the better of it; joined to that also was, I believe, the irritation of finding at my heels this insolent spy, a very fit subject, certainly, to outwit, if I had had the desire, but who did his duty with an intolerable mixture of pedantry and rigor\*: I was seized with a nervous attack in the middle of the road, and they were obliged to lift me out of my carriage, and lay me down on the side of the ditch. This wretched commissary fancied that this was an occasion to take compassion on me, and without getting out of his carriage himself, he sent his servant to find me a glass of water. I cannot express how angry I felt with myself for the weakness of my nerves; the compassion of this man was a last insult, which I would at least have wished to spare myself. He set off again at the same time that I did, and I made my entry, along with him, into the court yard of the castle of Lanzut. Prince Henry, not in the least suspecting any thing of the kind, came to meet me with the most amiable gaiety; he was at first frightened at the paleness of my looks, but when I told him, which I did immediately, what sort of guest I had brought with me, from that moment his coolness, firmness, and friendship for me did not belie themselves for a moment. But can one conceive a state of things in which a commissary of police should plant himself at the table of a great nobleman like prince Henry, or rather at that of any person whatever, without his consent?

(Note of the Editor) \* To explain how strong and well-founded was the anguish which my mother experienced at this point of her journey, I ought to mention that the attention of the Austrian police was not then confined to her only. The description of M. Rocca had been sent all along the road, with an order to arrest him in quality of his being a French officer; and although he had resigned his commission, and his wounds had incapacitated him from continuing his military service, there is no doubt, that if he had been delivered up to France, the forfeiture of his life would have been the consequence. He had therefore travelled alone, and under a borrowed name, and it was at Lanzut that he had given my mother the rendezvous. Having arrived there before her, and not in the least suspecting that she would be escorted by a commissary of police, he came out to meet her, full of joy and confidence. The danger to which he was thus, insensibly, exposing himself, transfixed my mother with terror, and she had barely time to give him a signal to return back; and had it not been for the generous presence of mind of a Polish gentleman, who supplied M. Rocca with the means of escaping, he would infallibly have been recognized and arrested by the commissary. Ignorant of what might be the fate of her manuscript, under what circumstances, public or private, she might ever publish it, my mother felt herself under the necessity of entirely suppressing these details, to which I am at

present allowed to give publicity. (End of Note of the Editor.)

After supper this commissary came up to my son, and said to him, with that coaxing tone of voice which I particularly dislike, when it is used to say cutting words, "I ought, according to my orders, to pass the night in your mother's apartment, in order to be certain that she has no communication with any one; but from regard to her, I will not do it." "You may add also," said my son, "from regard to yourself, for if you should dare to put your foot in my mother's apartment during the night, I will throw you out of the window." "Ah! Monsieur le Baron," replied the commissary, bowing lower than usual, because this threat had a false air of power which did not fail to affect him. He went to lay down, and the next day at breakfast, the prince's secretary managed him so well, by giving him plenty to eat and drink, that I might, I believe, have remained several hours longer, but I was ashamed at having been the occasion of such a scene in the house of my amiable host. I did not even allow myself time to examine those beautiful gardens, which remind us of the southern climate whose productions they offer, nor that house, which has been the asylum of persecuted French emigrants, and where the artists have sent the tribute of their talents in return for the services rendered them by the lady of the castle. The contrast between such delightful and striking impressions and the grief and indignation I felt, was intolerable; the recollection of Lanzut, which I have so many reasons for loving, even now makes me shudder, when I think of it.

I took my departure then from this residence, shedding bitter tears, and not knowing what else was in store for me during the fifty leagues I had yet to travel in the Austrian territory. The commissary accompanied me to the borders of his circle, and when he took his leave, asked me if I was satisfied with him; the stupidity of the fellow quite disarmed my resentment. A peculiar feature in all this persecution, which formerly never entered into the character of the Austrian government, is, that it is executed by its agents with as much rudeness as awkwardness: these ci-devant honest people carry into the base commissions with which they are entrusted the same scrupulous exactness that they formerly did into the good ones, and their limited conception of this new method of government, which was not known to them, makes them commit a hundred blunders, either from want of skill or clumsiness. It is like taking the club of Hercules to kill a fly, and during this useless exertion the most important matters may escape them.



On leaving the circle of Lanzut, I still found as far as Leopold, the capital of Galicia, grenadiers placed from post to post to make sure of my progress. I should have felt regret at making these brave fellows thus lose their time, had it not been for the thought that they were much better there, than with the unfortunate army delivered by Austria to Napoleon. On arriving at Leopold, I found again ancient Austria in the governor and commandant of the province, who both received me with the greatest politeness, and gave me, what I wished above every thing, an order for passing from Austria into Russia. Such was the end of my residence in this monarchy, which I had formerly seen powerful, just and upright. Her alliance with Napoleon while it lasted, degraded her to the lowest rank among nations. History will doubtless not forget that she has shown herself very warlike in her long wars against France, and that her last effort to resist Bonaparte was inspired by a national enthusiasm worthy of all praise; but the sovereign of this country, by yielding to his counsellors rather than to his own character, has destroyed for ever that enthusiasm, by checking its ebullition. The unfortunate men who perished on the plains of Essling and Wagram, that there might still be an Austrian monarchy and a German people, could have hardly expected that their companions in arms would be fighting three years afterwards for the extension of Bonaparte's empire to the borders of Asia, and that there might not be in the whole of Europe, even a desert, where the objects of his proscription, from kings to subjects, might find an asylum; for such is the object, and the sole object, of the war excited by France against Russia.

## CHAPTER 10.

### Arrival in Russia.

One had hardly been accustomed to consider Russia as the most free state in Europe; but such is the weight of the yoke which the Emperor of France has imposed upon all the Continental states, that on arriving at last in a country where his tyranny can no longer make itself felt, you fancy yourself in a republic. It was on the 14th of July that I made my entrance into Russia; this coincidence with the anniversary of the first day of the Revolution particularly struck me; and thus closed for me the circle of the history of France which had commenced on the 14th of July 1789.\* When the barrier which separates Austria from Russia was opened to let me pass, I made an oath never to set my foot in a country subjected in any degree to the emperor Napoleon. Will this oath ever allow me to revisit beautiful France?

\* (Note by the Editor) It was on the 14th of July, 1817, that my mother was taken from us, and received into the bosom of God. What mind is there that would not be affected with religious emotion on meditating on the mysterious co-incidences which the destiny of the human race presents! (End of Note by the Editor.)

The first person who received me in Russia was a Frenchman, who had formerly been a clerk in my father's bureaux; he talked to me of him with tears in his eyes, and that name thus pronounced appeared to me of happy augury. In fact, in that Russian empire, so falsely termed barbarous, I have experienced none but noble and delightful impressions: may my gratitude draw down additional blessings on this people and their sovereign! I entered Russia at the moment when the French army had already penetrated a considerable distance into the Russian territory, and yet no restraint or vexation of any kind impeded for a moment the progress of a foreign traveller; neither I, nor my companions, knew a syllable of Russian; we only spoke French, the language of the enemies who were ravaging the

empire: I had not even with me, by a succession of disagreeable chances, a single servant who could speak Russian, and had it not been for a German physician (Dr. Renner) who in the most handsome manner volunteered his services as our interpreter as far as Moscow, we should have justly merited the epithet of deaf and dumb, applied by the Russians to persons unacquainted with their language. Well! even in this state, our journey would have been quite safe and easy, so great is the hospitality of the nobles and the people of Russia! On our first entrance we learned that the direct road to Petersburg was already occupied by the armies, and that we must go to Moscow in order to get the means of conveyance there. This was another round of 200 leagues; but we had already made 1500, and I now feel pleased at having seen Moscow.

The first province we had to cross, Volhynia, forms a part of Russian Poland; it is a fertile country, over-run with Jews, like Galicia, but much less miserable. I stopped at the chateau of a Polish nobleman to whom I had been recommended, who advised me to hasten my journey, as the French were marching upon Volhynia, and might easily enter it in eight days. The Poles, in general, like the Russians much better than they do the Austrians; the Russians and Poles are both of Sclavonian origin: they have been enemies, but respect each other mutually, while the Germans, who are further advanced in European civilization than the Sclavonians, have not learned to do them justice in other respects. It was easy to see that the Poles in Volhynia were not at all afraid of the entrance of the French; but although their opinions were known, they were not in the least subjected to that petty persecution which only excites hatred without restraining it. The spectacle, however, of one nation subjected by another, is always a painful one;—centuries must elapse before the union is sufficiently established to make the names of victor and vanquished be forgotten.

At Gitomir, the chief town of Volhynia, I was told that the Russian minister of police had been sent to Wilna, to learn the motive of the emperor Napoleon's aggression, and to make a formal protest against his entry into the Russian territory. One can hardly credit the numberless sacrifices made by the emperor Alexander, in order to preserve peace. And in fact, far from Napoleon having it in his power to accuse the emperor Alexander of violating the treaty of Tilsit, the latter might have been reproached with a too scrupulous fidelity to that fatal treaty; and it was rather he who had the right of declaring war against Napoleon, as having first violated it. The emperor of France in his conversation with M. Balasheff, the minister of police, gave himself up to those inconceivable indiscretions which might be taken for abandon, if we did not know that it suits

him to increase the terror which he inspires by exhibiting himself as superior to all kinds of calculation. "Do you think," said he to M. Balasheff, "that I care a straw for these Polish jacobins?" And I have been really assured that there is in existence a letter, addressed several years since to M. de Romanzoff by one of Napoleon's ministers, in which it was proposed to strike out the name of Poland and the Poles from all European acts. How unfortunate for this nation that the emperor Alexander had not taken the title of king of Poland, and thereby associated the cause of this oppressed people with that of all generous minds! Napoleon asked one of his generals, in the presence of M. de Balasheff, if he had ever been at Moscow, and what sort of city it was. The general replied that it had appeared to him to be rather a large village than a capital. And how many churches are there in it?—continued the emperor. About sixteen hundred:—was the reply. That is quite inconceivable, rejoined Napoleon, at a time when the world has ceased to be religious. Pardon me, sire, said M. de Balashoff, the Russians and Spaniards are so still. Admirable reply! and which presaged, one would hope, that the Russians would be the Castilians of the North.

Nevertheless, the French army made rapid progress, and one has been so accustomed to see the French triumphing over every thing abroad, although at home they know not how to resist any sort of yoke, that I had some reason to apprehend meeting them already on the road to Moscow. What a capricious destiny, for me to flee at first from the French, among whom I was born, and who had carried my father in triumph, and now to flee from them even to the borders of Asia! But, in short, what destiny is there, great or little, which the man selected to humble man does not overthrow? I thought I should be obliged to go to Odessa, a city which had become prosperous under the enlightened administration of the Duke of Richelieu, and from thence I might have gone to Constantinople and into Greece; I consoled myself for this long voyage by the idea of a poem on Richard Coeur-de-Lion, which I have the intention of writing, if life and health are spared me. This poem is designed to paint the manners and character of the East, and to consecrate a grand epoch in the English history, that when the enthusiasm of the Crusades gave place to the enthusiasm of liberty. But as we cannot paint what we have not seen, no more than we can express properly what we have not felt, it was necessary for me to go to Constantinople, into Syria, and into Sicily, there to follow the steps of Richard. My travelling companions, better acquainted with my strength than I was myself, dissuaded me from such an undertaking, and assured me that by using expedition, I could travel post much quicker than an army. It will be seen that I had not in fact a great deal of time to spare.

## CHAPTER 11.

Kiow.

Determined to continue my journey through Russia, I proceeded towards Kiow, the principal city of the Ukraine, and formerly of all Russia, for this empire began by fixing its capital in the South. The Russians had then continual communication with the Greeks established at Constantinople, and in general with the people of the East, whose habits they have adopted in a variety of instances. The Ukraine is a very fertile country, but by no means agreeable; you see large plains of wheat which appear to be cultivated by invisible hands, the habitations and inhabitants are so rare. You must not expect, in approaching Kiow, or the greater part of what are called cities in Russia, to find any thing resembling the cities of the West; the roads are not better kept, nor do country houses indicate a more numerous population. On my arrival at Kiow, the first object that met my eyes was a cemetery, and this was the first indication to me of being near a place where men were collected. The houses at Kiow generally resemble tents, and at a distance, the city appears like a camp; I could not help fancying that the moveable residences of the Tartars had furnished models for the construction of those wooden houses, which have not a much greater appearance of solidity. A few days are sufficient for building them; they are very often consumed by fire, and an order is sent to the forest for a house, as you would send to market to lay in your winter stock of provisions. In the middle of these huts, however, palaces have been erected, and a number of churches, whose green and gilt cupolas singularly draw the attention. When towards the evening the sun darts his rays on these brilliant domes, you would fancy that it was rather an illumination for a festival, than a durable edifice.

The Russians never pass a church without making the sign of the cross, and their longbeards add greatly to the religious expression of their physiognomy. They generally wear a large blue robe, fastened round the waist by a scarlet band: the

dresses of the women have also something Asiatic in them: and one remarks that taste for lively colours which we derive from the East, where the sun is so beautiful, that one likes to make his eclat more conspicuous by the objects which he shines upon. I speedily contracted such a partiality to these oriental dresses, that I could not bear to see Russians dressed like other Europeans; they seemed to me then entering into that great regularity of the despotism of Napoleon, which first makes all nations a present of the conscription, then of the war-taxes, and lastly, of the Code Napoleon, in order to govern in the same manner, nations of totally different characters.

The Dnieper, which the ancients called Borysthenes, passes by Kiow, and the old tradition of the country affirms, that it was a boatman, who in crossing it found its waters so pure that he was led to found a town on its banks. In fact, the rivers are the most beautiful natural objects in Russia. It would be difficult to find any small streams, their course would be so much obstructed by the sand. There is scarcely any variety of trees; the melancholy birch is incessantly recurring in this uninventive nature; even the want of stones might be almost regretted, so much is the eye sometimes fatigued with meeting neither hill nor valley, and to be always making progress without encountering new objects. The rivers relieve the imagination from this fatigue; the priests, therefore, bestow their benedictions on these rivers. The emperor, empress, and the whole court attend the ceremony of the benediction of the Neva, at the moment of the severest cold of winter. It is said that Wladimir, at the commencement of the eleventh century, declared, that all the waters of the Borysthenes were holy, and that plunging in them was sufficient to make a man a Christian; the baptism of the Greeks being performed by immersion, millions of men went into this river to abjure their idolatry. It was this same Vladimir who sent deputies to different countries, to learn which of all the religions it best suited him to adopt; he decided for the Greek ritual, on account of the pomp of its ceremonies. Perhaps also he preferred it for more important reasons; in fact the Greek faith by excluding the papal power, gives the sovereign of Russia the spiritual and temporal power united.

The Greek religion is necessarily less intolerant than the Roman Catholic; for being itself reproached as a schism, it can hardly complain of heretics; all religions therefore are admitted into Russia, and from the borders of the Don to those of the Neva, the fraternity of country unites men, even though their theological opinions may separate them. The Greek priests are allowed to marry, and scarcely any gentleman embraces this profession: it follows that the clergy has very little political ascendancy; it acts upon the people, but it is very

submissive to the emperor.

The ceremonies of the Greek worship are at least as beautiful as those of the catholics; the church music is heavenly; every thing in this worship leads to meditation; it has something of poetry and feeling about it, but it appears better adapted to captivate the imagination than to regulate the conduct. When the priest comes out of the sanctuary, in which he remains shut up while he communicates, you would say that you saw the gates of light opening; the cloud of incense which surrounds him, the gold and silver, and precious stones, which glitter on his robes and in the church, seem to come from countries where the sun is an object of adoration. The devout sentiments which are inspired by gothic architecture in Germany, France and England, cannot be at all compared with the effect of the Greek churches; they rather remind us of the minarets of the Turks and Arabs than of our churches. As little must we expect to find, as in Italy, the splendor of the fine arts; their most remarkable ornaments are virgins and saints crowned with rubies and diamonds. Magnificence is the character of every thing one sees in Russia; neither the genius of man nor the gifts of nature constitute its beauties.

The ceremonies of marriage, of baptism, and of burial, are noble and affecting; we find in them some ancient customs of Grecian idolatry, but only those which, having no connection with doctrine, can add to the impression of the three great scenes of life, birth, marriage and death. The Russian peasants still continue the custom of addressing the dead previous to a final separation from his remains. Why is it, say they, that thou hast abandoned us? Wert thou then unhappy on this earth? Was not thy wife fair and good? Why therefore hast thou left her? The dead replies not, but the value of existence is thus proclaimed in the presence of those who still preserve it.

At Kiow we were shown some catacombs which reminded us a little of those at Rome, and to which pilgrimages are made on foot from Casan and other cities bordering on Asia; but these pilgrimages cost less in Russia, than they would anywhere else, although the distances are much greater. It is in the character of the people to have no fear of fatigue or of any bodily suffering; in this nation there is both patience and activity, both gaiety and melancholy. You see united the most striking contrasts, and it is that which makes one predict great things of them; for generally it is only in beings of superior order that we find an union of opposite qualities; the mass is in general of a uniform color.

I made at Kiow the trial of Russian hospitality. The governor of the province, General Miloradowitsch, loaded me with the most amiable attentions; he had been an aide-de-camp of Suwarow, like him intrepid; he inspired me with greater confidence than I then had in the military successes of the Russians. Before this, I had only happened to meet some officers of the German school, who had entirely got rid of their Russian character. I saw in General Miloradowitsch a real Russian; brave, impetuous, confident, and wholly free from that spirit of imitation which sometimes entirely robs his countrymen even of their national character. He told me a number of anecdotes of Suwarow, which prove that that warrior studied a great deal, although he preserved the original instinct which is connected with the immediate knowledge of men and things. He carefully concealed his studies to strike with greater force the imagination of his troops, by assuming in all things an air of inspiration.

The Russians have, in my opinion, much greater resemblance to the people of the South, or rather of the East, than to those of the North. What is European in them belongs merely to the manners of the court, which are nearly the same in all countries; but their nature is eastern. General Miloradowitsch related to me that a regiment of Kalmucks had been put into garrison at Kiow, and that the prince of these Kalmucks came to him one day, to confess that he suffered very much from passing the winter cooped up in a town, and wished to obtain permission to encamp in the neighbouring forest. Such a cheap pleasure it was impossible to refuse him; he and all his regiment went in consequence, in the middle of the snow, to take up their abode in their chariots, which at the same time serve them for huts. The Russian soldiers bear nearly in the same degree the fatigues and privations of climate or of war, and the people of all classes exhibit a contempt of obstacles and of physical suffering, which will carry them successfully through the greatest undertakings. This Kalmuck prince, to whom wooden houses appeared a residence too delicate in the middle of winter, gave diamonds to the ladies who pleased him at a ball; and as he could not make himself understood by them, he substituted presents for compliments, in the manner practised in India and other silent countries of the East, where speech has less influence than with us. General Miloradowitsch invited me the very evening of my departure, to a ball at the house of a Moldavian princess, to which I regretted very much being unable to go. All these names of foreign countries and of nations which are scarcely any longer European, singularly awaken the imagination. You feel yourself in Russia at the gate of another earth, near to that East from which have proceeded so many religious creeds, and which still contains in its bosom incredible treasures of perseverance and reflection.



## CHAPTER 12.

Road from Kiow to Moscow.

About nine hundred versts still separated Kiow from Moscow. My Russian coachmen drove me along like lightning, singing airs, the words of which I was told were compliments and encouragements to their horses, "Go along," they said, "my friends: we know one another: go quick." I have as yet seen nothing at all barbarous in this people; on the contrary their forms have an elegance and softness about them which you find no where else. Never does a Russian coachman pass a female, of whatever age or rank she may be, without saluting her, and the female returns it by an inclination of the head which is always noble and graceful. An old man who could not make himself understood by me, pointed to the earth, and then to the heaven, to signify to me, that the one would shortly be to him the road to the other. I know very well that the shocking barbarities which disfigure the history of Russia may be urged, reasonably, as evidence of a contrary character; but these I should rather lay to the charge of the boyars, the class which was depraved by the despotism which it exercised or submitted to, than to the nation itself. Besides, political dissensions, everywhere and at all times, distort national character, and there is nothing more deplorable than that succession of masters, whom crimes have elevated or overturned; but such is the fatal condition of absolute power on this earth. The civil servants of the government, of an inferior class, all those who look to make their fortune by their suppleness or intrigues, in no degree resemble the inhabitants of the country, and I can readily believe all the ill that has been and may be said of them; but to appreciate properly the character of a warlike nation, we must look to its soldiers, and the class from which its soldiers are taken, the peasantry.

Although I was driven along with great rapidity, it seemed to me that I did not advance a step, the country was so extremely monotonous. Plains of sand, forests of birch tree, and villages at a great distance from each other, composed

of wooden houses all built upon the same plan: these were the only objects that my eyes encountered. I felt that sort of nightmare which sometimes seizes one during the night, when you think you are always marching and never advancing. The country appeared to me like the image of infinite space, and to require eternity to traverse it. Every instant you met couriers passing, who went along with incredible swiftness; they were seated on a wooden bench placed across a little cart drawn by two horses, and nothing stopped them for a moment. The jolting of their carriage sometimes made them spring two feet above it, but they fell with astonishing address, and made haste to call out in Russian, forward, with an energy similar to that of the French on a day of battle. The Sclavonian language is singularly echoing; I should almost say there is something metallic about it; you would think you heard a bell striking, when the Russians pronounce certain letters of their alphabet, quite different from those which compose the dialects of the West.

We saw passing some corps de reserve approaching by forced marches to the theatre of war; the Cossacks were repairing, one by one, to the army, without order or uniform, with a long lance in their hand, and a kind of grey dress, whose ample hood they put over their head. I had formed quite another idea of these people; they live behind the Dnieper; there their way of living is independent, in the manner of savages; but during war they allow themselves to be governed despotically. One is accustomed to see, in fine uniforms of brilliant colors, the most formidable armies. The dull colors of the Cossack dress excite another sort of fear; one might say that they are ghosts who pounce upon you.

Half way between Kiow and Moscow, as we were already in the vicinity of the armies, horses became more scarce. I began to be afraid of being detained in my journey, at the very moment when the necessity of speed became most urgent; and when I had to wait for five or six hours in front of a post-house, (as there was seldom an apartment into which I could enter) I thought with trembling of that army which might overtake me at the extremity of Europe, and render my situation at once tragical and ridiculous; for it is thus with the failure of an undertaking of this kind. The circumstances which compelled me to it not being generally known, I might have been asked why I quitted my own house, even although it had been made a prison to me, and there are good enough people who would not have failed to say, with an air of compunction, that it was very unlucky, but I should have done better to stay where I was. If tyranny had only its direct partisans on its side, it could never maintain itself; the astonishing thing, and which proves human misery more than all, is, that the greater part of

mediocre people enlist themselves in the service of events: they have not the strength to think deeper than a fact, and when an oppressor has triumphed, and a victim has been destroyed, they hasten to justify, not exactly the tyrant, but the destiny whose instrument he is. Weakness of mind and character is no doubt the cause of this servility: but there is also in man a certain desire of finding destiny, whatever it may be, in the right, as if it was a way of living in peace with it.

I reached at last that part of my road which removed me from the theatre of war, and arrived in the governments of Orel and Toula, which have been so much talked of since, in the bulletins of the two armies. I was received in these solitary abodes, for so the provincial towns in Russia appear, with the most perfect hospitality. Several gentlemen of the neighbourhood came to my inn, to compliment me on my writings, and I confess having been flattered to find that my literary reputation had extended to this distance from my native country. The lady of the governor received me in the Asiatic style, with sherbet and roses; her apartment was elegantly furnished with musical instruments and pictures. In Europe you see every where the contrast of wealth and poverty; but in Russia it may be said that neither one nor the other makes itself remarked.

The people are not poor; the great know how to lead, when it is necessary, the same life as the people: it is the mixture of the hardest privations and of the most refined enjoyments which characterizes the country. These same noblemen, whose residence unites all that the luxury of different parts of the world has most attractive, live, while they are travelling, on much worse food than our French peasantry, and know how to bear, not only during war, but in various circumstances of life, a physical existence of the most disagreeable kind. The severity of the climate, the marshes, the forests, the deserts, of which a great part of the country is composed, place man in a continual struggle with nature. Fruits, and even flowers, only grow in hot-houses; vegetables are not generally cultivated; and there are no vines any where. The habitual mode of life of the French peasants could not be obtained in Russia but at a very great expense. There they have only necessities by luxury: whence it happens that when luxury is unattainable, even necessities are renounced. What the English call comforts are hardly to be met with in Russia. You will never find any thing sufficiently perfect to satisfy in all ways the imagination of the great Russian noblemen; but when this poetry of wealth fails them, they drink hydromel, sleep upon a board, and travel day and night in an open carriage, without regretting the luxury to which one would think they had been habituated. It is rather as magnificence that they love fortune, than from the pleasures they derive from it: resembling still in

that point the Easterns, who exercise hospitality to strangers, load them with presents, and yet frequently neglect the every day comforts of their own life. This is one of the reasons which explains that noble courage with which the Russians have supported the ruin which has been occasioned them by the burning of Moscow. More accustomed to external pomp than to the care of themselves, they are not mollified by luxury, and the sacrifice of money satisfies their pride as much or more than the magnificence of their expenditure. What characterizes this people, is something gigantic of all kinds: ordinary dimensions are not at all applicable to it. I do not by that mean to say that neither real grandeur nor stability are to be met with in it: but the boldness and the imagination of the Russians know no bounds: with them every thing is colossal rather than well proportioned, audacious rather than reflective, and if they do not hit the mark, it is because they overshoot it.

## CHAPTER 13.

Appearance of the Country.—Character of the Russians.

I was always advancing nearer to Moscow, but nothing yet indicated the approach to a capital. The wooden villages were equally distant from each other, we saw no greater movement upon the immense plains which are called high roads; you heard no more noise; the country houses were not more numerous: there is so much space in Russia that every thing is lost in it, even the chateaux, even the population. You might suppose you were travelling through a country from which the people had just taken their departure. The absence of birds adds to this silence; cattle also are rare, or at least they are placed at a great distance from the road. Extent makes every thing disappear, except extent itself, like certain ideas in metaphysics, of which the mind can never get rid, when it has once seized them.

On the eve of my arrival at Moscow, I stopped in the evening of a very hot day, in a pleasant meadow: the female peasants, in picturesque dresses, according to the custom of the country, were returning from their labour, singing those airs of the Ukraine, the words of which, in praise of love and liberty, breathe a sort of melancholy approaching to regret. I requested them to dance, and they consented. I know nothing more graceful than these dances of the country, which have all the originality which nature gives to the fine arts; a certain modest voluptuousness was remarkable in them; the Indian bayaderes should have something analogous to that mixture of indolence and vivacity which forms the charm of the Russian dance. This indolence and vivacity are indicative of reverie and passion, two elements of character which civilization has yet neither formed nor subdued. I was struck with the mild gaiety of these female peasants, as I had been, in different degrees, with that of the greater part of the common people with whom I had come in contact in Russia. I can readily believe that they are terrible when their passions are provoked; and as they have no education, they

know not how to curb their violence. As another result of this ignorance, they have few principles of morality, and theft is very frequent in Russia as well as hospitality; they give as they take, according as their imagination is acted upon by cunning or generosity, both of which excite the admiration of this people. In this mode of life there is a little resemblance to savages; but it strikes me that at present there are no European nations who have much vigor but those who are what is called barbarous, in other words, unenlightened, or those who are free: but the nations which have only acquired from civilization an indifference for this or that yoke, provided their own fire-side is not disturbed: those nations, which have only learned from civilization the art of explaining power and of reasoning servitude, are made to be vanquished. I frequently imagine to myself what may now be the situation of the places which I have seen so tranquil, of those amiable young girls, of those long bearded peasants, who followed so peaceably the lot which providence had traced for them; they have perished or fled, for not one of them entered into the service of the victor.

A thing worthy of remark, is the extent to which public spirit is displayed in Russia. The reputation of invincible which their multiplied successes have given to this nation, the natural pride of the nobility, the devotedness inherent in the character of the people, the profound influence of religion, the hatred of foreigners, which Peter I. endeavoured to destroy in order to enlighten and civilize his country, but which is not less settled in the blood of the Russians, and is occasionally roused, all these causes combined make them a most energetic people. Some bad anecdotes of the preceding reigns, some Russians who have contracted debts with the Parisian shopkeepers, and some bon-mots of Diderot, have put it into the heads of the French, that Russia consisted only of a corrupt court, military chamberlains, and a people of slaves. This is a great mistake. This nation it is true requires a long examination to know it thoroughly, but in the circumstances in which I observed it, every thing was salient, and a country can never be seen to greater advantage than at a period of misfortune and courage. It cannot be too often repeated, this nation is composed of the most striking contrasts. Perhaps the mixture of European civilization and of Asiatic character is the cause.

The manner of the Russians is so obliging that you might imagine yourself, the very first day, intimate with them, and probably at the end of ten years you would not be so!

The silence of a Russian is altogether extraordinary; this silence is solely

occasioned by what he takes a deep interest in. In other respects, they talk as much as you will; but their conversation teaches you nothing but their politeness; it betrays neither their feelings nor opinions. They have been frequently compared to the French, in my opinion with the least justice in the world. The flexibility of their organs makes imitation in all things a matter of ease to them; they are English, French, or German in their manners, according to circumstances; but they never cease to be Russians, that is to say uniting impetuosity and reserve, more capable of passion than friendship, more bold than delicate, more devout than virtuous, more brave than chivalrous, and so violent in their desires that nothing can stop them, when their gratification is in question. They are much more hospitable than the French; but society does not with them, as with us, consist of a circle of clever people of both sexes, who take pleasure in talking together. They meet, as we go to a fete, to see a great deal of company, to have fruits and rare productions from Asia or Europe; to hear music, to play; in short to receive vivid emotions from external objects, rather than from the heart or understanding, both of which they reserve for actions and not for company. Besides, as they are in general very ignorant, they find very little pleasure in serious conversation, and do not at all pique themselves on shining by the wit they can exhibit in it. Poetry, eloquence and literature are not yet to be found in Russia; luxury, power, and courage are the principal objects of pride and ambition; all other methods of acquiring distinction appear as yet effeminate and vain to this nation.

But the people are slaves, it will be said: what character therefore can they be supposed to have? It is not certainly necessary for me to say that all enlightened people wish to see the Russian people freed from this state, and probably no one wishes it more strongly than the Emperor Alexander: but the Russian slavery has no resemblance in its effects to that of which we form the idea in the West; it is not as under the feudal system, victors who have imposed severe laws on the vanquished; the ties which connect the grandees with the people resemble rather what was called a family of slaves among the ancients, than the state of serfs among the moderns. There is no middling class in Russia, which is a great drawback on the progress of literature and the arts; for it is generally in that class that knowledge is developed: but the want of any intermedium between the nobility and the people creates a greater affection between them both. The distance between the two classes appears greater, because there are no steps between these two extremities, which in fact border very nearly on each other, not being separated by a middling class. This is a state of social organization quite unfavorable to the knowledge of the higher classes, but not so to the

happiness of the lower. Besides, where there is no representative government, that is to say, in countries where the sovereign still promulgates the law which he is to execute, men are frequently more degraded by the very sacrifice of their reason and character, than they are in this vast empire, in which a few simple ideas of religion and country serve to lead the great mass under the guidance of a few heads. The immense extent of the Russian empire also prevents the despotism of the great from pressing heavily in detail upon the people; and finally, above all, the religious and military spirit is so predominant in the nation, that allowance may be made for a great many errors, in favor of those two great sources of noble actions. A person of fine intellect said, that Russia resembled the plays of Shakspeare, in which all that is not faulty is sublime, and all that is not sublime is faulty; an observation of remarkable justice. But in the great crisis in which Russia was placed when I passed through it, it was impossible not to admire the energetic resistance, and resignation to sacrifices exhibited by that nation; and one could not almost dare, at the contemplation of such virtues, to allow one's self even to notice what at other times one would have censured.



## CHAPTER 14.

Moscow.

Gilded cupolas announced Moscow from afar; however, as the surrounding country is only a plain, as well as the whole of Russia, you may arrive in that great city without being struck with its extent. It has been well said by some one, that Moscow was rather a province than a city. In fact, you there see huts, houses, palaces, a bazaar as in the East, churches, public buildings, pieces of water, woods and parks. The variety of manners, and of the nations of which Russia is composed, are all exhibited in this immense residence. Will you, I was asked, buy some Cashmere shawls in the Tartar quarter? Have you seen the Chinese town? Asia and Europe are found united in this immense city. There is more liberty enjoyed in it than at Petersburg, where the court necessarily exercises great influence. The great nobility settled at Moscow were not ambitious of places; but they proved their patriotism by munificent gifts to the state, either for public establishments during peace, or as aids during the war. The colossal fortunes of the great Russian nobility are employed in making collections of all kinds, and in enterprises of which the Arabian Nights have given the models; these fortunes are also frequently lost by the unbridled passions of their possessors. When I arrived at Moscow, nothing was talked of but the sacrifices that were made on account of the war. A young Count de Momonoff raised a regiment for the state, and would only serve in it as a sublieutenant; a Countess Orloff, amiable and wealthy in the Asiatic style, gave the fourth of her income. As I was passing before these palaces surrounded by gardens, where space was thrown away in a city as elsewhere in the middle of the country, I was told that the possessor of this superb residence had given a thousand peasants to the state: and another, two hundred. I had some difficulty in accommodating myself to the expression, giving men, but the peasants themselves offered their services with ardor, and their lords were in this war only their interpreters.

As soon as a Russian becomes a soldier, his beard is cut off, and from that moment he is free. A desire was felt that all those who might have served in the militia should also be considered as free: but in that case the nation would have been entirely so, for it rose almost en masse. Let us hope that this so much desired emancipation may be effected without violence: but in the mean time one would wish to have the beards preserved, so much strength and dignity do they add to the physiognomy. The Russians with long beards never pass a church without making the sign of the cross, and their confidence in the visible images of religion is very affecting. Their churches bear the mark of that taste for luxury which they have from Asia: you see in them only ornaments of gold, and silver, and rubies. I was told that a Russian had proposed to form an alphabet with precious stones, and to write a Bible in that manner. He knew the best manner of interesting the imaginations of the Russians in what they read. This imagination however has not as yet manifested itself either in the fine arts or in poetry. They reach a certain point in all things very quickly, and do not go beyond that. Impulse makes them take the first steps: but the second belong to reflection, and these Russians, who have nothing in common with the people of the North, are as yet very little capable of meditation.

Several of the palaces of Moscow are of wood, in order that they may be built quicker, and that the natural inconstancy of the nation, in every thing unconnected with country or religion, may be satisfied by an easy change of residence. Several of these fine edifices have been constructed for an entertainment; they were destined to add to the eclat of a day, and the rich manner in which they were decorated has made them last up to this period of universal destruction. A great number of houses are painted green, yellow, or rose color, and are sculptured in detail like dessert ornaments. The citadel of the Kremlin, in which the emperors of Russia defended themselves against the Tartars, is surrounded by a high wall, embattled and flanked with turrets, which, by their odd shapes, remind one of a Turkish minaret rather than a fortress like those of the West of Europe. But although the external character of the buildings of the city be oriental, the impression of Christianity was found in that, multitude of churches so much venerated, and which attracted your notice at every step. One was reminded of Rome in seeing Moscow; certainly not from the monuments being of the same style, but because the mixture of solitary country and magnificent palaces, the grandeur of the city and the infinite number of its churches give the Asiatic Rome some points of resemblance to the European Rome.

It was about the beginning of August, that I was allowed to see the interior of the Kremlin; I got there by the same staircase which the emperor Alexander had ascended a few days preceding, surrounded by an immense people, who loaded him with their blessings, and promised him to defend his empire at all hazards. This people has kept its word. The halls were first thrown open to me in which the arms of the ancient warriors of Russia are contained; the arsenals of this kind, in other parts of Europe, are much more interesting. The Russians have taken no part in the times of chivalry; they never mingled in the Crusades. Constantly at war with the Tartars, Poles, and Turks, the military spirit has been formed among them in the midst of the atrocities of all kinds brought in the train of Asiatic nations, and of the tyrants who governed Russia. It is not therefore the generous bravery of the Bayards or the Percys, but the intrepidity of a fanatical courage which has been exhibited in this country for several centuries. The Russians, in the relations of society, which are so new to them, are not distinguished by the spirit of chivalry, such as the people of the West conceive it; but they have always shown themselves terrible to their enemies. So many massacres have taken place in the interior of Russia, up to the reign of Peter the Great, and even later, that the morality of the nation, and particularly that of the great nobility, must have suffered severely from them. These despotic governments, whose sole restraint is the assassination of the despot, overthrow all principles of honor and duty in the minds of men: but the love of their country and an attachment to their religious creed have been maintained in their full strength, amidst the wrecks of this bloody history, and the nation which preserves such virtues may yet astonish the world.

From the ancient arsenal I was conducted into the apartments formerly occupied by the czars, and in which the robes are preserved which they wore on the day of their coronation. These apartments have no sort of beauty, but they agreed very well with the hard life which the czars led and still lead. The greatest magnificence reigns in the palace of Alexander; but he himself sleeps upon the floor, and travels like a Cossack officer.

They exhibited in the Kremlin a divided throne, which was filled at first by Peter I. and Ivan his brother. The princess Sophia, their sister, placed herself behind the seat of Ivan, and dictated to him what to say; but this borrowed strength was not able to cope long with the native strength of Peter I. and he soon reigned alone. It is from the period of his reign that the czars have ceased to wear the Asiatic costume. The great wig of the age of Louis XIV. came in with Peter I. and without touching upon the admiration inspired by this great man, one cannot

help feeling the disagreeable contrast between the ferocity of his genius and the ceremonious regularity of his dress. Was he in the right in doing away as much as he could, oriental manners from the bosom of his people? was it right to fix his capital in the north, and at the extremity of his empire? These are great questions which are not yet answered: centuries only can afford the proper commentaries upon such lofty ideas.

I ascended to the top of the cathedral steeple, called Ivan Veliki, which commands a view of the whole city; from thence I saw the palace of the czars, who conquered by their arms the crowns of Casan, Astracan, and Siberia. I heard the church music, in which the catholikos, prince of Georgia, officiated in the midst of the inhabitants of Moscow, and formed a Christian meeting between Asia and Europe. Fifteen hundred Churches attested the devotion of the Muscovite people.

The commercial establishments at Moscow had quite an Asiatic character; men in turbans, and others dressed in the different costumes of all the people of the East, exhibited the rarest merchandize: the furs of Siberia and the muslins of India there offered all the enjoyments of luxury to those great noblemen, whose imagination is equally pleased with the sables of the Samoiedes and with the rubies of the Persians. Here, the gardens and the palace Razoumowski contained the most beautiful collection of plants and minerals; there, was the fine library of the Count de Bouterlin, which he had spent thirty years of his life in collecting: among the books he possessed, there were several which contained manuscript notes in the hand-writing of Peter I. This great man never imagined that the same European civilization, of which he was so jealous, would come to destroy the establishments for public instruction which he had founded in the middle of his empire, with a view to form by study the impatient spirit of the Russians. Farther on, was the Foundling House, one of the most affecting institutions of Europe; hospitals for all classes of society might be remarked in the different quarters of the city: finally, the eye in its wanderings could rest upon nothing but wealth or benevolence, upon edifices of luxury or of charity; upon churches or on palaces, which diffused happiness or distinction upon a large portion of the human race. You saw the windings of the Moskwa, of that river, which, since the last invasion by the Tartars, had never rolled with blood in its waves: the day was delightful; the sun seemed to take a pleasure in shedding his rays upon these glittering cupolas. I was reminded of the old archbishop Plato, who had just written a pastoral letter to the emperor Alexander, the oriental style of which had extremely affected me: he sent the image of the Virgin from the borders of

Europe, to drive far from Asia the man who wished to bear down upon the Russians with the whole weight of the nations chained to his steps. For a moment the thought struck me that Napoleon might yet set his foot upon this same tower from which I was admiring the city, which his presence was about to extinguish; for a moment I dreamed that he would glory in replacing, in the palace of the czars, the chief of the great horde, which had also once had possession of it: but the sky was so beautiful, that I repelled the apprehension. A month afterwards, this beautiful city was in ashes, in order that it should be said, that every country which had been in alliance with this man, should be destroyed by the fires which are at his disposal. But how gloriously have the Russians and their monarch redeemed this error! The misery of Moscow may be even said to have regenerated the empire, and this religious city has perished like a martyr, the shedding of whose blood gives new strength to the brethren who survive him.

The famous Count Rostopchin, with whose name the emperor's bulletins have been filled, came to see me, and invited me to dine with him. He had been minister for foreign affairs to Paul I., his conversation had something original about it, and you could easily perceive that his character would show itself in a very strong manner, if circumstances required it. The Countess Rostopchin was good enough to give me a book which she had written on the triumphs of religion, the style and morality of which were very pure. I went to visit her at her country-house, in the interior of Moscow. I was obliged to cross a lake and a wood in order to reach it: it was to this house, one of the most agreeable residences in Russia, that Count Rostopchin himself set fire, on the approach of the French army. Certainly an action of this kind was likely to excite a certain kind of admiration, even in enemies. The emperor Napoleon has, notwithstanding, compared Count Rostopchin to Marat, forgetting that the governor of Moscow sacrificed his own interests, while Marat set fire to the houses of others, which certainly makes a considerable difference. The only thing which Count Rostopchin could properly be reproached with, was his concealing too long the bad news from the armies, either from flattering himself, or believing it to be necessary to flatter others. The English, with that admirable rectitude which distinguishes all their actions, publish as faithful an account of their reverses as they do of their victories, and enthusiasm is with them sustained by the truth, whatever that may be. The Russians cannot yet reach that moral perfection, which is the result of a free constitution.

No civilized nation has so much in common with savages as the Russian people,

and when their nobility possess energy, they participate also in the defects and good qualities of that unshackled nature. The expression of Diderot has been greatly vaunted: The Russians are rotten before they are ripe. I know nothing more false; their very vices, with some exceptions, are not those of corruption, but of violence. The desires of a Russian, said a very superior man, would blow up a city: fury and artifice take possession of them by turns, when they wish to accomplish any resolution, good or bad. Their nature is not at all changed by the rapid civilization which was given them by Peter I.; it has as yet only formed their manners: happily for them, they are always what we call barbarians, in other words, led by an instinct frequently generous, but always involuntary, which only admits of reflection in the choice of the means, and not in the examination of the end; I say happily for them, not that I wish to extol barbarism, but I designate by this name a certain primitive energy which can alone replace in nations the concentrated strength of liberty.

I saw at Moscow the most enlightened men in the career of science and literature; but there, as well as at Petersburg, the professors' chairs are almost entirely filled with Germans. There is in Russia a great scarcity of well-informed men in any branch; young people in general only go to the University to be enabled sooner to enter into the military profession. Civil employments in Russia confer a rank corresponding to a grade in the army; the spirit of the nation is turned entirely towards war: in every thing else, in administration, in political economy, in public instruction, &c. the other nations of Europe have hitherto borne away the palm from the Russians. They are making attempts, however, in literature; the softness and brilliancy of the sounds of their language are remarked even by those who do not understand it; and it should be very well adapted for poetry and music. But the Russians have, like so many other continental nations, the fault of imitating the French literature, which, even with all its beauties, is only fit for the French themselves. I think that the Russians ought rather to make their literary studies derive from the Greeks than from the Latins. The characters of the Russian alphabet, so similar to those of the Greeks, the ancient communication of the Russians with the Byzantine empire, their future destinies, which will probably lead them to the illustrious monuments of Athens and Sparta, all this ought to turn the Russians to the study of Greek: but it is above all necessary that their writers should draw their poetry from the deepest inspiration of their own soul. Their works, up to this time, have been composed, as one may say, by the lips, and never can a nation so vehement be stirred up by such shrill notes.

## CHAPTER 15

Road from Moscow to Petersburg.

I quitted Moscow with regret: I stopped a short time in a wood near the city, where on holidays the inhabitants go to dance, and celebrate the sun, whose splendor is of such short duration, even at Moscow. What is it then I see, in advancing towards the North? Even these eternal birch trees, which weary you with their monotony, become very rare, it is said, as you approach Archangel; they are preserved there, like orange trees in France. The country from Moscow to Petersburg is at first sandy, and afterwards all marsh: when it rains, the ground becomes black, and the high road becomes undistinguishable. The houses of the peasants, however, every where indicate a state of comfort; they are decorated with columns, and the windows are surrounded with arabesques carved in wood. Although it was summer when I passed through this country, I already felt the threatening winter which seemed to conceal itself behind the clouds: of the fruits which were offered to me, the flavor was bitter, because their ripening had been too much hastened; a rose excited emotion in me as a recollection of our fine countries, and the flowers themselves appeared to carry their heads with less pride, as if the icy hand of the North had been already prepared to pluck them.

I passed through Novogorod, which was, six centuries ago, a republic associated with the Hanse towns, and which has preserved for a long period a spirit of republican independence. Persons have been pleased to say that freedom was not reclaimed in Europe before the last century; on the contrary, it is rather despotism, which is a modern invention. Even in Russia the slavery of the peasants was only introduced in the sixteenth century. Up to the reign of Peter I. the form of all the ukases was: The boyars have advised, the czar will decree. Peter I. although in many ways he has done infinite good to Russia, humbled the grandees, and united in himself the temporal and spiritual power, in order to remove all obstacles to his designs. Richelieu acted in the same manner in

France; Peter I. was therefore a great admirer of his. It will be recollected that on being shown his tomb at Paris, he exclaimed, "Great man! I would give one half of my empire to learn from thee how to govern the other." The czar on this occasion was a great deal too modest, for he had the advantage over Richelieu of being a great warrior, and what is more, the founder of the navy and commerce of his country; while Richelieu has done nothing but govern tyrannically at home, and craftily abroad. But to return to Novogorod. Ivan Vasilewitch possessed himself of it in 1470, and destroyed its liberties; he removed from it to the Kremlin at Moscow, the great bell called in Russian, Wetchevoy kolokol, at the sound of which the citizens had been accustomed to assemble at the market place, to deliberate on public matters. With the loss of liberty, Novogorod had the mortification to see the gradual disappearance of its population, its commerce, and its wealth: so withering and destructive is the breath of arbitrary power, says the best historian of Russia. Even at the present day the city of Novogorod presents an aspect of singular melancholy; a vast inclosure indicates that it was formerly large and populous, and you see nothing in it but scattered houses, the inhabitants of which seem to be placed there like figures weeping over the tombs. The same spectacle is now probably offered by the beautiful city of Moscow; but the public spirit will rebuild it, as it has reconquered it.



## CHAPTER 16.

St. Petersburg.

From Novogorod to Petersburg, you see scarcely anything but marshes, and you arrive in one of the finest cities in the world, as if, with a magic wand, an enchanter had made all the wonders of Europe and Asia start up from the middle of the deserts. The foundation of Petersburg offers the greatest proof of that ardor of Russian will, which recognizes nothing as impossible: everything in the environs is humble; the city is built upon a marsh, and even the marble rests on piles; but you forget when looking at these superb edifices, their frail foundations, and cannot help meditating on the miracle of so fine a city being built in so short a time. This people which must always be described by contrasts, possesses an unheard of perseverance in its struggles with nature or with hostile armies. Necessity always found the Russians patient and invincible, but in the ordinary course of life they are very unsteady. The same men, the same masters, do not long inspire them with enthusiasm; reflection alone can guarantee the duration of feelings and opinions in the habitual quiet of life, and the Russians, like all people subject to despotism, are more capable of dissimulation than reflection.

On my arrival at Petersburg my first sentiment was to return thanks to heaven for being on the borders of the sea. I saw waving on the Neva the English flag, the symbol of liberty, and I felt that on committing myself to the ocean, I might return under the immediate power of the Deity; it is an illusion which one cannot help entertaining, to believe one's self more under the hand of Providence, when delivered to the elements than when depending on men, and especially on that man who appears to be a revelation of the evil principle on this earth.

Just facing the house which I inhabited at Petersburg was the statue of Peter I.; he is represented on horseback climbing a steep mountain, in the midst of serpents who try to stop the progress of his horse. These serpents, it is true, are

put there to support the immense weight of the horse and his rider; but the idea is not a happy one: for in fact it is not envy which a sovereign can have to dread: neither are his adulators his enemies: and Peter I. especially had nothing to fear during his life, but from Russians who regretted the ancient customs of their country. The admiration of him, however, which is still preserved is the best proof of the good he did to Russia: for despots have no flatterers a hundred years after their death. On the pedestal of the statue is written: To Peter the First, Catherine the Second. This simple, yet proud, inscription has the merit of truth. These two great monarchs have elevated the Russian pride to the highest pitch; and to teach a nation to regard itself as invincible, is to make it such, at least within its own territory: for conquest is a chance which probably depends more upon the faults of the vanquished than upon the genius of the victor,

It is said, and properly, that you cannot, at Petersburg, say of a woman, that she is as old as the streets, the streets themselves are so modern. The buildings still possess a dazzling whiteness, and at night when they are lighted by the moon, they look like large white phantoms regarding, immoveable, the course of the Neva. I know not what there is particularly beautiful in this river, but the waves of no other I had yet seen ever appeared to me so limpid. A succession of granite quays, thirty versts in length, borders its course, and this magnificent labour of man is worthy of the transparent water which it adorns. Had Peter I. directed similar undertakings towards the South of his empire, he would not have obtained what he wished, a navy; but he would perhaps have better conformed to the character of his nation. The Russian inhabitants of Petersburg have the look of a people of the South condemned to live in the North, and making every effort to struggle with a climate at variance 'with their nature. The inhabitants of the North are generally very indolent, and dread the cold, precisely because he is their daily enemy. The lower classes of the Russians have none of these habits; the coachmen wait for ten hours at the gate, during winter, without complaining; they sleep upon the snow, under their carriage, and transport the manners of the Lazzaroni of Naples to the Sixtieth degree of latitude. You may see them laying on the steps of staircases, like the Germans in their down; sometimes they sleep standing, with their head reclined against the wall. By turns indolent and impetuous, they give themselves up alternately to sleep, or to the most fatiguing employments. Some of them get drunk, in which they differ from the people of the South, who are very sober; but the Russians are so also, and to an extent hardly credible, when the difficulties of war require it.

The great Russian noblemen also show, in their way, the tastes of inhabitants of

the South. You must go and see the different country houses which they have built in the middle of an island formed by the Neva, in the centre of Petersburg. The plants of the South, the perfumes of the East, and the divans of Asia, embellish these residences. By immense hot houses, in which the fruits of all countries are ripened, an artificial climate is created. The possessors of these palaces endeavour not to lose the least ray of sun while he appears on their horizon; they treat him like a friend who is about to take his departure, whom they have known formerly in a more fortunate country.

The day after my arrival, I went to dine with one of the most considerable merchants of the city, who exercised hospitality *a la Russe*; that is to say, he placed a flag on the top of his house to signify that he dined at home, and this invitation was sufficient for all his friends. He made us dine in the open air, so much pleasure was felt from these poor days of summer, of which a few yet remained, to which we should have scarcely given the name in the South of Europe. The garden was very agreeable; it was embellished with trees and flowers; but at four paces from the house the deserts and the marshes were again to be seen. In the environs of Petersburg, nature has the look of an enemy who resumes his advantages, when man ceases for a moment to struggle with him.

The next morning I repaired to the church of Our Lady of Casan, built by Paul I. on the model of St. Peter's at Rome. The interior of this church, decorated with a great number of columns of granite is exceedingly beautiful; but the building itself displeases, precisely because it reminds us of St. Peter's: and because it differs from it so much the more, from the mere wish of imitation. It is impossible to create in two years what cost the labour of a century to the first artists of the universe. The Russians would by rapidity escape from time as they do from space: but time only preserves what it has founded, and the fine arts, of which inspiration seems the first source, cannot nevertheless dispense with reflection.

From Our Lady of Casan I went to the convent of St. Alexander Newski, a place consecrated to one of the sovereign heroes of Russia, who extended his conquests to the borders of the Neva. The empress Elizabeth, daughter of Peter I. had a silver coffin made for him, upon which it is customary to put a piece of money, as a pledge of the vow which is recommended to the Saint. The tomb of Suwarow is in this convent of Alexander Newski, but his name is its only decoration; it is enough for him, but not for the Russians, to whom he rendered such important services. This nation, however, is so thoroughly military, that

lofty achievements of that description excite less astonishment in it than other nations.

The greatest families of Russia have erected tombs to their relatives in the cemetery which belongs to the church of Newski, but none of these monuments are worthy of remark; they are not beautiful, regarded as objects of art, and no grand idea there strikes the imagination. It is certain that the idea of death produces little effect on the Russians; whether it is from courage, or from the inconstancy of their impressions, long regrets are hardly in their character; they are more susceptible of superstition than emotion: superstition attaches to this life, and religion to another; superstition is allied to fatality, and religion to virtue; it is from the vivacity of earthly desires that we become superstitious, and it is on the contrary by the sacrifice of these same desires, that we are religious.

M. de Romanzow, the minister of foreign affairs in Russia, loaded me with the most amiable attentions, and it was with regret that I considered him as so implicated in the system of the emperor Napoleon, that he must necessarily retire, like the English ministers, when that system was abandoned. Doubtless, in an absolute monarchy, the will of the master explains every thing; but the dignity of a prime minister perhaps requires that words of an opposite tendency should not proceed from the same mouth. The sovereign represents the state, and the state may change its system of politics whenever circumstances require it; but the minister is only a man, and a man, on questions of this nature, ought to have but one opinion in the course of his life. It is impossible to have better manners than Count Romanzow, or to receive strangers more nobly. I was at his house when the English envoy, Lord Tyrconnel, and Admiral Bentinck were announced, both of them men of remarkably fine appearance: they were the first English who had re-appeared on that continent, from which the tyranny of one man had banished them. After ten years of such fearful struggle, after ten years during which victories and disasters had always found the English true to the compass of their politics' conscience, they returned at last into the country which first emancipated itself from the universal monarchy. Their accent, their simplicity, their fierte, all awakened in the soul that sentiment of truth in all things, which Napoleon has discovered the art of obscuring in the eyes of those who have only read his journals, and listened to his agents. I do not even know if Napoleon's adversaries on the continent, constantly surrounded with a false opinion which never ceases to deafen them, can venture to trust themselves without apprehension to their own feelings. If I can judge of them by myself, I know that frequently, after having heard all the advices of prudence or meanness

with which one is overwhelmed in the Bonapartist atmosphere, I scarcely knew what to think of my own opinion; my blood forbid me to renounce it, but my reason was not always sufficient to preserve me from so many sophisms. It was therefore with the most lively emotion that I heard once more the voice of that England, with which we are almost always sure to agree, when we endeavour to deserve our own esteem, and that of persons of integrity.

The following day, I was invited by Count Orloff to come and spend the day in the island which bears his name, and which is the most agreeable of all those formed by the Neva; oaks, a rare production in this country, overshadow the garden. The Count and Countess Orloff employ their fortune in receiving strangers with equal facility and magnificence; you are at your ease with them, as in a country retreat, and you enjoy there all the luxury of cities. Count Orloff is one of the most learned noblemen to be met with in Russia, and his love of his country bears a profound character, with which it is impossible to help being affected. The first day I passed at his house, peace had just been proclaimed with England; it was a Sunday; and in his garden, which was on that day opened to all comers, we saw a great number of these long-bearded merchants, who keep up in Russia the costume of the Moujiks, that is to say of the peasants. A number of them collected to hear the delightful band of music of Count Orloff; it gave us the English air of God save the King, which is the song of liberty in a country, of which the monarch is its first guardian. We were all much affected, and applauded this air, which is become national for all Europeans; for there are no longer but two kinds of men in Europe, those who serve tyranny, and those who have learned to hate it. Count Orloff went up to the Russian merchants, and told them that the peace between England and Russia was celebrating; they immediately made the sign of the cross, and thanked heaven that the sea was once more open to them.

The isle Orloff is in the centre of all those which the great noblemen of Petersburg, and the emperor and empress themselves, have selected for their residence during summer. Not far from it is the isle Strogonoff, the rich owner of which has brought from Greece antiquities of great value. His house was open every day during his life, and whoever had once been presented might return when they chose; he never invited any one to dinner or supper on a particular day; it was understood that once admitted, you were always welcome; he frequently knew not half the persons who dined at his table: but this luxurious hospitality pleased him like any other kind of magnificence. The same practice prevails in many other houses at Petersburg; it is natural to conclude from that, that what we call in France the pleasures of conversation cannot be there met with: the company is much too numerous to allow a conversation of any interest even to be kept up in it. In the best society the most perfect good manners prevail, but there is neither sufficient information among the nobility, nor sufficient confidence among persons living habitually under the influence of a despotic court and government, to allow them to know any thing of the charms of intimacy. The greater part of the great noblemen of Russia express themselves with so much elegance and propriety, that one frequently deceives one's self at the outset about the degree of wit and acquirements of those with whom you are conversing. The debut is almost always that of a gentleman or lady of fine understanding: but sometimes also, in the long run, you discover nothing but the debut. They are not accustomed in Russia to speak from the bottom of their heart or understanding; they had in former times such fear of their masters, that they have not yet been able to accustom themselves to that wise freedom, for which they are indebted to the character of Alexander.

Some Russian gentlemen have tried to distinguish themselves in literature, and have given proofs of considerable talent in this career; but knowledge is not yet sufficiently diffused to create a public judgment formed by individual opinions. The character of the Russians is too passionate to allow them to like ideas in the least degree abstract; it is by facts only that they are amused; they have not yet had time or inclination to reduce facts to general ideas. In addition, every significant idea is always more or less dangerous, in the midst of a court where mutual observation, and more frequently envy are the predominant feelings.

The silence of the East is here transformed into amiable words, but which generally never penetrate beyond the surface. One feels pleasure for a moment in this brilliant atmosphere, which is an agreeable dissipation of life; but in the long

run no information is acquired in it, no faculties are developed in it, and men who pass their life in this manner never acquire any capacity for study or business. Far otherwise was it with the society of Paris; there we have seen men whose characters have been entirely formed by the lively or serious conversation to which the intercourse between the nobility and men of letters gave birth.

## CHAPTER 17.

### The Imperial Family.

I had at last the pleasure of seeing that monarch, equally absolute by law and custom, and so moderate from his own disposition. The empress Elizabeth, to whom I was at first presented, appeared to me the tutelary angel of Russia. Her manners are extremely reserved, but what she says is full of life, and it is from the focus of all generous ideas that her sentiments and opinions have derived strength and warmth. While I listened to her, I was affected by something inexpressible, which did not proceed from her grandeur, but from the harmony of her soul; so long was it since I had known an instance of concord between power and virtue. As I was conversing with the empress, the door opened, and the emperor Alexander did me the honor to come and talk to me. What first struck me in him was such an expression of goodness and dignity, that the two qualities appear inseparable, and in him to form only one. I was also very much affected with the noble simplicity with which he entered upon the great interests of Europe, almost among the first words he addressed to me. I have always regarded, as a proof of mediocrity, that apprehension of treating serious questions, with which the best part of the sovereigns of Europe have been inspired; they are afraid to pronounce a word to which any real meaning can be attached. The emperor Alexander on the contrary, conversed with me as statesmen in England would have done, who place their strength in themselves, and not in the barriers with which they are surrounded. The emperor Alexander, whom Napoleon has endeavoured to misrepresent, is a man of remarkable understanding and information, and I do not believe that in the whole extent of his empire he could find a minister better versed than himself in all that belongs to the judgment and direction of public affairs. He did not disguise from me his regret for the admiration to which he had surrendered himself in his intercourse with Napoleon. His grandfather had, in the same way, entertained a great enthusiasm for Frederic II. In these sort of illusions, produced by an



extraordinary character, there is always a generous motive, whatever may be the errors that result from it. The emperor Alexander, however, described with great sagacity the effect produced upon him by these conversations with Bonaparte, in which he said the most opposite things, as if one must be astonished at each, without thinking of their being contradictory. He related to me also the lessons à la Machiavel which Napoleon had thought proper to give him: "You see," said he, "I am careful to keep my ministers and generals at variance among themselves, in order that each may reveal to me the faults of the other; I keep up around me a continual jealousy by the manner I treat those who are about me: one day one thinks himself the favorite, the next day another, so that no one is ever certain of my favor." What a vulgar and vicious theory! And will there never arise a man superior to this man, who will demonstrate its inutility? That which is wanting to the sacred cause of morality, is, that it should contribute in a very striking manner to great success in this world; he who feels all the dignity of this cause will sacrifice with pleasure every success, but it is still necessary to teach those presumptuous persons who imagine they discover depth of thinking in the vices of the soul, that if in immorality there is sometimes wit, in virtue there is genius. In obtaining the conviction of the good faith of the emperor Alexander, in his relations with Napoleon, I was at the same time persuaded that he would not imitate the example of the unfortunate sovereigns of Germany, and would sign no peace with him who is equally the enemy of people and kings. A noble soul cannot be twice deceived by the same person. Alexander gives and withdraws his confidence with the greatest reflection. His youth and personal advantages have alone, at the beginning of his reign, made him be suspected of levity; but he is serious, even as much so as a man may be who has known misfortune. Alexander expressed to me his regret at not being a great captain: I replied to this noble modesty, that a sovereign was much more rare than a general, and that the support of the public feelings of his people, by his example, was achieving the greatest victory, and the first of the kind which had ever been gained. The emperor talked to me with enthusiasm of his nation, and of all that it was capable of becoming. He expressed to me the desire, which all the world knows him to entertain, of ameliorating the state of the peasants still subject to slavery. "Sire," said I to him, "your character is a constitution for your empire, and your conscience is the guarantee of it." "Were that even the case," replied he, "I should only be a fortunate accident."\* Noble words! The first of the kind, I believe, which an absolute monarch ever pronounced! How many virtues it requires, in a despot, properly to estimate despotism! and how many virtues also, never to abuse it, when the nation which he governs is almost astonished at such signal moderation. At Petersburg especially, the great nobility have less liberality

in their principles than the emperor himself. Accustomed to be the absolute masters of their peasants, they wish the monarch, in his turn, to be omnipotent, for the purpose of maintaining the hierarchy of despotism. The state of citizens does not yet exist in Russia; it begins however to be forming; the sons of the clergy, those of the merchants, and some peasants who have obtained of their lords the liberty of becoming artists, may be considered as a third order in the state. The Russian nobility besides bears no resemblance to that of Germany or France; a man becomes noble in Russia, as soon as he obtains rank in the army. No doubt the great families, such as the Narischkins, the Dolgoroukis, the Gallitzins, &c. will always hold the first rank in the empire; but it is not less true that the advantages of the aristocracy belong to men, whom the monarch's pleasure has made noble in a day; and the whole ambition of the citizens is in consequence to have their sons made officers, in order that they may belong to the privileged class. The result of this is, that young men's education is finished at fifteen years of age; they are hurried into the army as soon as possible, and everything else is neglected. This is not the time certainly to blame an order of things, which has produced so noble a resistance; were tranquility restored, it might be truly said, that under civil considerations, there are great deficiencies in the internal administration of Russia. Energy and grandeur exist in the nation; but order and knowledge are still frequently wanting, both in the government, and in the private conduct of individuals. Peter I. by making Russia European, certainly bestowed upon her great advantages; but these advantages he more than counter-balanced by the establishment of a despotism prepared by his father, and consolidated by him; Catherine II. on the contrary tempered the use of absolute power, of which she was not the author. If the political state of Europe should ever be restored to peace: in other words if one man were no longer the dispenser of evil to the world, we should see Alexander solely occupied with the improvement of his country! and in attempting to establish laws which would guarantee to it that happiness, of which the duration is as yet only secured for the life of its present ruler.

\* (Note by the Editor)

\* This expression has been already quoted in the third volume of the Considerations on the French Revolution; but it deserves to be repeated. All this, however, it must be remembered, was written at the end of 1812.

(End of Note by the Editor.)

From the emperor's I went to his respectable mother's, that princess to whom

calumny has never been able to impute a sentiment unconnected with the happiness of her husband, her children, or the family of unfortunate persons of whom she is the protectress. I shall relate, farther on, in what manner she governs that empire of charity, which she exercises in the midst of the omnipotent empire of her son. She lives in the palace of the Taurida, and to get to her apartments you have to cross a hall, built by prince Potemkin, of incomparable grandeur; a winter garden occupies a part of it, and you see the trees and plants through the pillars which surround the middle inclosure. Every thing in this residence is colossal; the conceptions of the prince who built it were fantastically gigantic. He had towns built in the Crimea, solely that the empress might see them on her passage; he ordered the assault of a fortress, to please a beautiful woman, the princess Dolgorouki, who had disdained his suit. The favor of his Sovereign mistress created him such as he showed himself; but there is remarkable, notwithstanding, in the characters of most of the great men of Russia, such as Menzikoff, Suwarow, Peter I. himself, and in yet older times Ivan Vasilievitch, something fantastical, violent, and ironical combined. Wit was with them rather an arm than an enjoyment, and it was by the imagination that they were led. Generosity, barbarity, unbridled passions, and religious superstition, all met in the same character. Even now civilization in Russia has not penetrated beyond the surface, even among the great nobility; externally they imitate other nations, but all are Russians at heart, and in that consists their strength and originality, the love of country being next to that of God, the noblest sentiment which men can feel. That country must certainly be exceedingly different from those which surround it to inspire a decided attachment; nations which are confounded with one another by slight shades of difference, or which are divided into several separate states, never devote themselves with real passion to the conventional association to which they have attached the name of country.

## CHAPTER 18.

### Manners of the Great Russian Nobility.

I went to spend a day at the country seat of prince Narischkin, great chamberlain of the court, an amiable, easy and polished man, but who cannot exist without a fete; it is at his house that you obtain a correct notion of that vivacity in their tastes, which explains the defects and qualities of the Russians. The house of M. de Narischkin is always open, and if there happen to be only twenty persons at his country seat, he begins to be weary of this philosophical retreat. Polite to strangers, always in movement, and yet perfectly capable of the reflection required to stand well at court: greedy of the enjoyments of imagination, but placing these only in things and not in books; impatient every where but at court, witty when it is to his advantage to be so, magnificent rather than ambitious, and seeking in everything for a certain Asiatic grandeur, in which fortune and rank are more conspicuous than personal advantages. His country seat is as agreeable as it is possible for a place of the kind to be, created by the hand of man: all the surrounding country is marshy and barren; so as to make this residence a perfect Oasis. On ascending the terrace, you see the gulph of Finland, and perceive in the distance, the palace which Peter I. built upon its borders; but the space which separates it from the sea and the palace is almost a waste, and the park of M. Narischkin alone charms the eye of the observer. We dined in the house of the Moldavians, that is to say, in a saloon built according to the taste of these people; it was arranged so as to protect from the heat of the sun, a precaution rather needless in Russia. However the imagination is impressed to that degree with the idea that you are living among a people who have only come into the North by accident, that it appears natural to find there the customs of the South, as if the Russians were some day or other to bring to Petersburg the climate of their old country. The table was covered with the fruits of all countries, according to the custom taken from the East, of only letting the fruits appear, while a crowd of servants carried round to each guest the dishes of meat and vegetables they

required.

We were entertained with a concert of that horn music which is peculiar to Russia, and of which mention has been often made. Of twenty musicians, each plays only one and the same note, every time it returns; each of these men in consequence bears the name of the note which he is employed to execute. When one of them is seen going along, people say: that is the sol, that is the mi, or that is the re of M. Narischkin. The horns go on increasing from rank to rank, and this music has been by some one called, very properly, a living organ. At a distance the effect is very fine: the exactness and the purity of the harmony excite the most noble ideas; but when you come near to these poor performers, who are there like pipes, yielding only one sound, and quite unable to participate by their own emotions in the effect produced, the pleasure dies away: one does not like to see the fine arts transformed into mechanical arts, to be acquired by dint of strength like exercise.

Some of the inhabitants of the Ukraine, dressed in scarlet, came afterwards to sing to us some of the airs of their country, which are singularly pleasing: they are sometimes gay and sometimes melancholy, and sometimes both united. These airs sometimes break off abruptly in the midst of the melody, as if the imagination of the people was tired before finishing what at first pleased them, or found it more piquant to suspend the charm at the very moment its influence was greatest. It is thus that the Sultana of the Arabian Nights always breaks off her story, when its interest is at the height.

M. Narischkin in the midst of this variety of pleasures, proposed to us to drink a toast to the united arms of the Russians and English, and gave at the same moment a signal to his artillery, which gave almost as loud a salute as that of a sovereign. The inebriety of hope seized all the guests; as for me, I felt myself bathed in tears. Was it possible that a foreign tyrant should reduce me to wish that the French should be beat? I wish, said I then, for the fall of him, who is equally the oppressor of France and Europe; for the true French will triumph if he is repulsed. The English and the Russian guests, and particularly M. Narischkin, approved my idea, and the name of France, formerly like that of Armida in its effects, was once more heard with kindness by the knights of the east, and of the sea, who were going to fight against her.

Calrnucks with flat features are still brought up in the houses of the Russian nobility, as if to preserve a specimen of those Tartars who were conquered by the

Sclavonians. In the palace of Narischkin there were two or three of these half-savage Calmucks running about. They are agreeable enough in their infancy, but at the age of twenty they lose all the charms of youth: obstinate, though slaves, they amuse their masters by their resistance, like a squirrel fighting with the wires of his cage. It was painful to look at this specimen of the human race debased; I thought I saw, in the midst of all the pomp of luxury, an image of what man may become, when he derives no dignity either from religion or the laws, and this spectacle was calculated to humble the pride which the enjoyments of splendor may inspire.

Long carriages for promenade, drawn by the most beautiful horses, conducted us, after dinner, into the park. It was now the end of August, but the sun was pale, the grass of an almost artificial green, because it was only kept up by unremitting attention. The flowers themselves appeared to be an aristocratic enjoyment, so much expense was required to have them. No warbling of birds was heard in the woods, they did not trust themselves to this summer of a moment; neither were any cattle observable in the meadows: one could not dare to give them plants which had required such pains to cultivate. The water scarcely flowed, and only by the help of machines which brought it into the gardens, where the whole of this nature had the air of being a festival decoration, which would disappear when the guests retired. Our caliches stopped in front of a building in the garden, which represented a Tartar camp; there, all the musicians united began a new concert: the noise of horns and cymbals quite intoxicated the ideas. The better to complete this entire banishment of thinking, we had an imitation, during summer, of their sledges, the rapidity of which consoles the Russians for their winter; we rolled upon boards, from the top of a mountain in wood with the quickness of lightning. This amusement charmed the ladies as much as the gentlemen, and allowed them to participate a little in those pleasures of war, which consist in the emotion of danger, and in the animated promptitude of all the movements. Thus passed the time; for every day saw a renewal of what appeared to me to be a fete. With some slight differences, the greater part of the great houses of Petersburg lead the same kind of life: it is impossible, as one may readily see, for any kind of continued conversation to be kept up in it, and learning is of no utility in this kind of society; but where so much is done only from the desire of collecting in one's house a great multitude of persons, entertainments are after all the only means of preventing the ennui which a crowd in the saloons always creates.

In the midst of all this noise, is there any room for love? will be asked by the

Italian ladies, who scarcely know any other interest in society than the pleasure of seeing the person by whom they wish to be beloved. I passed too short a time at Petersburg to obtain correct ideas of the interior arrangements of families; it appeared to me, however, that on one hand, there was more domestic virtue than was said to exist; but that on the other hand, sentimental love was very rarely known. The customs of Asia, which meet you at every step, prevent the females from interfering with the domestic cares of their establishment: all these are directed by the husband, and the wife only decorates herself with his gifts, and receives the persons whom he invites. The respect for morality is already much greater than it was at Petersburg in the time of those emperors and empresses who depraved opinion by their example. The two present empresses have made those virtues beloved, of which they are themselves the models. In this respect, however, as in a great many others, the principles of morality are not properly fixed in the minds of the Russians. The ascendancy of the master has always been so great over them, that from one reign to another, all maxims upon all subjects may be changed. The Russians, both men and women, generally carry into love their characteristic impetuosity, but their disposition to change makes them also easily renounce the objects of their choice. A certain irregularity in the imagination does not allow them to find happiness in what is durable. The cultivation of the understanding, which multiplies sentiment by poetry and the fine arts, is very rare among the Russians, and with these fantastic and vehement dispositions, love is rather a fete or a delirium than a profound and reflected affection. Good company in Russia is therefore a perpetual vortex, and perhaps the extreme prudence to which a despotic government accustoms people, may be the cause that the Russians are charmed at not being led, by the enticement of conversation, to speak upon subjects which may lead to any consequence whatever. To this reserve, which, under different reigns, has been but too necessary to them, we must attribute the want of truth of which they are accused. The refinements of civilization in all countries alter the sincerity of character, but when a sovereign possesses the unlimited power of exile, imprisonment, sending to Siberia, &c. &c. it is something too strong for human nature. We may meet with men independent enough to disdain favor, but heroism is required to brave persecution, and heroism cannot be an universal quality.

None of these reflections, we know, apply to the present government, its head being, as emperor, perfectly just, and as a man, singularly generous. But the subjects preserve the defects of slavery long after the sovereign himself would wish to remove them. We have seen, however, during the continuance of this war, how much virtue has been shown by Russians of all ranks, not even

excepting the courtiers. While I was at Petersburg, scarcely any young men were to be seen in company; all had gone to the army. Married men, only sons, noblemen of immense fortunes, were serving in the capacity of simple volunteer, and the sight of their estates and houses ravaged, has never made them think of the losses in any other light than as motives of revenge, but never of capitulating with the enemy. Such qualities more than counterbalance all the abuses, disorders, and misfortunes which an administration still vicious, a civilization yet new, and despotic institutions, may have introduced.



## CHAPTER 19.

Establishments for Public Education.—Institute of Saint Catherine.

We went to see the cabinet of natural history, which is remarkable by the productions of Siberia which it contains. The furs of that country have excited the cupidity of the Russians, as the Mexican gold mines did that of the Spaniards. There was a time in Russia, when the current money consisted of sable and squirrel skins, so universal was the desire of being provided with the means of guarding against the cold. The most curious thing in the museum at Petersburg, is a rich collection of bones of antediluvian animals, and particularly the remains of a gigantic Mammoth, which have been found almost whole among the ices of Siberia. It appears from geological observations, that the world has a much older history than that which we know: infinity is fearful in all things. At present, the inhabitants, and even the animals of this extremity of the inhabited globe are almost penetrated with the cold, which makes nature expire, a few leagues beyond their country; the color of the animals is confounded with that of the snow, and the Dearth seems to be lost in the ices and fogs which terminate this lower creation. I was struck with the countenances of the inhabitants of Kamstchatka, which are perfectly imitated in the museum at Petersburg. The priests of that country, called Shamanes, are a kind of improvisators; they wear, over their tunick of bark, a sort of steel net, to which some pieces of iron are attached, the noise of which is very great when the improvisator is agitated; he has moments of inspiration which a good deal resemble nervous attacks, and it is rather by sorcery, than talent, that he makes an impression on the people. The imagination, in such dreary countries, is scarcely remarkable but by fear, and the earth herself appears to repel man by the terror with which she inspires him. I afterwards saw the citadel, in the circumference of which is the church where the coffins of all the sovereigns, from the time of Peter the Great, are deposited: these coffins are not shut up in monuments; they are exposed in the same way as they were on the day of their

funeral, and one might fancy one's self quite close to these corpses, from which a single board appears to separate us. When Paul I. came to the throne, he caused the remains of his father, Peter I. to be crowned, who not having received that honor during his life, could not be placed in the citadel. By the orders of Paul I. the ceremonial of interment for both his father and mother was recommenced. Both were exposed afresh: four chamberlains once more kept guard over the bodies, as if they had only died the day before; and the two coffins are now placed by the side of each other, compelled to live in peace under the empire of death. Among the sovereigns who have stayed the despotic power transmitted to them by Peter I. there are several whom a bloody conspiracy has cast from the throne. The same courtiers, who have not the strength to tell their master the least truth, know how to conspire against him, and the deepest dissimulation necessarily accompanies this kind of political revolution; for they must load, with the appearance of respect, the person whom they wish to assassinate. And yet, what would become of a country governed despotically, if a lawless tyrant had not to dread the edge of the poniard? Horrible alternative, and which is sufficient to show the nature of the institutions where crime must be reckoned as the balance of power.

I paid homage to Catherine II. by going to her country residence, Czarskozele. This palace and garden are arranged with great art and magnificence; but the air was already very cold, although we were only at the first of September, and it was a singular contrast to see the flowers of the South agitated by the winds of the North. All the traits which have been collected of Catherine II. penetrate one with admiration for her as a sovereign; and I know not whether the Russians are not more indebted to her than to Peter I. for that fortunate persuasion of their invincibility which has so much contributed to their victories. The charm of a female tempered the action of power, and mingled chivalrous gallantry with the successes, the homage of which was paid to her. Catherine II. had, in the highest degree, the good sense of government; a brilliant understanding than hers would have less resembled genius, and her lofty reason inspired profound respect in the Russians, who distrust their own imagination, and wish to have it directed with wisdom. Close to Czarskozele is the palace of Paul I., a charming residence, as the empress dowager and her daughters have there placed the chefs-d'oeuvre of their talents and good taste. This place reminds us of that admirable mother and her daughters, whom nothing has been able to turn aside from their domestic virtues.

I allowed myself to indulge in the pleasure excited by the novel objects of my

daily visits, and I know not how, I had quite forgotten the war on which the fate of Europe depended; the pleasure I had in hearing expressed by all the world the sentiments which I had so long stifled in my soul, was so strong, that it appeared to me there was nothing more to dread, and that such truths were omnipotent as soon as they were known. Nevertheless a succession of reverses had taken place, without the public being informed of them. A man of wit said that all was mystery at Petersburg, although nothing was a secret; and in fact the truth is discovered in the end; but the habit of silence is such among the Russian courtiers, that they dissemble the day before what will be notorious the next, and are always unwilling to reveal what they know. A stranger told me that Smolensk was taken and Moscow in the greatest danger. Discouragement immediately seized me. I fancied that I already saw a repetition of the deplorable history of the Austrian and Prussian treaties of peace, the result of the conquest of their capitals. This was the third time the same game had been played, and it might again succeed. I did not perceive the public spirit; the apparent inconstancy of the impressions of the Russians prevented me from observing it. Despondency had frozen all minds, and I was ignorant, that with these men of vehement impressions, this despondency is the forerunner of a dreadful awakening. In the same way, you remark in the common people, an inconceivable idleness up to the very moment when their activity is roused; then it knows no obstacle, dreads no danger, and seems to triumph equally over the elements and men.

I had understood that the internal administration, that of war as well as of justice, frequently fell into the most venal hands, and that by the dilapidations which the subaltern agents allowed themselves, it was impossible to form any just idea either of the number of troops, or of the measures taken to provision them; for lying and theft are inseparable, and in a country of such recent civilization the intermediate class have neither the simplicity of the peasantry, nor the grandeur of the boyars; and no public opinion yet exists to keep in check this third class, whose existence is so recent, and which has lost the naivete of popular faith without having acquired the point of honor. A display of jealous feeling was also remarked between the military commanders. It is in the very nature of a despotic government to create, even in spite of itself, jealousy in those who surround it: the will of one man being able to change entirely the fortune of every individual, fear and hope have too much scope not to be constantly agitating this jealousy, which is also very much excited by another feeling, the hatred of foreigners. The general who commanded the Russian army, General Barclay de Tolly, although born on the territories of the empire, was not of the pure Sclavonian race, and that was enough to make him be considered incapable of leading the Russians to

victory: he had, besides, turned his distinguished talents towards systems of encampment, positions, and manoeuvres, while the military art, which best suits the Russians, is attack. To make them fall back, even from a wise and well reasoned calculation, is to cool in them that impetuosity from which they derive all their strength. The prospects of the campaign were therefore the most inauspicious possible, and the silence which was maintained on that account was still more alarming. The English give in their public papers the most exact account, man by man, of the wounded, prisoners and killed in each action; noble candour of a government which is equally sincere towards the nation and its monarch, recognizing in both the same right to have a knowledge of what concerns the nation. I walked about with deep melancholy in that beautiful city of Petersburg which might become the prey of the conqueror. When I returned in the evening from the islands, and saw the gilded point of the citadel which seemed to spout out in the air like a ray of fire, while the Neva reflected the marble quays and the palaces which surround it, I represented to myself all these wonders faded by the arrogance of a man who would come to say, like Satan on the top of a mountain, "The kingdoms of the earth are mine." All that was beautiful and good at Petersburg appeared to me in the presence of approaching destruction, and I could not enjoy them without having these painful ideas constantly pursuing me.

I went to see the establishments for education, founded by the empress, and there, even more than in the palaces, my anxiety was redoubled; for the breath of Bonaparte's tyranny is sufficient, if it approach institutions tending to the improvement of the human race, to alter their purity. The institute of St. Catherine is formed of two houses, each containing two hundred and fifty young ladies of the nobility and citizens; they are educated under the inspection of the empress, with a degree of care that even exceeds what a rich family would pay to its own children. Order and elegance are remarkable in the most minute details of this institute, and the sentiment of the purest religion and morality there presides over all that the fine arts can develope. The Russian females have so much natural grace, that on entering the hall where all the young ladies saluted us, I did not observe one who did not give to this simple action all the politeness and modesty which it was capable of expressing. They were invited to exhibit us the different kinds of talent which distinguished them, and one of them, who knew by heart pieces of the best French authors, repeated to me several of the most eloquent pages of my father's Course of Religious Morals. This delicate attention probably came from the empress herself. I felt the most lively emotion in hearing that language uttered, which for so many years had had no asylum but

in my heart. Beyond the empire of Bonaparte, in all countries posterity commences, and justice is shown towards those who even in the tomb, have felt the attack of his imperial calumnies. The young ladies of the institute of St. Catherine, before sitting down to table, sung psalms in chorus: this great number of voices, so pure and sweet, occasioned me an emotion of tender feeling mingled with bitterness. What would war do, in the midst of such peaceable establishments? Where could these doves fly to, from the arms of the conqueror? After this meal, the young ladies assembled in a superb hall, where they all danced together. There was nothing striking in their features as to beauty, but their gracefulness was extraordinary; these were daughters of the East, with all the decency which Christian manners have introduced among women. They first executed an old dance to the tune of Long live Henry the Fourth, Long live this valiant King! What a distance there was between the times which this tune reminded one of, and the present period! Two little chubby girls of ten years old finished the ballet by the Russian step: this dance sometimes assumes the voluptuous character of love, but executed by children, the innocence of that age was mingled with the national originality. It is impossible to paint: the interest inspired by these amiable talents, cultivated by the delicate and generous hand of a female and a sovereign.

An establishment for the deaf and dumb, and another for the blind, are equally under the inspection of the empress. The emperor, on his side, pays great attention to the school of cadets, directed by a man of very superior understanding, General Klinger. All these establishments are truly useful, but they might be reproached with being too splendid. At least it would be desirable to found in different parts of the empire, not schools so superior, but establishments which would communicate elementary instruction to the people. Every thing has commenced in Russia by luxury, and the building has, it may be said, preceded the foundation. There are only two great cities in Russia, Petersburg and Moscow; the others scarcely deserve to be mentioned; they are besides separated at very great distances: even the chateaux of the nobility are at such distances from each other, that it is with difficulty the proprietors can communicate with each other. Finally, the inhabitants are so dispersed in this empire, that the knowledge of some can hardly be of use to others. The peasants can only reckon by means of a calculating machine, and the clerks of the post themselves follow the same method. The Greek popes have much less knowledge than the Catholic curates, or the Protestant ministers; so that the clergy in Russia are really not fit to instruct the people, as in the other countries of Europe. The great bond of the nation is in religion and patriotism; but there is

in it no focus of knowledge, the rays of which might spread over all parts of the empire, and the two capitals have not yet learned to communicate to the provinces what they have collected in literature and the fine arts. If this country could have remained at peace, it would have experienced all sorts of improvement under the beneficent reign of Alexander. But who knows if the virtues which this war has developed, may not be exactly those which are likely to regenerate nations?

The Russians have not yet had, up to the present time, men of genius but for the military career; in all other arts they are only imitators; printing, however, has not been introduced among them more than one hundred and twenty years. The other nations of Europe have become civilized almost simultaneously, and have been able to mingle their natural genius with acquired knowledge; with the Russians this mixture has not yet operated. In the same manner as we see two rivers after their junction, flow in the same channel without confounding their waters, in the same manner nature and civilization are united among the Russians without identifying the one with the other: and according to circumstances the same man at one time presents himself to you as a European who seems only to exist in social forms, and at another time as a Sclavonian who only listens to the most furious passions. Genius will come to them in the fine arts, and particularly in literature, when they shall have found out the means of infusing their real disposition into language, as they show it in action.

I witnessed the performance of a Russian tragedy, the subject of which was the deliverance of the Muscovites, when they drove back the Tartars beyond Casan. The prince of Smolensko appeared in the ancient costume of the boyars, and the Tartar army was called the golden horde. This piece was written almost entirely according to the rules of the French drama; the rhythm of the verses, the declamation, and the division of the scenes, was entirely French; one situation only was peculiar to Russian manners, and that was the profound terror which the dread of her father's curse has inspired in a young female. Paternal authority is almost as strong among the Russians as among the Chinese, and it is always among the people that we must seek for the germ of national character. The good company of all countries resembles each other, and nothing is so unfit as that elegant world to furnish subjects for tragedy. Among all those which the history of Russia presents, there is one by which I was particularly struck. Ivan the Terrible, already old, was besieging Novorogod. The boyars seeing him very much enfeebled, asked him if he would not give the command of the assault to his son. His rage at this proposition was so great, that nothing could appease

him; his son prostrated himself at his feet, but he repulsed him with a blow of such violence, that two days after the unfortunate prince died of it. The father, then reduced to despair, became equally indifferent to war and to power, and only survived his son a few months. This revolt of an old despot against the progress of time has in it something grand and solemn, and the melting tenderness which succeeds to the paroxysm of rage in that ferocious soul, represents man as he comes from the hand of nature, now irritated by selfishness, and again restrained by affection.

A law of Russia inflicted the same punishment on the person who lamed a man in the arm as on one who killed him. In fact, man in Russia is principally valuable by his military strength; all other kinds of energy are adapted to manners and institutions which the present state of Russia has not yet developed. The females at Petersburg, however, seemed to be penetrated with that patriotic honor which constitutes the moral power of a state. The princess Dolgoronki, the baroness Strogonoff, and several others equally of the first rank, already knew that a part of their fortunes had suffered greatly by the ravaging of the province of Smolensko, and they appeared not to think of it otherwise than to encourage their equals to sacrifice every thing like them. The princess Dolgorouki related to me that an old long-bearded Russian, seated on an eminence overlooking Smoleusko, thus, in tears, addressed his little grandson, whom he held upon his knees: "Formerly, my child, the Russians went to gain victories at the extremity of Europe; now, strangers come to attack them in their own homes." The grief of this old man was not vain, and we shall soon see how dearly his tears have been purchased.

## CHAPTER 20.

Departure for Sweden.—Passage through Finland.

The emperor quitted Petersburg, and I learned that he was gone to Abo, where he was to meet General Bernadotte, Prince Royal of Sweden. This news left no farther doubt about the determination of that prince to take part in the present war, and nothing could be more important at that moment for the salvation of Russia, and consequently for that of Europe. We shall see the influence of it developed in the sequel of this narrative. The news of the entrance of the French into Smolensko arrived during the conferences of the prince of Sweden with the emperor of Russia; and it was there that Alexander contracted the engagement with himself and the Prince Royal, his ally, never to sign a treaty of peace. "Should Petersburg be taken," said he, "I will retire into Siberia. I will there resume our ancient customs, and like our long-bearded ancestors, we will return anew to conquer the Empire." "This resolution will liberate Europe," exclaimed the Prince Royal, and his prediction begins to be accomplishing.

I saw the Emperor Alexander a second time upon his return from Abo, and the conversation I had the honor of holding with him, satisfied me to that degree of the firmness of his determination, that in spite of the capture of Moscow, and all the reports which followed it, I firmly believed that he would never yield. He was so good as to tell me, that after the capture of Smolensko, Marshal Berthier had written to the Russian commander in chief respecting some military matters, and terminated his letter by saying that the Emperor Napoleon always preserved the tenderest friendship for the Emperor Alexander, a stale mystification which the emperor of Russia received as it deserved. Napoleon had given him some lessons in politics, and lessons in war, abandoning himself in the first to the quackery of vice, and in the second to the pleasure of exhibiting a disdainful carelessness. He was deceived in the Emperor Alexander; he had mistaken the nobleness of his character for dupery; he had not been able to perceive that if the



emperor of Russia had allowed himself to go too far in his enthusiasm for him, it was because he believed him a partizan of the first principles of the French revolution, which agreed with his own opinions; but never had Alexander the idea of associating with Napoleon to reduce Europe to slavery. Napoleon thought in that, as well as in all other circumstances, to succeed in blinding a man by a false representation of his interest; but he encountered conscience, and his calculations were entirely baffled; for that is an element, of the strength of which he knows nothing, and which he never allows to enter into his combinations.

Although General Barclay de Tolly was a military man of great reputation, yet as he had met with reverses at the beginning of the campaign, the general opinion designated as his successor, a general of great renown, Prince Kutusow; he took the command fifteen days before the entry of the French into Moscow, but he got to the army only six days before the great battle which took place almost at the gates of that city, at Borodino. I went to see him the day before his departure; he was an old man of the most graceful manners, and lively physiognomy, although he had lost an eye by one of the numerous wounds he had received in the course of a fifty years' service. On looking at him, I was afraid that he had not sufficient strength to struggle with the rough young men who were pouncing upon Russia from all corners of Europe: but the Russian courtiers at Petersburg become Tartars at the army: and we have seen by Suwarow that neither age nor honors can enervate their physical and moral energy. I was moved at taking leave of this illustrious Marshal Kutusow; I knew not whether I was embracing a conqueror or a martyr, but I saw that he had the fullest sense of the grandeur of the cause in which he was employed. It was for the defence, or rather for the restoration of all the moral virtues which man owes to Christianity, of all the dignity he derives from God, of all the independence which he is allowed by nature; it was for the rescuing of all these advantages from the clutches of one man, for the French are as little to be accused as the Germans and Italians who followed his train, of the crimes of his armies. Before his departure, Marshal Kutusow went to offer up prayers in the church of Our Lady of Casan, and all the people who followed his steps, called out to him to be the saviour of Russia. What a moment for a mortal being! His age gave him no hope of surviving the fatigues of the campaign; but there are moments when man has a wish to die for the satisfaction of his soul. Certain of the generous opinions and of the noble conduct of the Prince of Sweden, I was more than ever confirmed in the resolution of going to Stockholm, previous to embarking for England; towards the end of September I quitted Petersburg to repair to Sweden through Finland. My new friends, those whom a community of sentiment had brought about me, came to bid me adieu;

Sir Robert Wilson, who seeks every where an opportunity of fighting, and inflaming his friends by his spirit: M. de Stein, a man of antique character, who only lived in the hope of seeing the deliverance of his country; the Spanish envoy; and the English minister, Lord Tyrconnel; the witty Admiral Bentinck; Alexis de Noailles, the only French emigrant from the imperial tyranny, the only one who was there, like me, to bear witness for France; Colonel Dornberg, that intrepid Hessian whom nothing has turned from the object of his pursuit; and several Russians, whose names have been since celebrated by their exploits. Never was the fate of the world exposed to greater dangers; no one dared to say so, but all knew it: I only, as a female, was not exposed to it; but I might reckon what I had suffered as something. I knew not in bidding adieu to these worthy knights of the human race, which of them I should ever see again, and already two of them are no longer in existence. When the passions of man rouse man against his fellows, when nations attack each other with fury, we recognize, with sorrow, human destiny in the miseries of humanity; but when a single being, similar to the idols of the Laplanders, to whom the incense of fear is offered up, spreads misery over the earth in torrents, we experience a sort of superstitious fear which leads us to consider all honorable persons as his victims.

On entering into Finland, every thing indicates that you have passed into another country, and that you have to do with a very different race from the Sclavonians. The Finns are said to come immediately from the North of Asia; their language also is said to have no resemblance to the Swedish, which is an intermediate one between the English and the German. The countenances of the Finns, however, are generally perfectly German: their fair hair, and white complexions, bear no resemblance to the vivacity of the Russian countenance; but their manners are also much milder; the common people have a settled probity, the result of protestant instruction, and purity of manners. On Sundays, the young women are seen returning from sermon on horseback, and the young men following them. You will frequently receive hospitality from the pastors of Finland, who regard it as their duty to give a lodging to travellers, and nothing can be more pure or delightful than the reception you meet with in those families; there are scarcely any noblemens' seats in Finland, so that the pastors are generally the most important personages of the country. In several Finnish songs, the young girls offer to their lovers to sacrifice the residence of the pastor, even if it was offered to them to share. This reminds me of the expression of a young shepherd, "If I was a king, I would keep my sheep on horseback." The imagination itself scarcely goes beyond what is known.

The aspect of nature is very different in Finland to what it is in Russia; in place of the marshes and plains which surround St. Petersburg, you find rocks, almost mountains, and forests: but after a time, these mountains, and those forests, composed of the same trees, the fir and the birch, become monotonous. The enormous blocks of granite which are seen scattered through the country, and on the borders of the high roads, give the country an air of vigor; but there is very little life around these great bones of the earth, and vegetation begins to decrease from the latitude of Finland to the last degree of the animated world. We passed through a forest half consumed by fire; the north winds which add to the force of the flames, render these fires very frequent, both in the towns and in the country. Man has in all ways great difficulty in maintaining the struggle with nature in these frozen climates. You meet with few towns in Finland, and those few are very thinly peopled. There is no centre, no emulation, nothing to say, and very little to do, in a northern Swedish or Russian province, and during eight months of the year, the whole of animated nature is asleep.

The Emperor Alexander possessed himself of Finland after the treaty of Tilsit, and at a period when the deranged intellects of the monarch who then reigned in Sweden, Gustavus IV., rendered him incapable of defending his country. The moral character of this prince was very estimable, but from his infancy, he had been sensible himself that he could not hold the reins of government. The Swedes fought in Finland with the greatest courage; but without a warlike chief on the throne, a nation which is not numerous cannot triumph over a powerful enemy. The Emperor Alexander became master of Finland by conquest, and by treaties founded on force; but we must do him the justice to say, that he treated this new province very well, and respected the liberties she enjoyed. He allowed the Finns all their privileges relative to the raising of taxes and men; he sent very generous assistance to the towns which had been burnt, and his favors compensated to a certain extent what the Finns possessed as rights, if free men can ever accede voluntarily to that sort of exchange. Finally, one of the prevailing ideas of the nineteenth century, natural boundaries, rendered Finland as necessary to Russia, as Norway to Sweden; and it must be admitted as a truth, that wherever these natural limits have not existed, they have been the source of perpetual wars.

I embarked at Abo, the capital of Finland. There is an university in that city, and they make some attempts in it to cultivate the intellect: but the vicinity of the bears and wolves during the winter is so close, that all ideas are absorbed in the necessity of ensuring a tolerable physical existence; and the difficulty which is

felt in obtaining that in the countries of the north, consumes at great part of the time which' is elsewhere consecrated to the enjoyment of the intellectual arts. As some compensation, however, it may be said that the very difficulties with which nature surrounds men give greater firmness to their character, and prevent the admission into their mind of all the disorders occasioned by idleness. I could not help, however every moment regretting those rays of the South which had penetrated to my very soul.

The mythological ideas of the inhabitants of the North are constantly representing to them ghosts and phantoms; day is there equally favorable to apparitions as night; something pale and cloudy seems to summon the dead to return to the earth, to breathe the cold air, as the tomb with which the living are surrounded. In these countries the two extremities are generally more conspicuous than the intermediate ones; where men are entirely occupied with conquering their existence from nature, mental labors very easily become mystical, because man draws entirely from himself, and is in no degree inspired by external objects.

Since I have been so cruelly persecuted by the Emperor, I have lost all kind of confidence in destiny; I have however a stronger belief in the protection of providence, but it is not in the form of happiness on this earth. The result is, that all resolutions terrify me, and yet exile obliges me frequently to adopt some. I dreaded the sea, although every one said, all the world makes this passage, and no harm happens to any one. Such is the language which encourages almost all travellers: but the imagination does not allow itself to be chained by this kind of consolation, and that abyss, from which so slight an obstacle separates you, is always tormenting to the mind. Mr. Schlegel saw the terror I felt about the frail vessel which was to carry us to Stockholm. He showed me, near Abo, the prison in which one of the most unfortunate kings of Sweden, Eric XIV. had been confined some time before he died in another prison near Gripsholm. "If you were confined there," he said to me, "how much would you envy the passage of this sea, which at present so terrifies you." This just reflection speedily gave another turn to my ideas, and the first days of our voyage were sufficiently pleasant. We passed between the islands, and although there was more danger close to the land than in the open sea, one never feels the same terror which the sight of the waves appearing to touch the sky makes one experience. I made them show me the land in the horizon, as far as I could perceive it; infinity is as fearful to the sight as it is pleasant to the soul. We passed by the isle of Aland, where the plenipotentiaries of Peter I. and Charles XII. negotiated a peace, and

endeavored to fix boundaries to their ambition in this frozen part of the world, which the blood of their subjects alone had been able to thaw for a moment. We hoped to reach Stockholm the following day, but a decidedly contrary wind obliged us to cast anchor by the side of an island entirely covered with rocks interspersed with trees, which hardly grew higher than the stones which surrounded them. We hastened, however, to take a walk on this island, in order to feel the earth under our feet.

I have always been very subject to ennui, and far from knowing how to occupy myself at those moments of entire leisure which seem destined for study.

Here the manuscript breaks off.

After a passage which was not without danger, my mother was landed safely at Stockholm. She was received in Sweden with the greatest kindness, and spent eight months there, and it was there she wrote the present journal. Shortly after, she departed for London, and there published her work on Germany, which the Imperial police had suppressed. But her health, already cruelly affected by Bonaparte's persecutions, having suffered from the fatigues of a long voyage, she felt herself obliged without farther delay to undertake the history of the political life of her father, and to adjourn to a future period all other labors, until she had finished that which her filial affection made her regard as a duty. She then conceived the plan of her Considerations on the French Revolution. That work even she was not spared to finish, and the manuscript of her Ten Years' Exile remained in her portfolio in the state in which I now publish it.

(End of Note by the Editor.)

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