It is not to draw public attention to myself that I have set out to relate the circumstances of ten years of exile. The misfortunes I have endured, however bitter, count for so little amid the public disasters we confront that it would be shameful to speak of oneself if the events that concern us were not connected to the great cause of endangered humanity. Emperor Napoleon, whose character is fully revealed in everything he does, has persecuted me with meticulous care and inflexible asperity at an ever-increasing pace. And through my relations with him, I came to know what he was long before Europe had found the key to the enigma and, failing to guess what it meant, let herself be devoured by the sphinx.

People raised in France in the years before the Revolution are necessarily more attached to liberty than those whose childhood was spent under the bloody reign of the Terror. The war in America, the progress of enlightenment, the always admirable example of England’s government had disposed minds to regard representation on a national scale as necessary to the constitution of any monarchy or republic. And I think I may state that in my generation, the one that came of age with France’s Revolution, there are very few young men or women who, at the time, were not filled with the hope the Estates General led France to envisage. My father, bound by loyalty to the King of France, whose minister he was, nonetheless nurtured in his soul the political principles he believed as favorable to the enduring power of a virtuous monarch as to the happiness of an enlightened nation.

It is not to excuse my enthusiasm for liberty that I explain the private circumstances that inevitably made it even dearer to me; I believe one should take pride in that enthusiasm rather than make excuses for it; my intention was rather to make known at the outset that Emperor Napoleon’s
chief complaint against me is the love and respect for true liberty that have always been deeply my own. These feelings were handed down to me as a legacy from the moment I could reflect on the noble thoughts they derive from, and on the fine deeds they inspire. The cruel scenes that dishonored the French Revolution could not damage the cult of liberty; it seems to me, since they were simply acts of popular tyranny. At most, one might be discouraged for France, but if this country's misfortune was the inability to take possession of the noblest of treasures, that is no reason to proscribe it from the earth. When the sun disappears from the horizon of northern countries, their inhabitants do not curse its rays for still shining on other countries more favored by the sky.

I have no intention of going into the events preceding Bonaparte's arrival on the scene. If I write my father's life as I have planned, I shall tell what I saw in those first days of the Revolution whose influence changed the fate of the world. I mean to recount here only the part of that vast picture concerning me. But as I glance at the whole picture from so limited a perspective, I feel sure that I myself will often disappear into the background as I tell my own story.

When General Bonaparte won renown through the Italian Campaigns, I felt the strongest enthusiasm for him. Republican institutions were losing all dignity in France through the means employed to maintain them. One felt a kind of remorse for the most honorable opinions when the words that designated them were found in the most absurd and cruel decrees. It was disturbing to both mind and soul when, in the name of liberty, bloodthirsty men made victims of the worthiest citizens. The new institutions could still rightfully claim the interest of thinking people, but those responsible for making the institutions work completely degraded their essence. On the other hand, those who rightly opposed the revolutionaries gave no credit to the principles on which national representation is based. It was impossible to be wholly for any party—either with the persecutors or even with the persecuted—and man's finest faculty, admiration, did not know where to turn. Military glory readily inspires that sentiment. Bonaparte's proclamations from Italy were designed to inspire confidence in him. They were governed by a tone of noble moderation that stood in contrast to the revolutionary harshness of France's civilian leaders. In those days, the warrior spoke like a judge, while the judges used the language of military violence. Bonaparte had not carried out the barbaric laws against the émigrés. He was said to be passionately in love with his wife, whose character is so gentle and kind. In a word, no one was ever so mistaken about a man as I was about Bonaparte, for I thought him generous and sensitive.

That belief had so filled me with admiration that, when I first saw him, emotion almost kept me from speaking to him or answering him. He'd just come from Italy, renowned for the most brilliant, the most difficult military triumphs he had yet achieved. Far from enjoying supreme power at the time, he was even threatened with persecution. The homage I paid him had a disinterested and genuine quality that he has since been unable to earn or to obtain. From the very first moment, he inspired the deepest sense of fear that any human being has ever made me feel. I had seen ferocious men and estimable men. Bonaparte's effect on me had nothing in common with my reactions to them. I quickly realized that his character could not be defined by the words we customarily use. He was neither good nor violent, neither cruel nor mild in the way of humankind, rather he was a creature unlike any other, unable to feel or inspire sympathy in anyone. And it is precisely because he is not like a creature of our species that he inspires everyone with a sort of dread that in weak souls changes to submission. He hates no more than he loves, since for him there is only himself, and men act on his soul only as facts or as objects, never as his fellows. His strength lies in an imper- turbable egoism that neither pity, nor charm, nor religion, nor morality can for an instant divert from its course. It may be said that he is the world's great celibate. No one of his nature exists. If he is first in the art of the calculated act, he is last in the sphere of feelings. He is a clever chess player whose opponent, the human race, he proposes to checkmate.

The antipathy I felt for him heightened each time that I saw him. In vain my past admiration struggled against my present reaction, in vain I was struck by the superior mind Bonaparte revealed each time he spoke on a serious subject: I felt something like a sharp, cold sword in his soul that would chill even as it wounded. I sensed in his mind an irony for everything good and beautiful that his own glory did not escape, for he dared to scorn the nation whose suffrage he wanted, and no spark of enthusiasm—even for his own triumphs—mixed with his need to astonish others. Emperor Napoleon is as much a system as an individual, and in the following account it will be seen that his life has demonstrated all the effects of godlessness on the human heart.

I met Bonaparte in the interval between his return from Italy and his departure for Egypt. His face was less unpleasant than it is now—he was thin and pale at least, and one could think that his own ambition was devouring him, whereas for the last few years he has seemed to fatten on the unhappiness he causes. But his bearing has always been common, his gaity
vulgar, his courtesy awkward when shown at all, his manner coarse and rough, particularly with women. You might have thought that Providence, to punish the French for misusing their splendid qualities, was subjecting the nation most remarkable for its grace and sense of chivalry to the man most alien to that charm and that quality. During Bonaparte's stay in Paris in the winter of 1797-1798, before he went to Egypt, I met him several times in various circles and the discomfort he had made me feel was not dispelled. One day, at a party, I found myself beside him by chance without realizing it, and I drew back, although at the time he was as civil to me as he judged appropriate to his situation. I drew back in an instinctive terror that I was unaware of but that was all the more justified.

In society he would tell stories from his military career with a pungent turn of phrase that, at times, was even a bit reminiscent of the gift Italians show. But overall, his manners were stiff but not shy, unpolished but not good-natured. He was already possessed of a grand vocation for the role of prince, and the questions he addressed to those presented to him resembled the ones circulating in all courts where the master thinks he does you honor, not by what he says, but simply by talking to you at all, and he surely asked trivial questions out of calculated arrogance.

One day I dined with him at M. de Talleyrand's. He took a seat beside me at table and I found myself between him and Abbé Sieyès. A curious position, particularly if the future had been revealed to me. I examined General Bonaparte's countenance closely. But each time he caught my observant gaze, he skillfully cleared his eyes of expression and his whole face became impassive, except for a vague smile set on his lips as a precaution to divert notice from any genuine signs of his thinking. Throughout dinner Abbé Sieyès conversed as a man of superior mind. General Bonaparte was constantly on his guard. He asked this one if he was married, that one if he was off to the country, continually repeating "Citizen Garat," "Citizen Talleyrand," with an almost ridiculous affectation, for in society people hardly kept up that usage.

Abbé Sieyès spoke of my father with heartfelt respect. He called him a man who combined to the highest degree the calculation of a great financier and the splendid imagination of a poet. The praise was flattering because it was precise and accurate. Bonaparte, too, said a few kind words about my father, but as a man interested only in people he can make use of. In general, he wanted to be charming in those days, but one would have thought he was the prophet Balaam in reverse, cursing when he meant to bless; and his ascendency over other men came rather from the effect of his sharpness of temper than from the care he thought he was taking to flatter them. Also, a sorry fact was already contributing to his power over other men: their conviction that nothing could move him but their potential usefulness to him. What matters to him is neither eloquence, nor wit, nor charm, nor affection. For him, individuals are revenue or expenditure; their moral qualities have no effect on his soul, and I believe that there has never ever been a head of government in France who has said so many offensive things to those around him.

He gave signs of this behavior while still a general. After dinner he approached a woman well known in France for her beauty, her wit, and her ardent opinions. He stopped right in front of her like a German prince.

"Madame," he said, "I don't like women meddling in politics."

"You are right, General," she answered, "but in a country where women's heads are cut off, they naturally want to know why."

He made no answer to that retort because it was witty. I have thought ever since that if those around him had managed to resist what he said with trenchant replies, he would have spoken to them with greater tact. But for that matter, he degraded them in so many other respects that they could well endure one affront more. Since that time, people have quoted many of the rough and humiliating remarks he allowed himself with men and especially with women, telling this one that she was old, asking that one if she was good, and other sweet nothingings of the sort. This behavior is deliberate, like everything with respect to men. He has rightly judged that every individual who tolerates a flagrant insult is dominated by the person to whom that advantage has been allowed, and consequently, Bonaparte sets out to assume that position with respect to others. He takes calculated risks on the baseness of human nature, and it must be admitted that up to now his investments have not suffered. There is something less voluntary in his relations with women, but his feeling for them is completely opposite to the one they ordinarily inspire; he does not like these beings who are not so readily subject to the fear or the hope at his disposal; there is something disinterested in their existence that displeases him. In some respects they are like the clerical orders that answer to heaven alone. We might have seen Napoleon try to banish women from the earth if he had not needed their children for soldiers. It is so true that he regards them mainly in this light that several times he has been heard to repeat coarsely to young women: "Make soldiers for me," as if the lion deep in his lair asked ewes to give birth to little ones for him to devour.

As General Bonaparte did not find me at home when he came by to visit, I went to see him at his wife's apartments. He invited me into his study and I
tried to speak on behalf of Switzerland, then under threat of invasion by French troops. I was unaware that he had incited the invasion himself to find in Berne's modest treasury the funds for a distant expedition, and I was persuaded that if I portrayed Switzerland's happiness for Bonaparte, I might be useful to the country where my father had taken refuge. The call for the independence of the Vaud region, which did not enjoy the privileges of the sovereign cantons, was an attempt to arouse Switzerland, and a great stir was made over a few acts of the Berne government, which had abused its power less in a hundred years than French troops would do in a single week.

General Bonaparte responded to my portrayal of the Vaud's prosperity by saying that it was subject to the canton of Berne, that it had no political rights, and that men could no longer exist without those rights. I tempered this republican ardor as best I could by pointing out that the inhabitants of the Vaud were perfectly free and enjoyed full civil rights, that if they were refused the possibility of joining in the government, this advantage was of little value in a state where the exercise of political authority brought neither money nor prerogatives and could only be considered a sacrifice to the nation.

"Pride and imagination," he went on, "make us hold dear the right to participate in governing our country, and it is unjust to exclude any group whatever of its citizens."

I admitted to General Bonaparte that theoretically he was right, and I could have used the language that has so displeased him since that time—ideology, liberal ideas, and so forth—to make my point. But confining myself to the simple truth, I contrasted the abstract good he lauded with the real evils that would fall upon the most upright country on the Continent.

That conversation ended with my reply, and he began to tell me about his plans for retirement, his weariness with life. In fact I got a better idea of how pleasing he could be when he assumed a certain affability, the most dangerous of all his ruses. He has made much use of it since then, and has often been seen telling the most pernicious lies with the guilelessness of the head of a family describing his business to his children. Even though he had seemed pleasant to me in our conversation, each time I saw him afterward I felt more constrained in his presence. He knows how to torture good and bad people alike, and events have proved that the stifling air he brings to bear on everything around him has been one of the primary causes of his ascendancy over the French. It was precisely because he was a foreigner that he won such power over them. A French temperament could not have dominated the French nation. Richelieu, who spent half his life in Italy, had studied the politics and adroitness of the Italians. For Mazarin they were an inborn talent. Catherine de Medici was long able to retain the wretched power of tearing France apart, and it may be said that of the kings who have exercised the most despotic authority, most had foreign blood in their veins through their mothers. This French nation, endowed with such brilliant qualities, apparently did not receive from heaven the necessary dignity and firmness to be governed only by laws enacted with her consent.

I attended the solemn reception the directors accorded General Bonaparte in the Luxembourg. There was no room large enough for the ceremony inside the palace itself; therefore the courtyard was spread with sand, and over two thousand personages attended this presentation, out-of-doors, in the month of December. The directors were dressed in Roman togas. General Bonaparte arrived in a very simple uniform, followed by his aides-de-camp, who were a foot taller than he but already stood at the respectful distance they have so carefully maintained ever since.

General Bonaparte looked to the right and to the left at the multitude planted even on the rooftops to watch him pass by. His face expressed a sort of casual curiosity about all those human shapes he planned to bring into subjection as soon as he had the power to do so. It was easy to see as well that the supremacy of the five men who made up the Directory seemed ridiculous to him at the very least, and that he was reciting his speech before them with a studied nonchalance. That speech, however, contained notable remarks, among them one foretelling the era of representative government in Europe. But for Bonaparte, opinions were already nothing but means to an end. His Republican proclamations had not prevented his ceding an ancient republic, Venice, to Austria. He'd given very wise advice to Genoa on protecting itself from demagogy, and he was fomenting the overthrow of Switzerland under the pretense that several of its governments were aristocratic. He is a man who actually believes that nothing but self-interest counts for anyone, and who considers that everything said about morality and sincerity in this world is like the complimentary closing of a letter that obliges no one to obey those whose humble servant he calls himself. M. de Talleyrand replied with a very flattering speech in which he spoke to him of his taste for reading Ossian. He was in fact said to like the poet, but I still do not believe that either the heart's reveries or the clouds can be enough for such a man.

Toward the end of the year 1797, the time of General Bonaparte's welcome to Paris, people were talking only about the invasion of England.
One of the most prominent deputies had said that if it were not undertaken, the French government would be the laughingstock of Europe. In one of the fêtes for the Directory on the Champ de Mars, French troops were portrayed attacking and taking an English ship. I remarked that the French had only taken these ships on land. The Directory forgave my little joke, for it must be said in all fairness that it was rather open-minded despite the revolutionary principles that led it astray. It takes a tyrant, and an irascible tyrant like Napoleon, to punish the slightest word as though it were a crime. Thus Caracalla, writes Gibbon, had a woman’s head cut off for “an unseasonable witticism.”

General Bonaparte was named to lead the invasion of England by the directors. He proceeded to the coast of France and, recognizing the impossibility of the invasion, returned with several different projects in mind. His strong preference at the time was the resumption of war with Austria. With this in mind, he had the Directory instruct General Bernadotte, then ambassador to Vienna, to arrange a break between France and Austria, either because he wanted to give himself the honors of peace and war by turn, or because he wanted to harm General Bernadotte in whom he sensed the rival who would one day fly the flag of generous sentiments against the banner of crime. In his uncertainty, Bonaparte went every evening to the home of Barras, where I sometimes met him, and he sought to assume a familiar or dignified bearing in turn, but failed to get the right tone for either, since he could only be natural in tyranny.

One day, alone with Barras and seated beside him, he spoke about his influence over the peoples of Italy.

“They wanted to make me Duke of Milan or King of Italy,” he said, “but I’m not thinking anything of the sort.”

“You’re right,” Barras answered, “for tomorrow, if the Directory wanted you led to the Temple, there wouldn’t be four people against it.”

At those words, Bonaparte sprang from his chair to the fireplace, and the next day informed the Directory that he’d decided on the Egyptian campaign. Popular feeling in fact remained too strong in France to allow reaction in the opposite direction. The Directory still held influence over minds; people thought it powerful, and in France when people hold this view, it becomes reality.

A few months earlier, Bonaparte had sent General Augereau of the Army of Italy to lend support on the fatal day when the Directory crushed national representation, and paradoxically, he found a way to appear as the hope of the party of upright men at the very time he was helping to drive them out of the Legislative Body. But people already sensed that he did nothing without calculation, and the Royalist party preferred calculating men to genuine Republicans who were men with a firm doctrine.

One evening before Bonaparte arrived, I met General Augereau at Barras’s home. He was considered a patriotic general—that is, opposed to the return of the Old Regime—for he’d hardly reflected on political ideas and saw the sword as the only answer in all matters.

“Is it true, as rumor has it,” I asked, “that General Bonaparte is thinking of having himself made king?”

“Good God, no!” he replied. “That young man is too well-bred for such a thing.”

I laughed heartily at his response, which in fact characterized the times we lived in particularly well. Such abuse had been heaped on royalty that good people in the patriotic party truly believed it dishonest to think that way. People at all capable of reflection easily discerned Bonaparte’s ambitious plans already. For that reason above all he did well to leave for Egypt, since those plans could not be realized at the time, and excited suspicions that might have committed the Directory to undermine his reputation. He maintained that reputation in the Orient. The fighting at the Pyramids, in the deserts of Arabia—all those names from antiquity—kept the imagination alert to Bonaparte’s fate.

I returned to Coppet in the early days of January 1798 to be with my father when the French were considering the invasion of Switzerland. He was on the list of émigrés, and there was still a decree imposing the death sentence on any émigré found in territory occupied by French troops. My father, however, insisted on remaining in his refuge close to my mother’s ashes; so we found ourselves, he and I, completely alone with our servants and my young children in the vast château at Coppet. The French officers on the Vaud side, headed by General Suchet, were on good terms with my father by natural impulse and by order of the Directory. The moment the French entered Switzerland, Geneva lost her independence, and the government of France began by destroying a city which owed to that independence all her historical brillianc. The soldiers of the French Republic entered the country of William Tell bearing their abstract liberty and their concrete tyranny even into the mountains where simple men preserved—and preserve—in fact the treasure of their virtues and their laws.

A curious destiny for the Revolution in France! Throughout continental Europe it has destroyed the very principles of liberty on which it claimed to be founded. So it is that every unbridled enterprise must perish, that
every enterprise in which man does not invoke God in any way will inevitantly redound upon him, and that he who recognizes no barrier will never reach his goal.

Throughout Switzerland there was talk of the resistance that the canton of Berne and the democratic cantons planned to offer the French troops. For the first time I made vows to heaven against the French, and I no longer knew on what altars I might dedicate the most religious of all earthly sentiments, love for one's native land. The small cantons sent their contingents to Berne; those devout soldiers knelt in front of the church when they came to the public square. They had no fear of the approaching French because, they said, "there are four hundred of us, and if that isn't enough, we're ready to send as many more to the aid of our country." Who would not be moved by that great confidence in such slender means? Ah, the days of the three hundred Spartans were over! Numbers were all-powerful, and the greater the numbers, the less public opinion counts, for men become sheep the moment they become so numerous that they are forced to give unlimited authority to a handful of leaders.

On the day of the first battle between the Swiss and the French, although Coppet was thirty leagues from Berne, we heard the cannon fire resounding from afar, echoing from the mountains in the silence of the night. To discern the deadly noise more clearly, we hardly dared breathe, and though all the probabilities favored the French, the beauty of nature and the goodness of the inhabitants surrounding us gave hope for a liberating miracle. That anticipation was not rewarded. The Swiss were defeated in a pitched battle. The magistrate, M. de Steiger, old and blind, had himself led close to a battery of cannons in the hope of dying.

The French directed their efforts against the small cantons. But they defended themselves for a long time in the mountains, and it was never possible to bring the small cantons into subjection to the Republic one and indivisible—the pretext for tyranny in those days, as freedom of the seas is its pretext now. Those poor inhabitants of primitive Switzerland wanted nothing to do with the hypocritical gift sent to them by cannon fire. Women and children joined the resistance. Priests were massacred in their sanctuaries. But since in that confined space there was a strong national will, it was enough to arrest the progress of the French and oblige them to come to terms with the only men certain of never being vanquished: those of unwavering resolve.

What mixed sentiments we felt, my father and I, during those days of such painful anxiety! The least of the evils threatening us was the loss of our entire fortune. A large part of our income came from feudal rights, and confiscation threatened any man entered in whatever way on the list of émigrés. My father decided to ask the Directory to strike his name from that list. His request was drawn up with the force of logic and the dignity of character that, I venture to say, distinguish everything he has written. He pointed out that he had been born a foreigner, that the state he came from had named him his minister to Paris, that chosen three times by Louis XVI to direct his finances, he had left France for his native country only when a formal decree of the Constituent Assembly authorized him to do so. His case was so clear that the moment I delivered my father's memorandum to the Directory on my return to Paris, his name was struck from the list by unanimous vote. Barras, Treilhard, and Merlin, directors at the time, contributed effectively to the successful outcome. But people had not come to believe, as they do today, that there is no law but Emperor Napoleon's decrees. But even these decrees mean nothing if circumstances make it desirable to violate them. At times, several Councillors of State have in fact tried to oppose the Emperor with his own decisions in contentious or administrative matters, and he was as angry at his own past wishes as at those of another.

At this juncture, I shall relate what happened in 1798 with respect to my father's funds, that is, the two million he entrusted to the Public Treasury, and no slightest part of which we have been able to obtain to this day. As Minister of Finance, my father was entirely free to carry off his own fortune from the Royal Treasury when he left his position; he did not want to withdraw it, however, in that time of crisis. He was the one minister, from the beginning of the French monarchy on, who for seven years constantly refused the hundred thousand écus due to the Minister of Finance. No man was more justified in reclaiming at least what belonged to him, when he had not only served the state without salary, but devoted his capital to the display required by the office of France's Prime Minister. Short supplies threatened Paris with the cruellest famine. Messrs Hope of Amsterdam would send wheat to France only on my father's personal guarantee. My father renewed that guarantee, and it looked up his two million at the very moment a lettre de cachet exiled him from France. Never has money called to mind a greater number of honorable circumstances than that two million, and for twenty years, under France's various governments, finance administrators have without fail termed these funds the most sacred of debts. The Directory recognized it as such, but at first offered to pay my father in national assets, which meant that he might receive properties belonging to émigrés, and my father did not want those at any price. He agreed rather to defer full
payment of what was owed him until peace came. We shall see by what follows how Emperor Napoleon judged it proper to elude every form of justice respecting this debt. The fatal day of 1797, when the Directory admitted soldiers within the precincts of the Legislative Body, suppressed all moderation in the application of France's civil law. The power of public opinion disappeared entirely in the face of military force, and what good faith there had been in the Republican party gave way to the calculations of ambition. People sensed that the vault was about to come crashing down, and each one sought shelter for himself.

War broke out anew; it did not go well at first. In 1799, the Russians won great victories in Italy. A revolution inside the Directory, as in a harem, brought in new men to replace those introduced by another faction. Only one among them deserves mention: Sieyès. The others were there only to obey the men who had made them directors. Sieyès is a man of superior mind, and he has transcendent views on every subject; but his character is an impenetrable barrier to any benefit that might be drawn from his mind. Two serious flaws, a quick temper and fear, keep him from acting upon weak men and subject him to the strong. The moment he is not understood he gets angry, disgusted; and far from blaming himself, he blames others, a serious fault in political matters; it is not enough to be right, you must persuade the people you need that you are right. You must know how to adapt to the faculties of the mediocre people you are addressing. Virtue resides in intentions but is to be judged only by success. A certain degree of superiority is not understood by the multitude, but one degree further yields the secret of all the ways to make yourself heard. Fear, a natural result of the sedentary life Sieyès led until he was forty, posed yet another obstacle to his talent for conducting political affairs; it gave him impulses to despotism and timid resolve in turn, a deadly combination for the conduct of affairs.

Sieyès, even as he detested military government, sought a general's support, imagining quite wrongly that he could use it as a tool. From the start of the Revolution, Sieyès had plans for a constitution to which he attached great importance. He was convinced that he would find a general to back him in his attempt to establish it. Moreau, whose character is as moral as his genius is military, had neither talent nor taste for political factions. Pichegru had lost the confidence of liberty's friends by embracing the Royalist party. Heading the Republican army, General Bernadotte, through superiority of mind and impassioned determination of soul, should have won Sieyès's confidence. But Sieyès could not hope to bring such a man under subjection.

And so the State floated at random without a hand firm enough to save it. During that crisis the Jacobins tried to assert their authority. The allied coalition boasted of its victories over the French armies. Bonaparte's two brothers, Joseph and Lucien, both deputies in the Council of Five Hundred and both highly intelligent, although to different degrees, wrote to their brother that the state of affairs in France was such that, were he present, he could hope to win the greatest influence.

General Bonaparte was then in Egypt, calling himself General Bonaparte, Member of the Institute, to seduce French Republicans, and beginning his proclamations with a profession of Moslem faith to fool the Arabs. One day, he received newspapers and letters from France and shut himself in to read them. Emerging from his study, he told those he trusted that he needed to return to France.

But in the interval between the dates of the news he received and his arrival, the face of matters in France had changed completely. Public opinion rejected the Jacobins bid. Such a scourge can subjugate only a nation that has never known its like. To see it twice in the same country is completely impossible. The French armies came back to life as foreigners approached their territory. Massena successfully defended Switzerland. Moreau maintained the French position in Italy. The English raiding party in Holland was forced back to sea. Finally, General Bernadotte, whose conduct has since proved his administrative skills equal to his military genius, managed to reorganize the army in the space of two months as Minister of War; that very benefit offended the weak directors whose minister he was, and they deprived themselves of their one support by sending him away. In the long run, such a man could truly show who he was only by holding the highest rank.

And so, when General Bonaparte landed in Fréjus, his help was no longer needed, and men were better able to resist him. All danger was past, but it was recent, and both foreigners and the French themselves confused events that took place at very close intervals. At the time it was thought that Bonaparte had saved the ship of state, although he'd taken command only when it was afloat once more. Along with his staff, he disregarded the law enacted to protect Europe through quarantine of those arriving from the Levant. Had the Directory then been at the height of its power, it would have had General Bonaparte arrested for such a violation and for leaving his army.

When he left for Egypt, Director Reubell had said on one occasion that they must accept Bonaparte's resignation if offered, because the Republic would never lack for a successful general to head its armies.
however Reubell acted, we must give credit to a remark that so honors the French nation, for what would be the quality of a nation of twenty-four million inhabitants if it needed a man who deemed, not the law, but his own will as supreme?

In any event, France was so ill-governed when Napoleon arrived that she looked to anyone at all to be her master. And so this Caesar, far from having Pompey to fight, met as his Cato and Crassus a poor wretch of a local journalist, Gohier, a drunken soldier. General Moulin. Bonaparte himself has said that he found the crown of France lying on the ground and picked it up. Never has a more apt expression been used, since for six months before he arrived they had been offering power to anyone willing to take it. Therefore we must add to Bonaparte's good luck and subtract from his reputation the circumstances that made him France's leader.

I was with my father at Coppet when I learned that, on his way from Egypt, General Bonaparte had passed through Lyons, where he was greeted wildly. The news made a painful impression that could lead me to believe in the instinctive sense of the future—the second sight the Scots speak of that may be nothing more than the illumination of feeling, independent of rational thought. There should have been every reason to rejoice in Bonaparte's arrival. I enjoyed his brothers' company greatly. Most of the people who would be around him were more or less of my world. But I sensed the tyranny in Bonaparte's character, a tyranny that was to be proportionate to the events of every kind that had preceded it.

I left to spend the winter in Paris and had the uncommon luck to arrive on the eighteenth of Brumaire, the ninth of November, the day Bonaparte's political career began. As I was changing horses a few leagues from Paris, I was told that Director Barras, accompanied by gendarmes, had just passed by on his way back to his estate at Grosbois. The positions were telling the news of the day, and this way of hearing it increased its power over the imagination. This was the first time since the Revolution that I had heard a proper name on every tongue. Until then, they would say the Constituent Assembly did such and such, the King, the people, the Convention. Now there was talk only about the man who would take the place of them all and reduce the human race to anonymity, either by seizing a great deal of fame for himself, or by keeping everyone else on earth from acquiring any.

The very evening I reached Paris, I learned that General Bonaparte had spent the five weeks since his return preparing people's minds for the revolution that had just broken out. Each party in turn had offered itself to him, and to each he had given reason for hope. He told the Jacobins he would protect them from the return of the monarchy. He let the Monarchists believe he would restore the Bourbons. Steyès was told that the constitution he'd been dreaming of since the Revolution began would finally see the light of day. He had charmed the public not attached to a party with hopes of repose, order, and above all, peace. One day in a salon he was told of a woman in society whose papers had been seized under orders from the Directory. He protested the absurd atrocity of tormenting women—he who, for no reason, has condemned so many of them to endless exile. He talked inordinately of the need to restore peace, he who has brought the world ever-recurring war. There was, in fact, something indefinably mawkish and hypocritical in his manner that was like the tiger's velvet paw. It was natural for the nation to fall into the trap.

The Constitution, good or bad but still in place, had been destroyed two years earlier when armed force was called in to support it. Futile attempts to institute liberty had led to no reasonable outcome in a nation that scorns justice as foolishness, and deems immorality proof of a profound mind. Bonaparte had no man to conquer on the way to power. He had only one to fear: General Bernadotte. But the Directory, more jealous still of its defenders than of its adversaries if that is possible, had refused to call for his help. General Bonaparte shrewdly confided to him the secret of the revolution he planned, requesting his word of honor, as a brother-in-arms, not to betray him. General Bernadotte, who alone preserved the spirit of chivalry in an age when everything seemed to exclude it, replied that, as a private person, he would not reveal this secret entrusted to his honor, but that the government name him commander of any military unit whatever, he would fight the man who attempted to overthrow the existing order of things. The Directory drew up the order recalling General Bernadotte to the Ministry of War. But Bonaparte's good fortune carried the day. He frightened Barras, who resigned rather than sign Bernadotte's nomination, and perhaps destiny reserved this commanding adversary for a time when the human race had earned its mercy through suffering.

Lucien and Joseph gave their brother powerful support. They presented him to each party as a conquest they must make lest the other seize hold of it. They frightened the philosopher Steyès with the revolutionary Barras, Barras with Bonaparte's popularity in the armies. His military glory was in fact the nation's glory and, in the absence of any personal consideration or any well-grounded institution, only the fame won by force stood out amid the fatal equality that derived from the complete ruin of all rather than the well-balanced strength of each. The revolution was brought on through an
article of the Constitution allowing the Council of Ancients to move the Legislative Body to a city other than Paris, and on that occasion I observed that, for every institution to which France's Revolution gave birth, there was the desire to legitimate the means of the change, as if revolutions could be bound by theory. Things human subsist as long as men respect them. When this respect is gone, everything serves as a pretext or motive to overturn them, and once decrees become nothing more than paper barriers, public opinion becomes indifferent to them and they no longer guide such movements. The Council of Ancients ordered the Legislative Body, that is, itself, and the Council of Five Hundred to remove to Saint Cloud on the next day, 19 Brumaire.

On the evening of the eighteenth, when I reached Paris, the whole city was feverishly awaiting the great day that was to come, and without a doubt the majority hoped that General Bonaparte would have the upper hand. My own feelings, I admit, were more mixed than any I had yet felt during the Revolution. Once the battle was joined, if Bonaparte were driven off, the Jacobins would immediately be strong enough to compel all my friends, and myself foremost, to run from France. But I felt, as if the events that followed had been revealed to me, that the most fearful and, at the same time, the most degrading tyranny was about to weigh on France.

One of my friends was present at the Assembly of the Five Hundred at Saint Cloud. He sent me couriers hourly. Once, he sent word that he thought the Jacobins would win. I sent for money and had my carriage prepared to set off again, taking with me what I held most dear. An hour later, the same friend sent word that General Bonaparte had the upper hand, that armed force had dispersed the nation's representatives, and I wept, not for liberty—it never existed in France—but for hope of it, which had been enough to exalt the soul for over ten years; and from that moment I have felt a difficulty in breathing that in the years since, I think, has become the illness of all Europe.

There have been various ways of talking about how the revolution of 18 Brumaire came about. But most important to understand clearly is what characterizes the man on whom the human race still depends. He meant to speak enthusiastically at the Council of Anciens. But first of all, he does not know how to express himself nobly, and it is only in ordinary language that his caustic and trenchant wit can be shown to advantage. Moreover, he has no enthusiasm for any subject. His egotism is composed more of scorn for others than of attachment to anything whatever. He is truly superior, then, in disdain and insult alone. To win votes at the bar of the Ancients, he told them, among other things: "I am the god of war and fortune. Follow me." But even in his arrogance there was no grandeur. He used pompous words in place of those he would have liked to speak: "You're scoundrels and I'll have you shot if you don't obey me." Such would have been the genuine expression of his soul. The rest was only the means advised in turn by daring or hypocrisy, never by truth.

Looking very grave, he walked slowly into the Council of Five Hundred, followed by two tall grenadiers whose height protected his slight stature. When he appeared in the hall, the deputies known as Jacobs broke into indescribable shouting. His brother Lucien, who was presiding at the time, rang the bell to restore order, but to no effect. Screams of "traitor" and "usurper" were heard everywhere, and one of the deputies, a compatriot of General Bonaparte's, the Corsican Aréna, came up to him and shook him by the collar of his uniform. People thought he had a dagger to kill him. It was nothing of the kind. A punch was all the tragedy there was. Nonetheless, at that blow Bonaparte went pale with fright, his head sank to his shoulder, and to the two grenadiers at his side, he said: "Get me out of here." The grenadiers realized his anxiety and lifted him bodily from the midst of the deputies surrounding him. They carried him outside, and once there he recovered his presence of mind, mounted his horse, and prompted the troops to do his bidding. But in this situation, as in many others, one could see that he becomes confused when things go wrong. He recovers his faculties through reflection but emotion cuts them off. There are men, on the other hand, made greater by emotion. They are the ones who, above all, have strength of soul.

As his two grenadiers carried Bonaparte from the hall of the Five Hundred, the deputies opposed to him vehemently demanded that he be declared outlawed; it was then that his brother, Lucien, President of the Assembly, did him remarkable service by refusing, in the face of all threats, to put that decree to a vote. Had he consented, the decree would have passed, and no one can know how the soldiers would have reacted. For ten years they had consistently abandoned those generals declared outlawed. The decisions of men and women of the people are most often determined by habit and, besides, resemblances between words have greater influence over them than differences between things.

General Bonaparte sent his soldiers to lead Lucien from the hall and, once he was safe, ordered his troops into the Orangerie where the deputies had gathered, and to force them out by marching forward so they had no room left to stand. The grenadiers advanced from one end of the hall to the
other in squared-off battalions as if it were empty. Pushed against the wall, the deputies in their senatorial togas were forced to flee through the window into the gardens of Saint Cloud. Elected representatives of the people had already been outlawed in France, but this was the first time since the Revolution that civil status had been made ridiculous in the presence of military status; and Bonaparte, wanting power founded on the debasement of legislative assemblies as well as of individuals, was pleased with his ability to deprive national representation of all respect with his very first steps.

The dreadful specter of the Terror was—and has not ceased to be—the sorcery Bonaparte has used to oppress France, and not just since that time but in the very epoch when he seized power. There was no reason to fear the return of Jacobinism. That unbelievable hallucination could exist only when its effects were unknown. Nature does not twice produce such a scourge. To inflame minds to this degree of excess requires the fermentation of new ideas; it requires absolute ignorance of the consequences of those ideas and an undefined hope for the advantage they might bring to the individual and to the people as a whole. But how could one imagine a nation rushing headlong into the claws of the very monster that has torn it apart? Besides, the clergy's holdings that had formed the basis of the assignats no longer existed. Enthusiasm for the Revolution, good or bad, had at least weakened. Nothing begins anew among men at an interval too short for the human race to renew itself, and political experience serves for several generations at least. These truths, simple but indisputable in my eyes, excused my sorrow over 18 Brumaire. For had it been a question of seeing Jacobinism reestablished in France, or supporting Bonaparte unaware that his reign was to cost the human species ten million men, I would have acted like France, which did not like him but preferred him.

Never have more opportune and fortunate circumstances favored the one who wanted to take the reins of power. No man had acquired or retained a commanding reputation. A licentious free press had spoiled most reputations, and moreover, the French, who showed great intelligence during the Revolution, have displayed so little character that they can easily be discredited in each other's eyes merely by bringing out variations in their behavior and political opinions.

All parties welcomed Bonaparte. Each idealized him as its hope. The Royalists expected him to return the Bourbons. The Jacobins wanted him to maintain them in their positions. A few days after 18 Brumaire one of them told me: "The principles of the Revolution must be abandoned, but power must stay in the hands of the men who made it." "Precisely the opposite seems preferable to me," I replied sharply, indignant as I was at the apostate selfishness that Bonaparte sought to excite in every possible way. But, you will say, in France's state of anarchy at the time, wasn't a powerful hand needed to restore order? No doubt, but people were so dispirited that nothing was easier than governing France. A terror-stricken Europe asked only tranquility. It took no more than a Machiavellian gift to bring new misfortune to bear on this weary land. But the simplest good sense was enough to make it happy, and a Wellington's conscience was worth a hundred times more for the glory and prosperity of France than the diabolical genius who found in human degradation the fulcrum Archimedes sought to lift the world.

Genuine Republicans were the one party to be sincerely saddened by 18 Brumaire. But they were few in number either because it requires daring hope to imagine a republic in France, or because any sort of opinion is a rarity now, since people have so often bowed to circumstance.

Since I have never been able to think of any political interest apart from the love of liberty, I was grieved more each day by 18 Brumaire; I learned each day some new trait of arrogance or guile in the man gradually taking hold of power. I reasoned as best I could to fight the feeling that dominated me, but it kept rising up despite my efforts. I saw tyranny stealing upon us, sometimes stealthily as a wolf, sometimes with its head held high; but it seemed to me that from one hour to the next our oppression increased, and that all moral life would soon be in chains.

Fifty deputies, chosen from the two councils, were charged with discussing the constitution to be given to France, and some of the same men who had jumped out of the window when faced with Bonaparte's bayonets dealt as seriously with the abstract questions of a new constitution as if those questions still mattered. General Bonaparte lent himself willingly to those discussions, for he knew that the French like voicing their opinions even more than having them accepted. He let men accustomed to the tribune dissipate their energy in words, but when theory brought them too close to practice, he put an end to their difficulties by threatening to take no further part in their work, that is, to end it by force. Bonaparte himself is very fond of talking. His form of political dissimulation is not silence but a whirlwind of contradictory pronouncements that lead others to believe, in turn, the most contradictory things. He rather enjoyed the quibbles of a committee discussion on setting a particular order, as for the composition of a book, since it was not a matter of dealing tactfully with the higher orders of society, of maintaining privileges, of respecting laws or even customs. The Revolution had
swept away everything in Bonaparte’s path, and he had nothing to fight but
discursive reasoning—a kind of weapon that was child’s play in his hands
since, when he chose, he opposed it with a kind of vehement gibberish that
seemed quite lucid in light of the bayonets with which he could back it up.

Every evening I heard about each of those sessions that might have been
entertaining if the fate of humanity had not been at stake. The courtier’s
servile turn of mind began to emerge in these men who had shown such
revolutionary ruthlessness, and everything suggested that self-interest was
the true Proteus who could at will take the most diverse shapes.

It was assumed that Sieyès would present the complete draft of the Con-
stitution, which in the course of the Revolution was often spoken of as the
Ark of the Covenant that would bring all parties together; but by a curious
anomaly, he did not have one word on the subject in writing. Everything
was in his head as if he had wanted to speak as an oracle, and the irascibility
of his nature when he is not immediately understood added further to
the difficulty of expressing his ideas. One day a well-intentioned young man
asked the meaning of a passage in one of his pamphlets. “Read it again,” he
answered, irritably turning away.

General Bonaparte rapidly seized on what he needed from Sieyès’s sys-
tem, that is, to eliminate election of deputies by the nation. Sieyès had
conceived of eligibility lists from which the Senate could select the people’s
representatives under the name of tribunes and legislators. Undoubtedly
Sieyès had not devised that institution to establish tyranny in France. He had
set up counterweights that might perhaps offset it, but Bonaparte, dismissing
the counterweights, took hold of the critical words: no elections. Sieyès’s
metaphysics served to cloak or rather befog the actual power Bonaparte
meant to obtain. Sieyès had said: no elections. Thus it was that the philoso-
pher himself, and not the soldier, doomed the one right through which
public opinion can make its way into a government.60 These are the fresh
waters that vitalize it, whereas permanent bodies are like ponds whose stagn-
ant waves can more easily be corrupted. In a monarchy, and perhaps even
in a republic, a hereditary body is necessary—wise men appointed for life, a
whole conservative aristocracy; but the part of the government that author-
izes taxes must issue directly from the nation.

Once General Bonaparte had ensured that he would have to deal only
with paid men named by other paid men, he was sure of his power. For
him, the noble name of tribune meant allowances for five years, and the
grand title of senator, sinecures for life; and he quickly understood that one
group would want to acquire what the other wished to retain. There was no
one left within the State to whom the nation had granted any right what-
ever.60 The circuitous method of awarding nominations to the Senate only
made Bonaparte more certain of his influence. All these bodies issuing from
the same power were nothing but the hypocrisy of despotism under differ-
ent guises. General Bonaparte had his will echoed in him in different tones
by the wise voice of the Senate, by the shouts of the Tribune produced on
demand, by the silent balloting of the Legislative Body; and this three-part
choir appeared to represent the nation, although the same master was its
only coryphaeus. When the task was completed, he made a gift of land to
Sieyès so that the philosopher would lose all popularity by exposing his sen-
sitivity to the pleasures of wealth.61

He was remarkably shrewd in choosing the two consuls granted him to
veil his despotic unity. One of them, Cambacères,62 had learned submission
in the national Convention. A profoundly learned jurist, he had drafted the
arbitrary decrees of the factionists as methodically as if he had been setting
up the most just and carefully considered code of law. He told me one day
in conversation: “In the Convention, when they proposed setting up the
Revolutionary Tribunal, I saw right away the disasters that would come of
it, and yet the decree was passed unanimously.” And he was then a deputy in
the Convention and contributed his vote to that very unanimity; but in the
innocence of his fear, he did not even notice that fact, and I do not think he
imagined it possible to resist force. Bonaparte saw him immediately as his
paper colleague and real instrument. All he has looked for and has not
stopped looking for in men is talent, it is never character.

They say he decided on the other acolyte, Lebrun, for a dedication he
had printed under the Old Regime, and for his tractability in serving Chan-
cellor Maupeou.63 Observing him closely, Bonaparte saw a great deal of in-
telligence, a great deal of learning, integrity in domestic relationships, but
such respect for circumstances that he was certain of bending him to the
most powerful of them all: his own will. Cambacères acted as his interpreter
to the revolutionaries, Lebrun to the Royalists, and both of them, like Tal-
leyrand and Fouché, whom I shall discuss shortly, translated the same text—
Bonaparte’s usurpation—in two different languages: Lebrun advised the
Royalists to regain the institutions without the persons, and Cambacères
told the Republicans to retain the persons without the institutions.

Thus Bonaparte’s political army consisted solely of defectors from both
parties; on the one hand, they sacrificed their obligations to the old Bour-
bon family, and on the other hand, their love of liberty. In any case, no form
of independent thinking would be displayed under his rule, for he could be
king of self-interests but never of opinions. And by virtue of position as well as character, he smothered at once all that was knightly in royalty and in the Republic by debasing both nobles and citizens. When his position was constitutionally established, a great man pronounced on this order of things one of those sentences that echo across the centuries: “It is a monarchy,” said Mr. Pitt, “that lacks only legitimacy and limits.” He might have added that only a monarchy with limits was truly legitimate.64

Bonaparte chose to live in the Tuileries, a choice of residence that was a political salvo. There, people had seen the King of France; there, the customs of royalty were still present to all eyes, and the walls had only to be left to themselves, so to speak, for everything to fall into place once more. I went to stand at a window in the château to watch Bonaparte enter the Tuileries in the first days of the last year of the century. He was still far from the magnificence he has elaborated since that time,65 but already, the zeal of those around him to become courtisans first and then slaves revealed what they had perceived in Bonaparte’s soul. When his carriage entered the courtyard, his valets opened the door and threw down the folding steps with a violence suggesting that even physical objects were insolent when they slowed their master’s pace for an instant. As for him, he looked at no one, thanked no one, as if afraid he might be thought responsive to homage and grandeur. As he walked up the stairs amid the crowd making haste to follow him, his eyes turned neither to any object nor to any person in particular. His countenance expressed something vague and indifferent that hid what he was feeling, but that let others see what he always likes to show: cool composure toward fate and contempt for the human race.

Pamphlets were passed around saying that Bonaparte did not wish to be either Monk, or Cromwell, or even Caesar because, they went on, these were outworn roles, as if the events of the world could be thought of as tragic denouements that must not be copied from their predecessors. But the important thing was not really to persuade but rather to suggest a sentence to those wanting to be fooled—a sentence they could repeat to all and sundry. For some time Machiavelli’s doctrine has made such progress in France that all of French vanity is focused on political skill. You can let the whole nation into the comedy, so to speak; it will pride itself on being privy to the secret. When Bonaparte was negotiating with the Pope, a wig-maker said: “Me, I don’t believe in anything, but there has to be religion for the people.” Each individual enjoys believing he is party to the deception practiced on all.

Bonaparte addressed mutually contradictory language to all the parties, who then reported it to one another, and far from being displeased by this stratagem, they praised its finesse; and well-contented with having seen through it, they took diplomatic pleasure in pretending to be taken in. No doubt the stratagem succeeded only because it safeguarded interests even as it trifled with opinions. When Bonaparte negotiated with the leaders of the Vendée, he hinted that he might one day restore the House of Bourbon. But meanwhile, he immediately awarded great concrete and personal benefits to the priest, Bernier, who had made use of Catholic and Royalist fanaticism without ever having truly shared in it.66 You saw this Vendean priest installed in the waiting room of Police Minister Fouché, as if he were there only to discredit religion, were it to depend on its clergy. Thus the First Consul went about undoing another reputation daily, debasing proper names one by one, so that no person existed in and of himself, and so that his favor was needed all the more for the loss of public respect.

He carried the same system into his way of restoring wealth or taking it away. Half of France’s former landowners were still on the list of émigrés when Bonaparte was named First Consul; on the other hand, owners of property confiscated during the Revolution, a no less powerful class at the time, feared the return of those whose property they had bought. It never occurred to Bonaparte, who always made his way between two opposing interests, to resolve them through justice, that is, through a law that reconciled former rights with new interests in an orderly manner. To one person he restored his property, another he refused. A decree on forests and another on national credit put almost everyone’s wealth into his hands. Sometimes he restored the father’s property to the son, the elder son to the younger, according to his satisfaction with one or the other, and this arbitrary, unlimited action increased his power daily by making each person’s existence dependent on one man’s will. In every country, Turkey included, we meet with a religion, privileged groups, or at least one lowly class in peaceful possession of what fate has allotted it. But France’s appalling Revolution, having torn everything down and put nothing in its place, did not strike only those who came close to power or wanted to acquire it as in despotic countries: the most unknown of men were placed on the list of émigrés. The poorest like the wealthiest, the least known like the most famous, women, children, old people, priests, conscripts had something to ask of the new government and that something was life, for it was not a matter of telling oneself: “I will forgo a despot’s favor.” You had to resolve never to see your native land again, not to recover the slightest part of what you once owned if you incurred the disfavor of the government that had reserved for itself the right to decide the fate, one by one, of almost every inhabitant of
France. This situation excuses the nation to a large extent, it seems to me; but it makes us aware of the unprecedented injustice of those magistrates who, to retain their positions, handed over to the First Consul the destiny of all their fellow citizens. I deeply pity those from whom misfortune wrenches an act of weakness. How can one know for certain that some greater degree of punishment might not have overcome the resistance one glories in? But ignominy for the sake of obtaining a position, ignominy for wealth gained at the expense of mankind and the liberty of one's country: from these no man can recover in the eyes of men.

This Tribune, whose very name was an ongoing joke, never thought popular rights could be abandoned fast enough. It forbade itself initiative, it refused petitions. In sum, just as we had seen French nobles throw away all their privileges, one after the other, at the feet of public opinion on the night of August 4, 1789, these alleged representatives of a nation that had not appointed them, threw themselves to the opposite extreme with equal violence, calling "Jacobin," like "aristocrat" in former times, anyone who took it into his head to demand any institution or any barrier to limit the authority of a single man.

The multitude of newspapers published in France was suddenly reduced to fourteen by a simple decree of the Council of State. At that moment the appalling power of publications was established, with all of them repeating the same thing every day, and tolerating no shadow of contradiction of any sort. The discovery of printing was held to be liberty's safeguard because, until then, it had never been seen at the service of tyrannical authority. But just as regular troops have been far less favorable to European independence than militias, so the discovery of printing would be regrettable if it resulted in the tyranny of the press, and if the army of journalists was recruited and paid by the government. Before the discovery of printing, at least, people communicated by word of mouth, and individuals formed their opinions according to facts. But when all men's natural curiosity for the news is taxed with lies, when no event is recounted without an accompanying sophistry, when tyranny, by nature silent, becomes talkative to mislead the mind even as it withers the soul, the nation is deprived of its very depths and the most perverse doctrine is placed within reach of everyone.

The First Consul himself dictated, and still dictates, articles for the official newspaper, The Monitor. His rather limited education should not allow him to write in French or any other language himself. But even though he does not know either spelling or grammar, he has a style. One senses the brutal fist, if it may be put that way, behind his every word. He loses patience with what he says as if the very attempt to persuade others showed too much regard for them. He enjoys insults, vulgar insults, even when, in his army bulletins, he ought to maintain the dignity of omnipotence. His former relations with the Jacobins have left him with a certain tone, something of a man of the people. It may be said that he is the Revolution incarnate, but the Revolution at once violent and corrupt, and assuredly not the one desired and conceived by the foremost classes of society. Roederer, a highly intelligent man who certainly thinks precisely the opposite of what he has been saying for the past twelve years, lauded Bonaparte's gift for journalism and assures him that he sets a rather high value on it. Bonaparte feels that in France you must kill with irony those you mean to ruin in some other manner, and he handles this weapon somewhat clumsily, it is true, but always so as to inflict a great deal of harm. For when response is forbidden, every blow strikes home.

No man can act with great effect except in the trend of his century, and if you examine the story of all those who have changed the face of the world you will see that, for the most part, they have merely seized for their own advantage the trend of minds already in place. The bad philosophy of the end of the eighteenth century derived all cults of the soul. Bonaparte put this philosophy into practice. Bonaparte knows that force, as long as it is unrelenting, can never be ridiculous. And so he uses mockery against everything that resists power: public opinion, talent, religion, morality. "Your conscience is a dumb beast," he told M. de Broglie, bishop of Flanders, who resisted his wishes. "Don't you know that if God reigns in heaven, I am the one who commands on earth?" His whole doctrine amounts to saying: "Shame to the vanquished!" which is worse than misfortune, and I believe that he would scorn himself were fortune to abandon him.

The only human creatures he does not really understand well are those who cling sincerely to some opinion, whatever the consequences. You would think he sniffs men out to make them his instruments or his prey. Bonaparte considers such men either simpleminded or merchants who overcharge, that is to say, who want to be bought for too dear a price.

It got back to him that I had spoken in my circles against this ever-growing oppression whose progress I foresaw as clearly as if the future had been revealed to me. Joseph Bonaparte, whose wit and conversation I enjoyed, came to see me and said: "My brother is complaining about you. 'Why,' he repeated to me yesterday, 'why doesn't Madame de Staël go along with my government? What does she want? Payment of her father's funds? I'll arrange it. Residence in Paris for him? I'll allow it. Come now, what
threat of power and the hope of wealth he holds out, he ties the tendency to boredom, and that too terrifies the French. In the long run, residence forty leagues from the capital, in contrast to all the advantages combined in the world's most agreeable city, weakens most exiles, accustomed from childhood to the charm of society.

The night before Benjamin Constant was to deliver his speech, gathered in my home were Lucien Bonaparte, M. de Talleyrand, Roederer, Regnault, Segur, and several others whose conversation possesses, to varying degrees, the ever-renewed interest inspired by forceful ideas and graceful expression. Except for Lucien, each of them had been worn down by the Directory's proscription and was prepared to serve the new government, asking in return only a substantial reward for devotion to its power. M. Benjamin Constant came to me and said quietly: "Look at your drawing room filled with people you enjoy; if I speak, it will be deserted tomorrow; do think it over." "One must act on one's convictions," I told him. Exaltation inspired that reply, but I admit, had I known then what I was to suffer from that day on, I would not have had the strength to refuse Benjamin Constant's offer to forgo his speech and avoid compromising me. Today, Bonaparte's disfavor means nothing with respect to public opinion; he can have you put to death, but he cannot undermine your reputation. Then, however, the nation was not aware of his tyrannical intentions and, as each person hoped to win the return of a brother or friend, restitution of a fortune, whoever dared resist him was crushed with the name of Jacobin, and society withdrew from you along with the government's favor, an unbearable situation, especially for a woman, and whose cuts and stabs no one can know without having experienced it.

The day the signal for opposition in the Tribunate was given by one of my friends, I was to have a number of people in my home whose company I enjoyed a great deal but who were partial to the new government. I received ten notes of excuse at five o'clock. I withstood the first and second well enough, but when those notes followed one after the other I began to feel uneasy. In vain I appealed to my conscience, which had counseled me to forgo all the pleasures of society dependent on Bonaparte's favor, but so many respectable people blamed me that I was unable to rely firmly enough on my own way of looking at things.

Bonaparte had done nothing precisely culpable as yet; many people insisted that he would protect France from great woes. In fact, if just then he had sent me word that he would be reconciled with me, I would have been overjoyed if anything. But he is never willing to make peace with anyone
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 general 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 compagnon 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
ashed, 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 Leman, 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 sided 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 negociated 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
tyrranny 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 Fouche 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 infanta 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'etre:"

(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
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 equivocque 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 tranquilized 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 enterprise 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.
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.

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[PART THE SECOND]

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 espionnage, 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 Gallicia 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 Lubomirksa, the sister of prince Adam Czartorinski,
marshal of the Polish Confederation, which the Austrian troops were
going to support. The princess Lubomirksa 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 Gallicia, 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 Gallicia 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 Gallicia 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 Lubomirksa, so 
famous in Poland for the union of the most perfect taste and 
magnificence. I anticipated extreme pleasure from again seeing 
prince Henry Lubomirksa, 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?

(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

(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.)
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 Leopol, the capital of Gallicia, 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 Leopol, 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 co-incidence
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 Gallicia, 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 Sclovonian origin: they have been enemies, but respect each other mutually, while the Germans, who are further advanced in European civilization than the Sclovonians, 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 uninvective 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 ascendency; 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 dissentions, 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 Scelovonian 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 necessaries 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 Moskva, 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; avast 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 desert. 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 particular lovely 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 reappeared 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 a 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 Alexander 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.

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.

(End of Note by the Editor.)
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. Calmucks 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 Scavonians. 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.

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 ascendency 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 Shamenes, 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, Czarskozelo. 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 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 Czarskozelo 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 naivety 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 Scutian 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.