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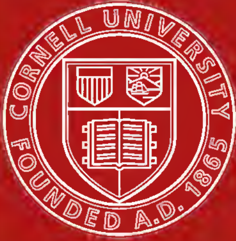

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THE EXILE OF ST. HELENA

NAPOLEON AT ST. HELENA.

After the picture by Delaroche.

THE EXILE OF ST. HELENA

The Last Phase in Fact and Fiction

FROM THE FRENCH OF

PHILIPPE GONNARD

Illustrated

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PREFACE

The author desires to acknowledge the debt of gratitude which he owes to his numerous correspondents, both at home and abroad, who have rendered him assistance in the composition of this book. To M. Émile Bourgeois, Professor at the Faculty of Letters and at the Higher Normal School, is due the idea of this work. He has also given much valuable help and advice. The author is greatly indebted to Comte Emmanuel de Las Cases and to Vicomte Couëdie de Kergoualer for giving him access to their family archives. Both in Paris and London the librarians and archivists have placed themselves at his service with their customary good will.

Mr. Pierre Caron and M. Schmidt, of the *Archives Nationales*, have given valuable assistance, whilst from Vicomte de Grouchy and M. Guillois, the publishers of the *Journal de Gourgaud*, the author has received much interesting information. Thanks, too, to several of his friends, MM. Jacques Chevalier, Maurice Legendre, Gabriel Leroux, Paul-Louis Couchoud, he has been enabled to complete various researches which he had commenced.

THE ORIGIN OF THE NAPOLEONIC LEGEND

In this work it is our intention to study what share Napoleon had in the formation of the "Napoleonic legend." In order to do this it will be necessary to consider Napoleon's work at St. Helena, on which the legend is founded.

PREFACE

The exact sense of the expression the "Napoleonic legend" must first be determined. We do not mean by it that over-indulgence of the public, and of historians in general, with regard to certain assertions of bulletins too favourable to the Emperor—that indulgence, for instance, which looked upon Essling as a victory and which overestimated the number of deaths on the enemy's side at Eylau or at Moscow. Neither was the essential characteristic of the legend that of absorbing in Napoleon's glory the merit of his collaborators, thus taking Castiglione away from Augereau, Auerstædt from Davout, the Civil Code from Portalis or Cambacérès, in order to attribute everything to him.

All this is not what we mean by the "legend." It was inevitable that the importance of Napoleon's victories should have been exaggerated, and that the public should have seen one man in that epoch and have passed over his aids or his instruments. The masses could not remember all the names, but they retained the one most worthy of remembrance. The people did not trouble about statistics, but they had a lasting impression of the most extraordinary success followed by crushing reverses. They summed up all this, but they did not create a legend.

The legend begins with the interpretation of facts. Neither the public nor historians could make any mistake, after so short a time, as to what Napoleon had done, but the question was: what had he *meant* to do? What were his *principles* and his *motives*. *Why* had he acted in such a way? Historians do not agree on these points.

From 1815 to 1851, Napoleon's numerous historians and the Liberal or Bonapartist Press gave answers to these questions which were accepted by the majority of the French public. These answers really constitute what may be called the Napoleonic legend. The following are a few of them:

Napoleon was the convinced and disinterested representative of the principles of 1789.

Napoleon, whose ideas were Liberal, was only Dictator from sheer necessity.

Napoleon, who wished for peace, was constantly forced into war by the European coalition.

Napoleon supported and proclaimed the law of nationalities, etc.

We call these ideas and other similar ones "the Napoleonic legend" for two reasons. In the first place they do not always agree with facts and, secondly, when Napoleon gave utterance to them at St. Helena, he frequently had to somewhat distort the truth in order to impose them on public belief.

According to our idea, therefore, historians, later on, found the themes which constitute the Napoleonic legend in the works written at St. Helena. They took them from there, either from the lips or the pen of the Emperor. The origin, then, of this legend is in Napoleon's *Memoirs*, written from his dictation, and in his *Conversations* published later on by his faithful companions. In these, then, are to be found the sacred texts which have since been commented on.

We shall now endeavour to show that the man who arranged all these elements, in view of a political end to be gained, did not trouble about being absolutely frank. He concealed certain facts and modified others. "He arranged his life, his defence, and his glory," says Queen Hortense, "with the infinite care of a dramatic author, who takes great pains with his fifth act and attends to all the details for the sake of the final apotheosis."

In this work the following are the general lines of the plan adopted for the study of the legend.

(1) An examination of the conditions under which Napoleon's historical work at St. Helena was composed, of his hopes and intentions and also of his policy, which was just as active during that period of his life as at any other time. We shall also study how he wrote, the documents and books he possessed, the dates when his memoirs were dictated and when his conversations were noted by his companions.

(2) An attempt to prove that the essential elements of the legend exist in this St. Helena literature.

(3) A comparison of Napoleon's declarations at St. Helena with historical facts from 1769 to 1815. A comparison of Napoleon's declarations concerning his intentions and principles and *other declarations of his differing from the*

first ones, which there is every reason to believe are more sincere.

The object of this work will be attained if this book should become the convincing commentary of the title chosen by Lord Rosebery : *Napoleon, The Last Phase*, and if we should succeed in making others share our belief that this phase, too, was active and fertile, and that Napoleon, even at St. Helena, was able to wield his influence over the eventual destiny of France.

Napoleon Buonaparte
from a Sketch by Colonel Planat
his private Secretary
on Board of H.M.S Bellerophon.
Plymouth Sound July 31st 1815.

CHAPTER I

PRELIMINARY INFORMATION

In order to spare the reader many tedious notes and explanations later on in this volume, the opening chapter is devoted to a brief *résumé* of some of the more important details connected with Napoleon's life at St. Helena.

On the 15th of July, 1815, he set out on the *Bellerophon* to seek refuge in England. He soon discovered that he could not count on shelter either there or in America. On the 7th of August, he was sent to St. Helena, under the escort of a squadron, commanded by Admiral Cockburn. As he was allowed to take three officers with him, he chose General Bertrand, General de Montholon, and General Gourgaud. Bertrand was accompanied by his wife, and de Montholon by his wife and two children. His State Councillor, Comte de Las Cases, went with him as secretary, and was accompanied by his son. Napoleon also took his valet, Marchand, and about ten other domestics.

On arriving at St. Helena on the 17th of October, 1815, Napoleon spent one night at Jamestown, the capital of the island. He then settled in a little cottage called "The Briars," whilst waiting for the residence of Longwood to be prepared. He lived in this cottage nearly two months with Las Cases and a few servants. The other exiles stayed at Jamestown, and visited Napoleon every day. On the 10th of December, 1815, he was able to move to Longwood, but when once there he found himself restricted to extremely limited boundaries, which neither he nor his companions could cross unless accompanied by an English officer.

Bertrand and his wife lived at Hut's Gate, some little distance from Longwood.

Until April 14th, 1816, Napoleon was under the surveillance of Admiral Cockburn, who was entrusted with the government of St. Helena, and with the command of the squadron sent to keep watch over the island. Although he had several times been greatly annoyed by the Admiral, Napoleon respected him.

The new Governor, Sir Hudson Lowe, was a very punctilious man, and, as he had received strict orders with regard to the prisoner, intercourse soon became somewhat strained between them. Before very long Sir Hudson Lowe could only communicate with Napoleon through Bertrand or de Montholon.

On the 17th of June, 1816, the Commissioners delegated by France, Austria and Russia arrived at St. Helena. These Commissioners were the Marquis de Montchenu, Baron von Sturmer, and Comte de Balmain. Their mission was to see that Napoleon did not leave the island and they were also to keep their respective Governments informed with regard to his actions and sentiments. He did not see them himself, but he kept up a fairly pleasant intercourse with them, through his companions, more particularly with Comte de Balmain. The Marquis de Montchenu was the only one of the three who remained at St. Helena until the death of Napoleon. Baron von Sturmer left in July, 1818, and Comte de Balmain in 1820.

Admiral Cockburn was succeeded in the command of the squadron on guard by Admiral Malcolm. He arrived in June, 1816, and was always on excellent terms with Napoleon. Admiral Plampin took command from June, 1817, and he was much more reserved.

On the 19th of October, 1816, on the plea of economy, Sir Hudson Lowe sent three of Napoleon's domestics back to Europe, and also Piontowski, a Polish officer, who had joined the little colony of exiles.

In November, 1816, Las Cases was dismissed from Longwood for having attempted a secret correspondence with Europe and, on the 30th of December, he was sent away from the island.

NAPOLEON ON BOARD THE BELLEROPHON.

From the picture by Sir W. Q. Orchardson.

PRELIMINARY INFORMATION

Gourgaud, for reasons that have never been quite clear, left Longwood in February, 1818, and St. Helena the following month. O'Meara, the English doctor, who attended Napoleon, and who was in great favour with him, was recalled to England in July, 1818, as the English Government was suspicious of him. Madame de Montholon also left St. Helena in July, 1819, and returned to Europe.

In September, 1819, a Corsican doctor arrived to take O'Meara's place. His name was Antommarchi, and he was accompanied by two priests, Vignali and Buonavita, and by a few domestics. Buonavita left the island in 1821 as the climate did not suit him.

There never was any actual reconciliation between Napoleon and Sir Hudson Lowe. Their intercourse, which was strained at the beginning of 1820, became somewhat more pleasant towards the close of that year, but this tranquillity was soon to be disturbed by Napoleon's illness. At the time when O'Meara was attending him, he had felt the first symptoms of that disease which was to prove fatal. After O'Meara's departure Napoleon refused to see any other English doctor, and the disease made rapid progress. Antommarchi succeeded in holding it in check for some time, and during the commencement of 1820 his patient was better. In March, 1821, there was a relapse and Napoleon, who was by no means easy to tend, succumbed on the 5th of May, 1821.

CHAPTER II

NAPOLEON'S HOPES AND INTENTIONS AT ST. HELENA

In order to understand Napoleon's motives when composing the works he wrote at St. Helena, we must try to realise what he thought about his own situation. How long did he imagine it would endure, in what way did he think he could improve it and what likelihood was there that he would succeed in his efforts? In a word what were his hopes and intentions at St. Helena?

There is one point which need not be discussed here, as Lord Rosebery has treated it fully in his book.[1] It is the fact that among Napoleon's various plans, that of escape from the island does not figure at all. Considering the conditions of the captivity and Sir Hudson Lowe's minute precautions, it would certainly not have been feasible. The childish character of the plans attributed to the Bonapartists of Europe and America [2] is proof sufficient that there was nothing in them. Lord Rosebery very rightly insists on the fact that Napoleon would not have attempted to escape even if it had been possible.

[1] *Napoleon, The Last Phase*, chapter VIII.

[2] The following are the principal passages on this question: two vague warnings addressed to the English Government in 1816 (see Forsyth [Bibliography 96*a*.] I, 392); three letters addressed to Napoleon or to his family in 1816 and 1818, the one very vague, the other two giving details with great precision about a plan of escape; all three seem to be mere mystifications intended for the English Ministers (Forsyth, III, pp. 64 and 451). With regard to the American plans, Joseph's intrigues with the United States and Colonel Latapie's énterprise (intrigues which Lord Rosebery perhaps did not take seriously enough). The principal documents are to be seen in the British Museum, vols. 20,200 and 20,201. The *Mémoires d'Hyde de Neuville* (Bibliography 108) and Schlitter, *Kaiser Franz I und die Napoleonideen* (Bibliography 109), can also be consulted.

This is confirmed over and over again by Montholon[1] in his writings. Napoleon would have been in danger, when free, of coming across assassins in the pay of the Bourbons. He would not have cared to reside in America, as that meant being forgotten, and giving up for ever his *rôle* in Europe. It would have been of no use to leave St. Helena if Europe were not prepared to welcome him. In 1815, France was displeased with the Bourbons, otherwise it would have been useless for Napoleon to have left Elba. He did not care to leave his new prison now unless Europe were prepared to help him. Could he reasonably hope for such a change of tactics on the part of his enemies? Was it probable that those who had outlawed him in 1815 and who guarded him so zealously now would ever give up their captive and let him have his throne once more? Napoleon had one reason for clinging to such a hope. It was that the European Powers, from 1815 to 1821, all suspected each other of having this intention. The European Commissioners, who had been sent to St. Helena, were there to keep watch on the English quite as much as on the prisoner. The Marquis de Montchenu's report in 1820 insinuates that an understanding probably existed between the English Government and Napoleon for the latter to be set free.[2] The adventurer, Maubreuil, who had taken refuge in England, advised the English Minister to give Napoleon back his throne and then share with him the Empire of Europe.[3] Sir Hudson Lowe, too, fancied that Comte de Balmain and Baron von Sturmer were trying to bring about an understanding between Napoleon and his former friend or his father-in-law. It was no doubt for this reason that the Governor was so anxious to get them both away from Longwood.[4] Napoleon, who was ever hopeful, might very well have believed what Castlereagh, Metternich, and Nesselrode deemed possible.

His hopes were based on the sympathy of certain sovereigns

[1] *Récits de la captivité* (Bibliography 23*a*), I, pp. 278, 286, 348; II, pp. 100, 151.

[2] Report of November 7, 1820.—*Affaires étrangères, Mémoires et documents*, vol. 1805, documents 79–80.

[3] See Appendix I.

[4] See Lord Rosebery, *Napoleon, The Last Phase*, chapter XI.

and on their political needs. He also counted on the people themselves in the various countries of Europe.

Princess Charlotte of England, daughter of the Prince Regent, was supposed to be favourable to liberal ideas and to Napoleon. When she came to the throne there would be some chance for the captive.[1]

"The remembrance of the fraternal friendship" between himself and the Emperor Alexander of Russia, at Tilsit, and the solemn promises of this prince at Erfurt, together with "the sacredness of the bond which united him to the Emperor of Austria,"[2] made him see possible protectors in these sovereigns. This, at least, was the official form he gave to his hopes. His real idea probably was that the European sovereigns, in their difficulties, might think it advantageous to have him for their ally—the Russians against the English, or the English against the Russians, and this certainly was not unreasonable.

The question is what did he really expect from the three sovereigns? At one moment he hoped that they might give him back his throne and treat him as umpire in Europe.[3] At another time all he wanted was power in France.[4] Sometimes his one desire was for liberty and permission to live in England,[5] and later on all he asked for was a change of prison, more freedom, and the recall of Sir Hudson Lowe.[6] It was by no means easy to get his grievances and his proposals made known to the sovereigns. Princess Charlotte, during her father's lifetime, could do nothing, and as every letter from Napoleon to the English Government was read by the Ministers, there was no hope there. It would have been easy for him to approach Alexander and the Emperor of Austria, as the Commissioners sent by them might have served as diplomatic agents, but Napoleon had

[1] See *Journal de Gourgaud*, November 5th, 1815, February 11th, 1818. *Récits de la captivité*, II, pp. 14, 248.

[2] *Récits de la captivité*, II, p. 251. Compare II, p. 246.

[3] *Mémorial de Sainte-Hélène*, April 18th, 1816. *Journal de Gourgaud*, November 5th, 1815.

[4] *Récits de la captivité*, I, 133. *Gourgaud*, June 30th, 1817.

[5] *Récits de la captivité*, II, 14.

[6] Gourgaud, October 9th, 1817, January 1st, 1818.

refused to receive them in their official capacity[1] and, as Sir Hudson Lowe objected to his seeing them as private individuals, all negotiations were difficult. They took place though, thanks to Montholon and Gourgaud. Bertrand did not care to be compromised in any way and it was of no use counting on Baron von Sturmer, as this dull, timid diplomat avoided all advances and seemed to look upon Napoleon as an outlaw with whom it was dangerous to come into contact.[2] Comte de Balmain was intelligent, amenable, and unprejudiced and, as more latitude was allowed him by his Court, intercourse with him was more satisfactory. Sir Hudson Lowe and the other Commissioners considered him almost revolutionary. Thanks to his conversation with Montholon and Gourgaud, he obtained information for his reports to St. Petersburg. He therefore cultivated their acquaintance, was friendly to the exiles and held out vague hopes to them which, in their impatience as captives, they interpreted as certainties. Gourgaud's departure from St. Helena, in 1818, seems to have been the result of this intercourse with Balmain. He was entrusted with carrying on negotiations with Europe, just before the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle.

It has been stated that Gourgaud's departure was not due to this diplomatic mission but to a quarrel with Montholon and with Napoleon himself. It would take too much space to discuss this subject here, but it is treated fully in the Appendix.[3] It does seem though, that, whatever may have been the cause of Gourgaud's departure, Napoleon endeavoured to make use of it for approaching Alexander once more and for trying to influence him.

The attempt did not succeed and the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle was a bitter disappointment to Napoleon. The Czar, on whom he had counted, presented a memorial, justifying all the precautions that had been taken with regard to the exile and this memorial obtained the approval of

[1] This official capacity was the result of the Treaty of August 2nd, 1815, between the Powers. It made Napoleon the prisoner of Europe, and he would not recognise this.

[2] See his reports of October 31st, 1817.

[3] See Appendix II.

the other Courts.[1] Napoleon was very much discouraged;[2] but he nevertheless counted on the Czar and on the Emperor of Austria for alleviating his captivity. When Sturmer was recalled in 1818 and Montchenu took his place, Napoleon was deeply grieved, as he saw no chance now of renewing his intercourse with his father-in-law.[3] When Balmain married Sir Hudson Lowe's stepdaughter, Napoleon feared[4] that the Russian Commissioner would from henceforth approve his father-in-law in everything. His optimism caused him to make the strangest concessions. In 1820, Montholon, who was the Longwood ambassador, made a great deal of the Marquis de Montchenu, lent him books and newspapers and congratulated him on the birth of the Duc de Bordeaux.

"Why do they keep us here any longer?" he asked in conclusion, "there is only one thing that Napoleon now wishes and that is to spend the rest of his life as a private individual on a good estate. He would live on his own income. He quite understands that certain precautions would have to be taken, and he would think it only natural if he were treated as Ferdinand was at Valencay. He would be quite willing to give his word of honour."[5]

Napoleon even petitioned Louis XVIII with regard to his captivity and when nothing was done for him, he began to lose faith in sovereigns and to turn towards the people of the various nations. From the very beginning he had taken great interest in all popular questions and agitations. He counted on a revolution taking place in England, Prussia,[6] or

[1] It has been thought that Pozzo di Borgo's influence was evident in this. See this memorial in G. Firmin-Didot, *La Captivité de Sainte-Hélène* (Bibliography, 42), p. 293.

[2] *Rapport de Balmain*, Bibliography, 44, March 1st, 1819.

[3] Balmain's report of July 11th, 1818.

[4] "They consider this marriage for themselves," writes Gors, Montchenu's secretary, "like the marriage of the sun for the frogs" (Report of October 8th, 1819, *Affaires étrangères*, Vol. 1804 (*a*), p. 137, document 37).

[5] Firmin-Didot, *La Captivité de Sainte-Hélène*, p. 206. The conversations are in chapters V. and VI. It should be noticed that the conversation on p. 174, attributed by M. Firmin-Didot to the month of December, 1818, is really to be found in the report of November 7th, 1820.

[6] *Mémorial*, April 18th, 1816. Gourgaud, October 26th, 1815.

France.[1] In England, too, he was looking forward to the fall of the Tory Ministry.[2] Gradually, though, he saw that it was no use counting on the people of any nation. The Continent remained unmoved. France, evacuated by the Allies in 1818, did nothing for him. The House of Lords in England approved the conduct of the English Government, with regard to Napoleon, as set forth by Lord Bathurst,[3] and the English riots came to nothing.

Napoleon began to think now that he would probably end his days at St. Helena and, ever hopeful, he turned his attention to his son's prospects.

Ever since 1816 he had been calculating on the effect that his "Martyrdom" at St. Helena might have on European opinion and the benefit his son might get from it.

"If he lives," Napoleon used to say, "he will, thanks to my martyrdom, get back the crown."[4]

This idea gradually became clearer in his mind and took a definite form. "If Jesus Christ had not died on the cross, He would never have been worshipped as God,"[5] he would say, and then he would add: "If I die on the cross and my son lives all will be well with him."[6] In spite of everything, though, Napoleon never really gave up hope for himself.[7] On March 1st, 1821, a very despondent letter from Gourgaud annoyed him.[8] This proves that he did not even then despair, although his chief hopes were now centred in the reign of Napoleon II.

In 1820 he dictated to Montholon the Constitution he desired for his son's reign.[9] Then came his last illness, and Napoleon's one thought then was of the King of Rome. His Will and the codicils are all about him, and on the 17th of April, a fortnight before his death, he dictated to Montholon

[1] *Récits de la captivité*, II, 14. Gourgaud, February 15th, June 11th, September 25th, November 18th, 1817.

[2] Gourgaud, November 18th, 1819. Montchenu's report, May 16th, 1819 (*Affaires étrangères*, Vol. 1804 (*a*), p. 49, document 16).

[3] The news arrived at Longwood, May 27th, 1817.

[4] *Récits de la captivité*, I, 286.

[5] *Id.*, II, pp. 152, 156. Gourgaud, July 23rd, 1817.

[6] *Récits de la captivité*, II, p. 164.

[7] *Id.*, II, pp. 317, 409, 419.

[8] *Id.*, II, p. 484.

[9] *Id.*, II, p. 280.

his counsels to his son.[1] In this document the father and the realistic politician forgot all resentment for the martrydom endured, so anxious were they for that to be of some service to the heir. "My son must not avenge my death," says Napoleon, at this supreme moment, "he must take advantage of it."

Just as Napoleon had formerly had his own policy for influencing kings, so he had his policy now for influencing the nations in favour of himself and of his son. He had appealed to kings through their sentiments and their interests. When appealing to the nations he tried to influence public opinion by means of that great power, the Press, a power of which he had always made use both before and during the Empire. Whilst at St. Helena, Napoleon saw two means of winning and keeping his popularity: his conversations and his polemical works during his lifetime and his memoirs after his death.

It was necessary for him to refute the various works in which his intentions and his deeds had been called into question, the works in which he had been represented as a tyrant eager for bloodshed and war. He wanted to appear to the nations of Europe as the representative and the champion of those ideas which were the dearest to them, liberty, equality, nationality, &c. The importance of his memoirs for such a purpose will readily be understood. Written in a serious style, in an elevated and impersonal way, they would give utterance to the Emperor's principles and tell of his great deeds. There could then be special works for replying to calumnies and for explaining away all wrong ideas. It would be like fighting with the heavy cavalry and the light troops. Napoleon had, from the first, thought it of the greatest importance to convince and win over, by his own words, all those with whom he came into contact, either on the English boats or at St. Helena. Familiar conversation enabled him to comprehend those prejudices which made people hostile to him and to explain them away. His extreme simplicity and good nature surprised everyone agreeably, whilst his personal charm and

[1] *Récits de la captivité*, II, p. 517.

NAPOLEON AT THE GANGWAY OF THE BELLEROPHON IN PLYMOUTH SOUND, AUGUST 1815.

From the picture by Eastlake.

magnetism gave him great power. Proofs of all this are to be had in abundance in the various works which have been published relating to St. Helena.

On the *Bellerophon* and on the *Northumberland* he endeavoured to make those in authority like him by means of his affability, and his inferiors by his familiarity.[1] There, as everywhere else, those of the upper class were the most difficult to win over, whilst the soldiers and the sailors, more impressionable and less rigid, were soon favourable to him. Among those with whom he came into contact were Lord Lowther and Mr. Littleton, members of Parliament;[2] the principal inhabitants or officials of St. Helena; Colonel Wilks, former Governor of the island,[3] Commander Hamilton,[4] Dr. Warden, army surgeon on the *Northumberland*,[5] the officers of the 53rd regiment (who were entrusted with his guardianship),[6] and Admiral Malcolm, who commanded the cruising fleet in charge of the island.[7] He also made the acquaintance of persons of distinction staying for a short time at St. Helena, such as the ex-English Governor of Java,[8] and Lord Amherst, who was appointed Ambassador to China.[9] Napoleon tried his powers of persuasion on all these people, and he was quite aware of the charm of his own personality and of the influence he could obtain by his words.[10] He felt sure that if he could have gone to London and talked to the Ministers and to the Members of Parliament he could have persuaded them. "My logic would have won over men like Grey and Grenville,"[11] he said. With respect to his situation at St. Helena he used to say: "I can do as I like with the Governor's reputation. All that I say about him, about

[1] Maitland's account (Bibliography, 33 (*a*), pp. 73 and 248). Compare *Récits de la captivité*, I, 125; *Mémorial*, August 27th, 1815.

[2] See Bibliography, 43.

[3] *Id.*, 48. Compare *Mémorial*, April 20th, 1816; *Récits de la captivité*, I, p. 251.

[4] *Récits de la captivité*, I, p. 254.

[5] See Bibliography, 28.

[6] *Récits de la captivité*, II, p. 149. Gourgaud, July 14th, 1817.

[7] See Bibliography, p. 46.

[8] *Mémorial*, May 19th, 1816.

[9] *Récits de la captivité*, II, p. 135. Compare Bibliography, 45.

[10] See Lord Rosebery, *Napoleon, The Last Phase.*

[11] Gourgaud, January 11th, 1816.

his bad treatment and his idea of poisoning me, will be believed."[1]

On comparing this speech with what Napoleon said later on about his martyrdom being useful to his son, when we read the passages in which he confesses that his uncompromising attitude towards Sir Hudson Lowe was largely due to political reasons,[2] it seems as though he somewhat exaggerated his "martyrdom."

But these conversations and unwritten memoirs could not reach very many people. It was only natural, therefore, that the idea should occur to him to collect and publish them for the benefit of the public at large. Las Cases had thought of this from the very first and had taken notes of Napoleon's conversations, with the intention of publishing his Diary.[3]

Napoleon did not approve of this at first. Imbued as he was with classical ideas as regards the dignity of literary style and the majesty of history, he foresaw no practical results from such a publication.[4] Later on, when Warden's letters containing many of his conversations appeared in print, he appears to have changed his opinion. Second-rate though the work was, it had remarkable success, thanks to its familiar style and the details that were given. Napoleon began to realise what an important *rôle* such Memorials, or written conversations, might play, and that they would be more popular than serious memoirs of a more literary kind. Gourgaud objected to the abundance of detail in Warden's book.

"I cannot see anything extraordinary," he said, "in the fact that your Majesty should be seated on the sofa in this or that position."

"You may not see it," replied Napoleon, "but it is all this talk about a great man that interests people the most."[5]

[1] Gourgaud, December 21st, 1817.
[2] *Récits de la captivité*, II, 163.
[3] Las Cases was a man of ideas. He differed from Gourgaud and Montholon, who, at any rate at first, only seem to have thought of preserving for themselves and their family an exact account of this period in their life.
[4] *Mémorial*, September 7th, 1815.
[5] Gourgaud, June 20th, 1817.

When speaking to O'Meara about Warden he said: "People are curious to know the most trifling circumstances in the life of a man who has played a great part. They like to know what he eats and drinks and are more interested in such nonsense than in studying his good and bad qualities, but as the public is like this we must cater to it and tell it what it wants to be told."[1] Napoleon had not cared for the idea of Las Cases publishing his diary, but he encouraged O'Meara in a similar work.

"I suppose you will publish your book when you go to England," he said to him. "You can say that you heard me talk about many things and that you had many conversations with me. You will get a great deal of money and everyone will believe you."

When Napoleon replied to Warden in his *Letters from the Cape* he adopted a similar tone and, after this, other works of the same kind were issued from Longwood.[2]

Among the writings which represent, as it were, Napoleon's intercourse with the nations, there are two different series. The first series consists of the writings composed by him and compiled from his dictations. These are the Memoirs. Then there were the accounts of his conversations for which he was not personally responsible, but which he considered might be of some use on the whole. This series is known as the Memorials. It forms quite as important a part of Napoleon's historical work as the Memoirs.

It is necessary to examine both series with equal care, both as regards authenticity and method of composition, in order to find out just what Napoleon wanted the world to think of himself and of his work.

[1] *Napoléon en exil* (Bibliography, 20 (*a*), March 13th, 1817).
[2] See Bibliography, 10.

CHAPTER III

NAPOLEON'S DOCUMENTATION

When studying the historical works written by Napoleon at St. Helena the question naturally arises : What documents or notes had he at his disposal for them ? He certainly had an exceptionally good memory, but it is interesting to see what actual documents he possessed when compiling his *Mémoires* and his works treating of special historical subjects.

In the first place it was absolutely necessary for him to have exact details about the facts he was going to relate. Secondly it was advisable for him to know the state of public opinion in Europe at the time he was writing, in order to know how to write, and just the turn to give to his accounts. A double *documentation* was really necessary for this. He first required historical works, official documents about his own life and reign, and then newspapers and pamphlets indicating the tendencies of European opinion from 1815 to 1821.

I. *Books at St. Helena.*—On leaving France, Napoleon took with him a certain number of volumes which the Provisional Government had authorised him to select from the Rambouillet library on his journey from Malmaison to the island of Aix. He chose about four hundred books, but they consisted of literary works, chiefly tragedies and novels, for enlivening hours of weariness during his exile. This was a library for diversion and not for historical work.[1]

[1] *Récits de la captivité*, I, p. 34. *Souvenirs de Madame de Montholon* (Bibliography, 47), p. 82. *Mémorial*, November 6th, 1815.

NAPOLEON'S DOCUMENTATION

On the journey from England to St. Helena, Napoleon took advantage of the stop at Madeira to make out a list of books, which he asked the English Government to send him at his own expense.[1] He did not receive these works until June, 1816, so that he had to go through a period of privation, during which time his only resources for his work were "a poor account of the wars of the French in Italy,"[2] a collection of the *Annual Register*, lent to him by someone living in St. Helena,[3] in November, 1815, and a very valuable series given to him by Sir Hudson Lowe, in April, 1816. This consisted of the collection of the bulletins of the *Grande Armée*, the official documents of the Egyptian expedition and a few copies of the *Moniteur*.[4]

At the end of June, 1816, the books ordered at Madeira arrived.[5] Although Napoleon was not satisfied with them,[6] there were some very useful and almost indispensable sources of information among them, particularly "the long-awaited collection of *Moniteurs*," embracing the period of 1793—1807.

After the arrival of these works, with the exception of a few stray books and papers,[7] the exiles do not appear to have received anything else for a long time. During this period, Sir Hudson Lowe, in spite of the friction between him and Napoleon, seems to have been the only person who supplied the Longwood library with reading matter. Among other works he gave Napoleon the collection of the *Ambigu*, which was undoubtedly of great service to him.[8]

[1] *Napoléon en exil*, I, p. 7. [2] *Mémorial*, October 1st–3rd, 1815.

[3] *Mémorial*, November 6th, 1815. Gourgaud, *ibid.*

[4] *Récits de la captivité*, I, p. 262. *Mémorial*, June 13th, 1816. Gourgaud, April 26th, 1816.

[5] *Récits de la captivité*, I, pp. 315-316. *Mémorial*, June 22nd, 1816. Gourgaud, *ibid.* *Napoléon en exil*, June 23rd, 1816.

[6] See in the *Mémorial*, October 20th, 1816, and the *Récits de la captivité* (I, pp. 315–316), the reasons of this dissatisfaction. The works not paid for by Napoleon were taken back by the English Government at his death. See Bibliography, Nos. 98 and 101, and Lord Rosebery, *Napoleon, The Last Phase*, Chapter VII. The inventory of the works taken back by the English Government in 1821 will be found in *R.O.*, Vol. XXXII.

[7] Such for instance as Miot's work on *L'Expédition d'Égypte* (*Récits de la captivité*, II, p. 50); and a work by *Méhée de la Touche* (*Récits de la captivité*, I, p. 101).

[8] *Napoléon en exil*, March 4th, 1817.

In June, 1817, the first parcel of books arrived from Lord and Lady Holland, Napoleon's illustrious admirers in England. These books were not of much value to Napoleon for his writings,[1] but they were the first instalment of an important series sent to him by these friends. Nothing else arrived for at least six months, so that he had nothing to depend upon except the books and papers which had arrived in 1816, and those lent him by Sir Hudson Lowe.[2] He complained of this lack of books[3] and a list was made out of those he wanted.[4] This was probably at the beginning of 1818.

A more ample provision was sent to him during this year. About thirty volumes arrived in March, thanks to the English Ministry. These were, however, chiefly Liberal pamphlets of the epoch and were not of much service to anyone writing the history of the preceding years.[5] In September, a packing case full of books arrived addressed to O'Meara. They were from William Holmes, but he sent them in another name,[6] with the instructions that they were to be delivered at Longwood. The books were stopped on the way,[7] as O'Meara

[1] See Gourgaud, June 11th, 1817. Forsyth, work quoted, II, p. 306.

[2] About these books lent see the *Journal du Dr. Verling* (Bibliography, *Archives nationales*), September 21st, 1818: the Governor asks for the return of books lent which were perhaps useful: *Actes, ordonnances, décrets, manifestes tirés du Moniteur*, by Goldsmith, six vols.; works on the wars of Russia and Spain; the *Ambigu* of 1812, etc. See also B. M. 20,124, p. 337, a list of books lent and reclaimed December 4th, 1818: Jones's *War in the Peninsula*, *Official Documents on the invasion of Rome in* 1808, etc. This obliging conduct on the part of Sir Hudson Lowe should be noted.

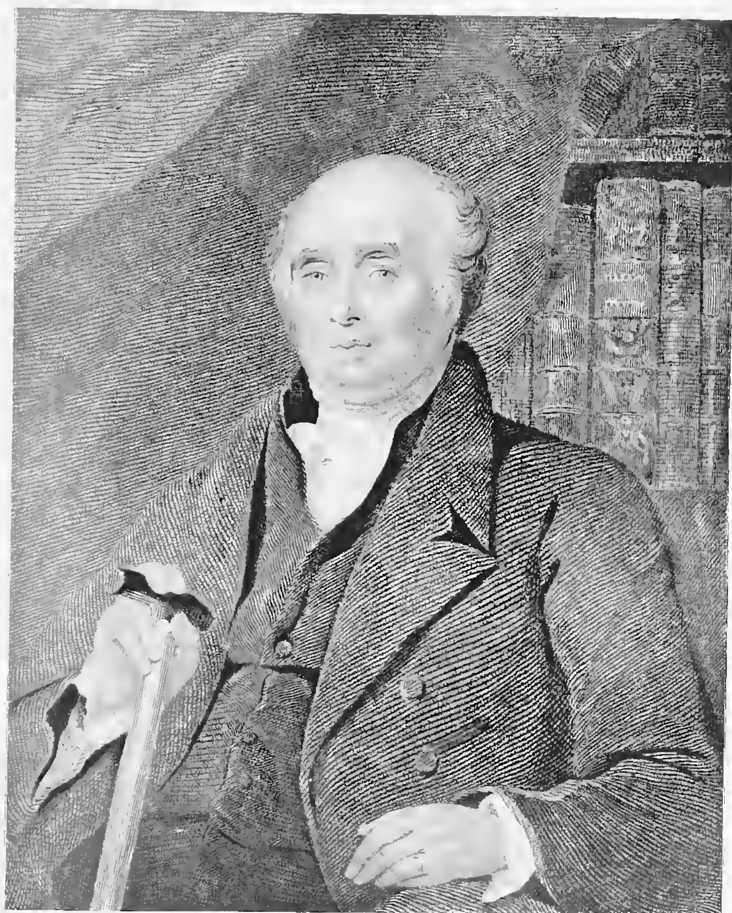
[3] *Napoléon en exil*, August 10th, 1817.

[4] The following reasons are what cause us to date the document thus, which is given as an appendix to the *Journal* of Gourgaud, II, p. 496. It could only have been made out in 1818, as a certain number of works which only appeared in 1817 are contained in it; and as it was among Gourgaud's papers and he left Longwood in February, 1818, its date is determined by that. This list is interesting: as general works the *Moniteur* (1807-1817), and the *Fastes des armées françaises* are asked for. The works treating of any particular epoch refer especially to the Consulate and to Italian affairs.

[5] See the list given in the letter from Bertrand to Las Cases, July 28th, 1818 (*Mémorial*, IV, pp. 578–579). Compare *Récits de la captivité*, II, p. 268; Forsyth, II, p. 428; *Napoléon en exil*, March 28th, 1818; B. M. 20,121, p. 309.

[6] See Chapter VIII. on the subject of William Holmes and his intercourse with O'Meara.

[7] Forsyth, III, p. 14–21.



LORD HOLLAND.

After a portrait by C. R. Leslie.

had already left, but they were finally handed over to Napoleon in December, 1818.[1]

On December 12th, more volumes from Lady Holland[2] arrived and some others sent by the English Government.[3] There were not many of these, but they were useful.

In 1819 there were two more packages sent, and on July 14th a series of works arrived at Longwood,[4] the sender of which is not mentioned. Among these were many books and pamphlets on that time, and *L'Histoire des batailles, sièges et combats des Français de 1792 à 1815*, a work which was useful for reference. In September, with Antommarchi and the priests, several cases of books arrived, but they were badly chosen, as, according to Antommarchi, there were scarcely any which were not duplicates of works already there.[5]

During the year 1820 a quantity of books arrived. On the 7th of January, 1820, William Holmes sent about seventy volumes.[6] These were very well selected and very interesting to Napoleon.[7] On the 7th of July it was Lady Holland's turn, and a large consignment arrived at Longwood from her containing many useful works.[8] On the 30th September the English Government, feeling itself in honour bound, sent Napoleon a quantity of pamphlets and a few collections of

[1] See the list B. M. 20,149, p. 50. There were twenty-eight volumes, among which : *Précis des évènements militaires*, by Mathieu Dumas, six vols. ; Thiébault, *Expédition en Portugal ; Victoires et conquètes des Français*, etc. ; *Considérations sur l'art de la guerre*, by Rogniat ; *Histoire de l'expédition de l'armée britannique en Égypte*, by Wilson.

[2] B.M. 20,149, p. 56.

[3] B.M. 20,149, p. 57. Among these, with the works already mentioned by Rogniat and Mathieu Dumas, were Odeleben, *Campagne de Saxe en 1813*, two vols. ; Vol. VIII of Jomini ; and Pradt, *Des colonies de l'Amérique*, etc.

[4] B.M. 20,127, p. 32.

[5] *Les derniers moments de Napoléon* (Bibliography, 25), I, 87, *sqq.*

[6] We have not been able to discover whether they started or arrived on the 7th of January.

[7] B.M. 20,204, p. 106. Note the *Correspondance de Bernadotte* (Bibliography, 68), and *L'Histoire de la Révolution de Saint-Domingue* (Bibliography, 71).

[8] B.M. 20,130, p. 190. *B.N.* 11, document 313. Among these works were *Biographies nouvelles des contemporains*, by Arnault ; *Guerre de la Vendée, Campagne de* 1815 (by Gourgaud ?). To be noted as curiosities : *Poésies de Madame Desbordes-Valmore*, and some works by Napoleon himself : *Les Mémoires historiques* (Campaign of 1815, published by O'Meara) and the *Documents particuliers sur Napoléon* (*Lettres du Cap*).

documents,[1] among which was *La Correspondance inédite, officielle et confidentielle de Napoléon Bonaparte.* On the 26th of December two hundred volumes from Lady Holland reached Longwood, but Napoleon scarcely did any more work.[2] Among these books there were novels, pamphlets, and poetry: *Le Pape*, by Joseph de Maistre, Lamartine's *Méditations*, and, still more interesting for Napoleon, the *Documents* published by his brother, Louis Bonaparte,[3] and the *Mémoires pour servir à l'Histoire de Charles XIV., Jean.*[4] The Longwood library was getting more complete just as the owner of it was about to disappear. There was an abundance of books at the commencement of 1821, and such was the irony of Fate that the consignments so generously sent were only in time now for Napoleon's tomb. He had one more proof of the inexhaustible kindness of Lady Holland, for fresh packages of books arrived from her on the 28th of February, and among other valuables works,[5] Polybius's History, which the exile had long desired.[6] Thanks to the munificence of Lord Bathurst, Napoleon, who was then very ill, received still another package of books on the 14th of March. He opened it during a lull in his pain.[7]

From all this it will be seen that until June, 1816, Napoleon had scarcely any documents for his historical works. From June, 1816, to 1818, he was only very poorly supplied, although he had some of the more indispensable books and papers. From the year 1818, his wealth increased rapidly,

[1] B.N. 11, document 305. As a curiosity the following should be noted, *Les Maximes et Pensées du prisonnier de Sainte-Hélène* (Bibliography, 51), an apocryphal work which must have amused the captive.

[2] The list given B.M. 20,131, p. 345 (books sent to Longwood at the end of December, 1820), that to be found *B.N.* 11, document 311 (date of arrival, December 26th, 1820), seems to be the one contained in the 13th *Addendum* of 1818 (B.N. 9). There is evidently a mistake, as Le Brun's *Marie Stuart* is given, the *Méditations*, and some newspapers dated up to July 4th, 1820.

[3] Comte de Saint-Leu, *Documents historiques et réflexions sur le gouvernement de la Hollande*, 3 vols. 8vo., Paris, Aillaud, 1820.

[4] See Bibliography, 72.

[5] See B.M. 20,150, p. 44, and 20,132, p. 192. Note: *Campagne d'Italie de 1813–1814*; *Correspondance de l'armée en Égypte*; *Vie de Hoche*; *Pièces d'Égypte*; *Campagnes de Souvarow*; *Histoire de Moreau.*

[6] See *Les derniers moments*, II, 20.

[7] *Récits de la captivité*, II, pp. 486—500. B.M. 20,132, p. 248.

so that by the time of his death he was about as well supplied with the necessary documents as anyone could have been at that epoch.

He had a collection of official newspapers and periodicals, of official documents, comprising bulletins, proclamations and decrees, together with various memoirs, pamphlets, works on strategy and military art and his own correspondence. To sum up briefly, he had all that anyone could have had in 1821 and in addition to this, his own recollections.

The next thing to consider is whether he possessed all this wealth of material in time.

II. *Newspapers and Pamphlets.*—He could not write without knowing something of the general state of things and of public opinion in Europe, otherwise there would have been a risk of offending the masses of the people whom he had always endeavoured to have with him. It was impossible for him to guess their sentiments and, on the strength of such guessing, win their approbation. It was therefore necessary for him to have plenty of newspapers, all the political literature of the times. His wealth in this respect increased at the same rate as that of his library.

Napoleon complained over and over again and his companions echoed his sentiments, that for a long time, until 1818 at least, he was reduced to a few numbers of the *Times*,[1] odd numbers, chosen specially by the Governor,[2] a few copies of the *Courrier*,[3] the *Observer*,[4] the *Gazette de France* and the *Quotidienne*.[5] This was not absolutely true, but it is a fact that until July, 1818, Longwood was poorly supplied with newspapers.

It is quite certain that the English Ministry and the Governor were determined not to allow all the news to reach Napoleon. Lord Bathurst declared in the House of Lords that "if Lord Holland thought that General Bonaparte ought to be supplied with all the newspapers he wished for, he, Lord Bathurst, did not agree with him."[6] Sir Hudson

[1] Tenth Letter from the Cape.
[2] See the letter from Montholon to Sir Hudson Lowe, August 23rd, 1816.
[3] *Napoléon en exil*, July 28th, 1819.
[4] *Id.*, March 28th, 1818, note.
[5] *Napoléon en exil*, August 26th, 1816.
[6] Forsyth, IV, p. 132.

Lowe evidently did not either[1] but there is no proof that the papers and pamphlets were often kept back. In two cases, though, there is evidence that Napoleon had cause for his complaints. In a letter, dated August 19th, 1817, Lord Bathurst approves the Governor for having kept back the "fiery writings of Cobbett," sent by Lord Holland.[2] Admiral Plampin wrote to Sir Hudson Lowe, on the 28th of June, 1819, to the effect that he had taken upon himself to stop some newspapers which contained "some infamous falsehoods."[3] There is no doubt, though, that if news was lacking for a long time, it was because nothing was sent to him and not because the papers sent were stopped. During three years (October, 1815—July, 1818), the newspapers he received were either from the Governor, Admiral Malcolm or O'Meara. No newspapers were received at St. Helena specially addressed to Napoleon, but, from the very first, Admiral Cockburn used to send his own newspapers regularly to Longwood.[4] Sometimes even he was polite enough to send them before he had read them himself. Sir Hudson Lowe, in spite of what Napoleon and O'Meara say, seems to have followed the Admiral's example and to have sent with the same regularity. What O'Meara states in his *Napoleon in exile* is contradicted in a letter written by him to the Governor. He speaks, in this letter, of the "regular series" of the *Times* sent by the latter.[5]

There was very little variety though in these papers and they were scarcely of a kind to interest Napoleon. Only the

[1] "The Governor . has never kept back one single newspaper of a regular series received by him, but he will not hesitate to do so, if he sees that it is necessary" (Forsyth, IV, p. 485).

[2] Forsyth, IV, p. 224.

[3] *B.N.* 10, document 268.

[4] *Récits de la captivité*, I, pp. 176, 181, 185, 202, 208, 216, 220, 222, 231, 239. Gourgaud, December 8th and 29th, 1815, April 9th–12th, 1816. *Napoléon en exil*, July 28th, 1816; *Mémorial*, December 29th, 1815, February 17th, March 9th–12th, April 9th, 1816.

[5] June 20th, 1817 (Forsyth, II, p. 288). For what Sir Hudson Lowe sent, see *Récits de la captivité*, I, pp. 282, 293, 295, 338, 352, 403, 409, 465; II, pp. 27, 50, 59, 62, 86, 91, 97, 101, 129, 130, 172, 215, 216, 220, 224, 405, 483, 538. Gourgaud, April 15th, May 22nd and 30th, June 18th, July 26th, September 30th, November 24th, 1816, January 24th, March 5th, May 21st, 26th and 30th, October 15th, 16th and 31st, 1817, February 3rd, 1818. *Napoléon en exil*, March 5th, 1817. *Mémorial*, May 24th and 30th, June 18th, July 25th, August 12th, October 8th, November 10th, 1816.

Times arrived regularly.[1] The English newspapers that he preferred, such as the *Morning Chronicle*, and the French newspapers, which were still more interesting to him, had only a few subscribers in St. Helena, as most of the residents were English officials who were supposed to be Conservatives.[2]

Admiral Malcolm endeavoured to keep up a friendly intercourse with Napoleon and, as a means to that end, he either took him his newspapers or gave them to O'Meara for him. As O'Meara frequently took him papers on his own account it is often difficult to trace from whom these really were.[3] It is very evident though that O'Meara frequently acted as intermediary.[4] All this incurred Sir Hudson Lowe's displeasure [5] and he was still more indignant when he discovered that O'Meara was in the habit of taking the exiles newspapers which he had specially bought for them.[6]

In spite of all this, Napoleon really knew very little about European affairs until about the middle of the year 1818. The only paper he had received regularly was the *Times*. He had only seen odd numbers of the others.[7] A few of the various pamphlets which had appeared had reached him, but from these it was impossible to get a true idea of the state of Europe. In consequence of all this he continued to nourish some very wrong impressions and his hopes were doomed to bitter disappointment.

From the middle of 1818 things began to improve. In March, 1817, Sir Hudson Lowe informed Lord Bathurst of

[1] Letter from Sir Hudson Lowe to Lord Bathurst of March, 1817, (Forsyth, II, pp. 231-232).

[2] Admiral Cockburn's sending of French newspapers is noted (*Récits de la captivité*, I, p. 216), of the *Morning Chronicle* (*id.*, I, p. 239), and again of French newspapers (*id.*, pp. 409, 465 ; II, p. 129). Compare Gourgaud, April 9th, 1816. Las Cases speaks definitely about the French papers : they were the *Débats* (May 29th, August 12th, 1816).

[3] See *Récits de la captivité*, I, p. 469 ; II, pp. 60, 78. *Napoléon en exil*, May 16th, December 27th, 1816, January 5th, February 28th, March 23rd, April 23rd, June 7th, 10th, and 12th, September 1st, 1817. Gourgaud, January 5th and 30th, May 24th, June 18th, November 12th, 1817.

[4] *Récits de la captivité*, I, p. 439. Gourgaud, January 9th, 1818. Forsyth, II, pp. 311-312.

[5] See his letter to Lord Bathurst of January 20th, 1818 (Forsyth, IV, 350).

[6] *Napoléon en exil*, May 23rd, 1817.

[7] See O'Meara's letter to the Governor (Forsyth, II, pp. 287-288).

the prisoner's request to be allowed to take in the *Morning Chronicle* and some French papers.[1] No notice was taken of the request until later on when Las Cases returned to Europe. He brought the matter then before the English Ministry,[2] and from July, 1818, after several difficulties,[3] Napoleon received the *Morning Chronicle* regularly and it seems as though he also received the *Journal du Commerce*.[4] From that time forth the Liberal point of view in Europe could not be concealed from him.

He not only received newspapers now, but various pamphlets and political periodicals, as well as more books.

The pamphlets and books were signed by some of the best known names: Chateaubriand,[5] Benjamin Constant,[6] Grégoire,[7] de Maistre.[8] There were pamphleteers, too, of second and third rank. Amongst the best known periodicals were the *Minerve français*,[9] the *Bibliothèque historique*,[10] the *Lettres normandes*,[11] *L'Ermite de la Chaussée d'Antin* and its various sequels.[12] Then there were some of the papers: the *Constitutionnel*, the *Drapeau blanc*, the *Quotidienne*, and the *Vrai Liberal*, which Napoleon very generously lent to the guardian of his captivity, the Marquis de Montchenu.[13]

From 1815 then to 1818 there was an almost absolute

[1] Forsyth, II, pp. 231–232. [2] *Mémorial*, IV, p. 599.

[3] See *Mémorial*, IV, p. 574.

[4] Forsyth, IV, 486. Balmain, report of December 23rd, 1818.

[5] *Mélanges de politique*, two volumes, which arrived on the 14th of July, 1819; *Le Duc de Berry*, which arrived at the end of 1820.

[6] *Des élections en* 1818, arrived July 14th, 1819.

[7] *Première et deuxième lettres*, arrived July 7th, 1820.

[8] *Du Pape*, arrived at the end of 1820.

[9] No. 4 arrived July 14th, 1819, Nos. 6 and 8 were sent from London, January 7th, 1821, and those of April to July, 1819; others arrived (there is no mention of the numbers) July 7th, 1820, and two numbers in December; there are also some in the consignment which arrived on September 30th of the same year.

[10] Nos. 6–11 were sent from London on the 7th of January, 1820; others arrived July 7th and September 30th; fourteen numbers reached Longwood, December 26th, 1820.

[11] Fifteen numbers arrived March 12th, 1818; the numbers from April to July, 1819, were sent from London, January 7th, 1820; there were some in the consignment of March 14th, 1821.

[12] *L'Ermite de la Chaussée d'Antin* and *L'Ermite de la Guyane* arrived March 12th, 1818; *L'Ermite de Londres*, Vol. I, and *L'Ermite en Provence*, December 26th, 1820.

[13] See report of November 7th, 1820 (*Affaires étrangères*, 1805, p. 48, Document 79).

dearth of newspapers, pamphlets and books. From 1818 to 1821 there was a comparatively good supply, so that during this latter period Napoleon was able to get a sufficiently clear idea of what was going on in Europe. This important information will be of use later on when studying Napoleon's method of writing his historical works.

CHAPTER IV

NAPOLEON'S METHOD OF WORK

From the accounts given by the writers of the Memorials, it is easy to see Napoleon's method of writing his memoirs. He was the chief director himself, but he had collaborators who were indispensable to him. Las Cases, Montholon, Gourgaud, and Bertrand prepared the matter for him and he then dictated to them. The following plan was almost invariably carried out for this work.

Napoleon mentioned to one of his companions the period on which he wanted to write and commissioned him to collect the facts, figures, dates, &c., that is the matter to which he would give the form. Sometimes he would just ask for notes to be taken about a certain epoch from the *Annual Register*,[1] from the *Moniteur*,[2] from articles in English newspapers,[3] from Strabo and other old writers [4] and when it was a question of the Egyptian campaign, from the bulletins of the *Grande Armée*.[5] Sometimes he conducted this research work himself, had the notes taken, or English articles translated under his supervision.[6] Sometimes, having recourse to those who were well up in certain subjects, he would give them problems to solve on questions of inundations, fortifications,[7]

[1] Gourgaud, November 7th and 15th, 1815, December 8th, 1816, March 5th, 1817, August 23rd, 1817. *Récits de la captivité*, II, p. 171.
[2] Gourgaud, July 4th, August 2nd and 9th, 1817.
[3] *Id.*, January 25th, 1817.
[4] *Mémorial*, September 22nd, 1816.
[5] Gourgaud, April 14th, 1817.
[6] *Récits de la captivité*, II, p. 80. *Mémorial*, September 17th–19th and 25th–27th, 1816. Gourgaud, November 8th, 1816, February 1st, 1817.
[7] *Récits de la captivité*, I, p. 347; II, p. 165. Gourgaud, April 18th, 25th, 27th, and 28th, May 6th and 7th, and June 23rd and 25th, 1817.

or maps to make for the accounts of campaigns.[1] He generally asked Gourgaud for this kind of help. Occasionally he would dictate notes for the guidance of his collaborators in the collection of facts. These notes indicate the volumes or papers to be looked through, give just the subject to be studied, determine its principal divisions, its structure and sometimes the tone and style to be adopted. Two of these notes exist. The first one was dictated to Las Cases for the researches to be made with regard to the Consulate and the beginning of the Empire. It indicates the general lines of the subject to be treated, divides it into chapters and states clearly the work to be done. The *Moniteurs* are to be carefully gone through and "all the events given, with page and date, without distinction of matter."[2] This seems to mean that Las Cases was to look through every number, note down all the facts without exception and classify them under different headings which Napoleon himself dictates. The idea was to separate the facts, which were all mixed up chronologically, but which really were connected with various series of events. Napoleon's method was very simple and very practical.

The second note is one dictated to Gourgaud for his guidance in collecting the matter required by Napoleon for his criticisms of Lord Bathurst's Speech.[3] This note was evidently dictated very quickly as it is incorrect and somewhat obscure.

"I should like Gourgaud," says Napoleon, "to read Bathurst's speech and to classify the points in three categories: First.—Bathurst's replies to Montholon[4] when he declared 'It is not true.'

"Secondly.—His assertions that no reply had been received, when the documents are there to prove the contrary.[5]

[1] *Récits de la captivité*, I, pp. 333, 376; II, p. 127. Gourgaud, May 10th, 1817.

[2] *Mémorial*, September 28th, 1816.

[3] R.O., Vol. XXI, Letter from Sir Hudson Lowe to Lord Bathurst, March 30th, 1819 (No. 207).

[4] Montholon's letter to Sir Hudson Lowe, August 23rd, 1816. Lord Bathurst, in his speeches, replied by the phrase:—"It is not true"—to each of Montholon's assertions.

[5] Rather: no answer has been sent, that is: *Napoleon* had not replied to certain proposals of the Government (See Forsyth, IV, p. 172).

"Thirdly.—Bathurst's assertions, which are false and irritating.

"Fourthly.—Those that are mere slanders.

"There are about twenty questions on which he is always wrong. The *résumé* can therefore be divided into three parts:

"First.—The *résumé* of the bill[1]—the regulations—discussion of the four restrictions made by the Government.

"Secondly.—His repudiation of the repudiation made for false statements.[2]

"Thirdly.—Slanderous statements. Contemptuous tone. Impropriety of putting the bill through after the arrival at St. Helena. The reply to be in two parts. Sum up and recapitulate the above. The second part to consist of general considerations to prove that everything is tending towards the end in view, but only vaguely expressed, of killing the Emperor.[3] Finally there must be a comparison with Hannibal and this will complete the three parts of the harangue."

After thus letting his companions collect the facts for his work Napoleon contributed his share to it.

II.—Both Las Cases and Montholon speak of this second phase in his method of composition. When, after reading the notes, he was thoroughly imbued with his subject, Napoleon would dictate to one of his companions a chapter or a fragment of a chapter. This was only the first rough draft, "recollections without any kind of classification."[4]

Napoleon dictated very quickly. His collaborator took down the notes as well as he could by some kind of shorthand.

[1] The bill of April 11th, 1816, settling about the captivity of Napoleon.

[2] See Forsyth, IV, pp.151–180. This phrase, which is not very clear, seems to correspond to the detailed examination of Lord Bathurst's assertions: this part is a series of contradictions given to Lord Bathurst, who, in his speeches, had given the lie to what Napoleon complained of. It must, therefore, be understood: contradiction given (by Napoleon) to a contradiction Lord Bathurst had given to Napoleon, etc.

[3] The phrase, though badly turned, is clear enough. Note the rapidity of the dictation. Two parts are mentioned, but no change is made when a third idea occurs.

[4] *Récits de la captivité*, II, pp. 9–10.

EARL BATHURST.

After a portrait by T. Phillips.

He then copied them out clearly and the following day Napoleon would dictate a second version from them.

This second version was riper, "fuller, more positive, better arranged and sometimes differed materially from the first one."[1]

The collaborator copied this out and brought it to Napoleon the following day. This was the stage when he put his own work into "correcting it now with his own hand, frequently in pencil."[2] The chief part of the work was now done, but it was frequently read over again and revised.

This general method of composition took another turn when Napoleon wrote notes about the various works which appeared. His way of proceeding then was to scrawl short sentences or merely exclamations on the margin of the book. Examples of this could be seen in his notes on *L'Ambassade de Varsovie*,[3] on *L'Histoire de Charles XIV Jean*,[4] and in the first version of his notes on *Fleury de Chaboulon*.[5] After his first notes pencilled on the work, Napoleon would dictate further developments, but always in the form of notes. It is thanks to this system that there are sometimes two versions of his notes on the same subject. In 1867, his notes on *Fleury de Chaboulon* were published from the original. A fuller and more detailed version of these notes had already been published in the 1822 edition of his *Mémoires*. The latter notes were from his manuscript in its second stage. In 1820, the notes on the manuscript of St. Helena were published by O'Meara and Gourgaud.[6] The edition of 1823 gives more details, so that this is undoubtedly the second version. Finally, the notes on Lloyd,[7] published in 1900,[8] are only short, whilst in those which appeared in the 1870 edition of the *Mémoires*, there are more details given.[9]

[1] *Mémorial*, October 1st–3rd, 1815. [2] *Récits de la captivité*, II, pp. 9–10.
[3] See Bibliography, 63. [4] *Id.* 72.
[5] *Id.* 69.—The work, annotated by Napoleon's hand, is in the Sens Museum; the notes were published (first version) in the *Commentaires de Napoléon* (Bibliography, 4).
[6] Bibliography, 12 and 12 (*a*). [7] *Id.*, 74. [8] *Id.*, 18.
[9] These "second versions," always longer than the first ones, appeared doubtful to Quérard (*Supercheries littéraires dévoilées*, II, p. 2230): he fancied he saw in these alterations the hand of the publisher wanting to lengthen out the copy. One fact would tend to prove that he was right,

As Napoleon had not always been so well supplied with the necessary documents for writing his historical works, it was only natural that when further material arrived at St. Helena, he should have wished either to re-commence his writings or to complete them.

The *first versions* then were obtained by means of the research and the dictations already described, and the *second versions* by the same method, but with more ample material.

I. Two versions exist of the *Histoire de la campagne d'Italie* (1796–1797), preceded by the *Siège de Toulon*, *Treize Vendémiaire* and *Operations de l'armée d'Italie* (1792–1795). Napoleon began to dictate this on the 9th of September, 1815, when on the *Northumberland*. He had nothing with him except "a very poor book on the wars of the French in Italy."[1] He continued this work, with the same lack of

namely, that in nearly all the additions made to the primitive notes on the *Manuscrit de Sainte-Hélène* there are extracts borrowed, word for word, from the *Lettres du Cap*. The publishers then wanted, perhaps, to get these *Lettres du Cap* by fragments into Napoleon's works, as they could not at that time own them to be their master's. But the utilising of these *Lettres du Cap* may have been ordered by Napoleon, and two facts defend the probity of the publishers against Quérard's suspicions, which are often exaggerated: first, that the notes published in 1822 on Fleury de Chaboulon were sufficiently strong against the Bourbons for the publishers to have been obliged to cut them down considerably. This fact is very evident. The question is, would they have lengthened out these notes to curtail them later on? Secondly, the notes on Lloyd were lengthened out like the others and the editors had no interest in doing this, as they did not publish them. The first publication was in 1870. Proceeding by analogy, we may conclude that these alterations and additions were Napoleon's work, as all this agrees perfectly well with what we have just seen of his method of work.

We believe we have also found a *first version* of the *Lettres du Cap*. In the first note-book, communicated by M. du Couëdic de Kergoualer (See Bibliography), are *Notes on the work*: *Letters written from Saint Helena, printed in London in* 1816, with the preamble: "A pamphlet on Napoleon was published in England in 1816. It went through a large number of editions and was translated into several languages. In several countries, where the circulation of it was stopped by the police, it got in in manuscript. Many of the things are true, but there are many important things that the author has distorted. It is evident that he neither understood French nor Italian. We will sum up in eleven notes his most important accounts." These eleven notes contain the essentials of the *Lettres du Cap* and in the same order. It is probable that we have here a first sketch of this, that Napoleon, later on, gave a literary framework to it, and that he endeavoured to make it agreeable reading by the addition of some anecdotes.

[1] *Mémorial*, September 7th–9th, October 1st–3rd, 1815.

necessary documents for reference, during his voyage on the *Northumberland*,[1] and afterwards at "The Briars."[2] He dictated it to one or other of his companions, but chiefly to Las Cases. In November, 1815, it was corrected, thanks to information obtained from the *Annual Register*.[3] In April, 1816, Sir Hudson Lowe lent Napoleon the *Bulletins*, and in June the *Moniteurs* arrived. These papers were useful for correcting certain details, but the whole work was not re-written then.[4] In October, 1816, Napoleon burnt all the rough drafts and only kept two complete copies of it.[5] The first version, therefore, was quite finished when Las Cases left St. Helena. Las Cases was arrested on the 25th of November and his papers seized. Among them were some pages of these two copies. Napoleon claimed them, but as Las Cases asked to be allowed to keep a few chapters, Napoleon gave his consent. These chapters were published in the *Recueil de pièces authentiques sur le captif de Saint Hélène*,[6] and were afterwards inserted in the *Mémorial*.[7] The account of the siege of Toulon, given by Gourgaud in the first volume of the *Mémoires*, in 1822, also seems to have been taken from this version.

When Napoleon had fresh sources of information at his command, he began the work all over again and dictated it this time to Montholon. This was probably during the years 1818 and 1819.[8] It is this form of it which is to be found in the later editions of the *Mémoires*.

II. Two versions also exist of the Egyptian campaign. Napoleon commenced this at "The Briars," corrected it with the help of the *Annual Register*, a few *Moniteurs*, the

[1] *Mémorial*, September 19th-22nd, October 1st–3rd, 1815. Gourgaud, October 4th, 7th, 9th, 1815.

[2] *Récits de la captivité*, I, p. 162. Gourgaud, October 28th, 1815. *Mémorial*, October 25th–27th, October 28th–31st, November 1st–4th, 6th, 1815, etc.

[3] *Récits de la captivité*, I, pp. 176, 231, 232, 236. Gourgaud, February 27th, 1816. *Mémorial*, November 6th, 1815.

[4] *Id.*, I, pp. 311, 337, 349, 350, 351, 353, 358, 399, 407. Gourgaud, August 9th and 11th, 1816. *Mémorial*, June 4th and 26th, August 7th, 8th, 9th, 14th, 16th, September 22nd and 24th, 1816.

[5] *Mémorial*, October 5th, 1816.

[6] See Bibliography, 5.

[7] I, pp. 443-490; II, pp. 182-244, 380-462, and a few more fragments.

[8] *Récits de la captivité*, II, p. 266.

[9] *Id.*, I, p. 162.

Bulletins,[1] and then completed it after receiving the works of Strabo and Herodotus in June, 1816.[2]

Las Cases had taken away with him some chapters of the Italian campaign, and Gourgaud, in 1818, took away some chapters of the Egyptian campaign and published them in 1822, in the *Mémoires*.[3]

After Gourgaud's departure, Napoleon was better supplied with documents for this work, and he therefore began it all over again and dictated it to Montholon during the year 1819.[4] This new version was published by General Bertrand in 1847.

III. The same thing occurs with the history of the Waterloo campaign. The recollection of this battle haunted Napoleon, and he began an account of it on the 6th of October, 1815, when he was on board the *Northumberland*.[5] He went on with it and then began it again when fresh material arrived,[6] but was never satisfied with it, as his mind absolutely refused to understand the causes of his defeat. When Gourgaud left St. Helena, he took with him the rough copy of this campaign in its latest version and published it in 1818.[7] In June, 1820, Napoleon began this work again, and re-wrote it completely.[8] This version was sent to O'Meara in England, and he had it published in London, Paris, and Philadelphia.[9]

[1] *Id.*, I, pp. 174, 207, 210, 213, 214, 224, 262, 277, 294. Gourgaud, November 30th, December 12th and 15th, 1815, January 10th, 15th, 16th, 24th, 25th, 29th, 31st, February 1st, 2nd, 17th, 20th, 1816.

[2] *Récits de la captivité*, I, pp. 299, 333, 376; II, pp. 50, 96. Gourgaud, July 22nd, August 1st and 29th, 1816, April 25th, May 6th and 8th, June 23rd and 25th, July 5th, August 22nd, 1817. *Mémorial*, 17th, 18th, 19th, 22nd, 25th, September 27th, 1816.

[3] See the list of his papers on his departure from St. Helena, R.O. 14.

[4] *Récits de la captivité*, II, p. 7.

[5] *Id.*, pp. 145–146.

[6] *Id.*, I, pp. 264, 265, 270; II, pp. 86, 96, 105. *Mémorial*, August 26th, 1816. Gourgaud, April 24th, 27th, May 9th, 11th, 19th, June 12th and 16th, 1816, March 4th, 13th, 30th, May 15th and 20th, and June 3rd, 1817.

[7] See Bibliography, 7.

[8] *Récits de la captivité*, II, pp. 404–405.

[9] Bibliography 8.—One reason makes it seems probable that the date given by Montholon is inexact and that the re-writing of it should be dated 1819. The letters from O'Meara to Madame de Montholon (communicated by M. le Vicomte du Couëdic de Kergoualer, see Bibliography) speak, in February and March, 1820, of negotiations with the publisher Phillipps for the publication of a work, the title of which is not given, but which has every likelihood of being the second version of the *Campagne de 1815*. Phillipps offered four thousand pounds for it; another publisher would not conclude "unless the name of the great

It is this version which is given later on in the editions of the *Mémoires*.

The comparison of these different versions is extremely interesting, as Napoleon's method of working is very evident in them.

The alterations made are frequently very slight ones. In several chapters of the Italian campaign, the version by Las Cases and the one by Montholon are almost word for word alike.[1] In certain chapters of the Egyptian campaign there is scarcely any difference between the version by Gourgaud and the one by Bertrand.[2] In some parts of the account of Waterloo, Gourgaud's version is very much alike that published by O'Meara.[3] There are two differences, though, which greatly change the tone of the account.

The first difference is that the second version, thanks to a better supply of the necessary documents, is more exact. The figures are given more correctly[4] and more in detail.[5] Even in the account itself extracts are given from official documents. It is as though the author wishes to sink his own personality and let the documents speak for themselves.[6] A passage in the chapter on Aboukir is curious in this respect. In the first version,[7] Napoleon speaks of Brueys and criticises his conduct. In the second version,[8] the same criticisms are there, but are given as being contained in the despatches sent to Brueys by Bonaparte in Egypt. It is no longer Napoleon criticising in 1819, but the General-in-Chief in 1798. In the chapter on Ligny, the two versions of the 1815 campaign should be read. The change of tone here is striking. In the former, Napoleon dwells on Ney's

personage is formally affixed to it as author." Any doubt is scarcely possible, particularly as the second version of the *Campagne de 1815* did appear published by Phillipps. Now it is probable that O'Meara would not have negotiated the sale of this work without having it, or at least without knowing that it was ready. This takes us back, then, probably to 1819, for the re-writing of it (perhaps to 1818. See Chapter VIII).

[1] *Treize Vendémiaire, Montenotte, Castiglione, Rivoli.*

[2] *Les Pyramides.*

[3] *État militaire de la France, Plan de campagne, Passage de la Sambre.*

[4] See Castiglione, Paragraph VIII of Montholon's version ;—Rivoli, II and X ;—Tagliamento, VII.

[5] See *Castiglione,* VII.

[6] *Paris,* I ; *Aboukir,* II and III.

[7] Paragraphs IV–VII.

[8] Paragraphs II, III.

mistakes, discusses them and argues. In the second version, he merely exposes the facts and the reader is left to draw his own conclusions.[1]

The general tone of the second version is considerably modified. In the first one Napoleon is more familiar. He sometimes speaks in the first person plural. He says, for instance: "We fought, ... we suffered a great deal, ... &c." In the second version this *we* never appears. In its place are the words: "the army fought, the army suffered a great deal." He speaks of himself as "Napoleon" in the first version and in the second one as "the General-in-Chief." Another significant detail is that in the first version the soldiers address him with the familiar *thou*, in true Republican fashion. In the second version this familiarity has disappeared and the soldiers say *you* to their General. This modification is not due to silly vanity on the part of the narrator. In his first account he was simply dictating his recollections, but in his second one he endeavours to rise to the dignity and impersonality of history.

There are other proofs of the author's wish to sink his own personality. The result of this is that many of his most interesting observations are omitted in the second version. Among these are his remarks on the Constitution of the year III.[2] on maritime war,[3] on Islamism and Christianity,[4] and on the customs of the Egyptians.[5] The reason for the omission of these passages was, no doubt, that as they were not directly connected with the subject related, they suggested too clearly the idea of Napoleon at St. Helena meditating on his past life. The student of history merely want facts and not Napoleon's ideas when in exile.

[1] It is also worthy of note that in the *Observations sur la campagne de 1815*, Napoleon, in the first version, is as it were dazed, crushed by his defeat. He only thinks of justifying himself, of showing that he was not responsible, that the mistakes were not his. In the second version he gives the edict, judges and condemns Ney, Grouchy, Wellington. He is himself again, and once more takes the tone of master.

[2] *Treize Vendémiaire.* [3] *Aboukir.*

[4] *Campagne d'Égypte, Religion.* These reflections take up fourteen pages in Gourgaud's edition, and also six in Bertrand's.

[5] The chapter entitled *Usages* in Gourgaud's edition has twenty-two pages. The corresponding passages in the chapter on *Religion* in Bertrand's volume only take up eight pages.

There are some differences, though, in these two versions which are more serious. In his first account of the Italian campaign Napoleon gave his recollections in the simplest way possible. He took the military events and the diplomatic facts in chronological order, usually giving some battle as the theme of a chapter and, either at the beginning or the end of the chapter, an account of contemporary negotiations. In the second version he pays more attention to the logical order of history than to the chronological order of his recollections. He therefore makes separate chapters of the diplomatic events and treats these more fully.[1]

The account of Joubert's campaign is mentioned twice, but only briefly in the first version,[2] whilst in the second one it is treated once, but with details.[3] The author's desire to transform his *Mémoires* into a trustworthy history is very evident in all this. Certain parts of these *Mémoires* are entirely remodelled. The *Siège de Toulon*, *Venise*, *Léoben* and the greater part of the *Campagne d'Égypte* come under this category. In the second version there are more exact details and a longer account given. The chapter on Toulon takes 55 pages instead of 31; that on Léoben 23 pages instead of 14; the description of Egypt takes up 92 pages instead of 27; and the account of the siege of Acre 18 instead of 10. Not only are the accounts longer, but the dates are more correct, the sequence of events more carefully observed and consequently there is more order and clearness in the general plan.

As an instance of this, when Napoleon gives an account of the siege of Toulon in the first version, he tells of the *sortie* of the English on the 30th of November, 1793. This reminds him of General Doppet's mistake, through which the siege was a failure. The mistake dated from the 11th of November and consequently should have been mentioned before the account of the siege was given. In this version, Napoleon's recollections were evidently jotted down haphazard, just as they came to his mind. Many striking

[1] *Négociations en* 1796, *Négociations en* 1797.—See elements of these chapters in the first version, Arcole, I; *Tagliamento*, I.

[2] *Tagliamento*, IX, and Léoben, VI.

[3] *Tagliamento*, VII.

episodes are given, but without any sequel. In the first version about Léoben a whole medley of facts is given without dates. The second version brings order into the account and makes a chapter of French history out of a series of personal recollections.

In the account of the Italian and the Egyptian campaigns the same modifications are to be seen. In the first version each chapter seems to stand alone as though intended to suffice for itself. In the second version a few phrases, by way of introduction and conclusion, give the chapter its place in the account and make it a part of a whole skilfully linked together. Napoleon was gradually making headway and his writings were becoming more methodical and more clear.

This system in his work seems worthy of Napoleon, with his love of accuracy and order. The careful abstract made from all sources, the continually repeated work of digestion and of remodelling, in order to arrive at more clearness, more precision, and more impersonality, was all carried out in a remarkable way. As Napoleon, during the latter part of his exile, was well supplied with information about the various subjects he treated, there is no doubt that the opinions he expressed in his last writings were his final ones. What he then said was what he meant to say and what he wished the world to think of his work.

A great proof of this is that he did not wish the first versions of his works to be published. He was very unwilling to let Las Cases take away the few chapters for which he begged. When Gourgaud left St. Helena, Napoleon asked him for all the rough copies of his manuscript that he possessed.[1]

He did not want anything to exist, except the final version of his works, as he considered the first rough drafts too incomplete. These rough drafts are nevertheless a proof of the conscientiousness with which the whole work was carried out. They prove, too, that the *Mémoires* represent the clear, well informed mind of Napoleon.

[1] Gourgaud, February 5th, 1818.—See the exaggeration and distortion of this wish of Napoleon's in Lord Holland's *Souvenirs diplomatiques*, Paris, Rouvier, 1851, p. 275.

CHAPTER V

THE WORKS AND THEIR DATES

In order to have any idea of Napoleon's work whilst at St. Helena, one must study a list of his writings with, as nearly as possible, the date of composition.

His writings may be divided into three categories: *Mémoires*; political works on special subjects; works relating to military art or to the history of war outside his own reign.

I.—*Mémoires.* In writing these Napoleon began with the two periods of 1793–1801 and of 1815. He left the intervening period almost untouched. The first period may be divided again into four parts: (*a*) The *Campagne d'Italie* (1796–1797), preceded by the *Siège de Toulon* and the *Treize Vendémiaire.* There are two versions of a certain number of these chapters. The first version was written by Las Cases in 1815 and 1816, and the second by Montholon, probably in 1818 and 1819.[1]

(*b*) *Campagne d'Egypte*, of which there are also two versions. The first one was chiefly written by Gourgaud, from 1815 to 1818, and was published in the *Mémoires* in 1822. The second version was written by Montholon in 1819 and published by Bertrand in 1847.[2] (*c*) The epoch of the *Directoire*, which is a kind of preface and justification of the 18th of Brumaire. It includes the *Situation de l'Europe en 1798*; *Politique extérieure et intérieure du Directoire*, and *Vendée.* The *Evénements de 1798 et 1799*, published in the *Campagne d'Egypte*, should also be included in this

[1] See, in Appendix III, the comparative table of the two versions, from which it is easy to see the parts that are lacking in the former of the two.

[2] See Appendix III.

category. In the Memorials there is very little information given about the writings of this part of the *Mémoires.* Napoleon seems to have been at work on it towards the end of 1817 and at the commencement of 1818.[1] Probably the greater part of it was written after the departure of Gourgaud and with the collaboration of Montholon, as these chapters were published by him in the 1822 edition of the *Mémoires.* (*d*) The *18th of Brumaire* and the first days of the *Consulat* (*Consulats provisiores ; Gênes ; Marengo, Ulm, Moreau ; Diplomatie ; Guerre ; Neutres*). This part of the *Mémoires* was commenced as early as 1815.[2] More time and care were expended on it than on any other period. Gourgaud worked at it until his departure.[3] He took away with him a few pages of the rough copy about the English expedition to Copenhagen.[4] The rest of the manuscript remained at St. Helena and was modified at different times.[5] It is evident that Napoleon would have liked to treat this part of his *Mémoires* more fully, as he went back several times to the negotiations of Amiens.[6] He never thoroughly revised it though, and Gourgaud published the chapters that were finished in the 1822 edition.

The portion devoted to the close of Napoleon's political life forms two books: the Island of Elba and the Hundred Days, and the Waterloo Campaign.

(1) *L'île d'Elbe et les Cent Jours.* Napoleon worked at this, chiefly with Montholon, during the whole time of his captivity.[7] Probably for political reasons, this portion of the *Mémoires* was not published in the 1822 nor the 1830 edition. It did not appear in print until 1870.

[1] *Récits de la captivité*, II, p. 238. Gourgaud, December 19th, 1817; January 19th, 1818.

[2] Gourgaud, October 30th and 31st, November 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 6th, 7th, 1815. *Mémorial*, November 14th, 1815.

[3] *Récits de la captivité*, I, pp. 200, 214, 238, 239, 294, 321, 325, 326, 351, 353, 396, 438 ; II, pp. 51, 61, 62. Gourgaud, February 1st, December 25th, 1817. *Mémorial*, June 4th, 1816.

[4] R.O., Vol. XIV, Major Gorrequer's report, February 16th, 1818.

[5] *Récits de la captivité*, September, 1819.

[6] *Id.*, I, pp. 201, 294.

[7] *Id.*, I, pp. 209, 220, 298, 319, 403 ; II, pp. 83, 186, 194, 200, 239, 316. Las Cases, February 25th–28th, 1816. Gourgaud, June 9th, 1816, September 12th, 19th, 1817.

(2) Waterloo. This campaign seems to have haunted Napoleon's mind constantly at St. Helena. He could not understand the causes of his defeat, and consequently kept returning to the subject. The June anniversaries always brought everything back still more vividly to him, and he would then talk over his mistakes or those of his lieutenants. Sometimes he would express his astonishment, and sometimes he would merely deplore the fatalities which had overwhelmed him.

As far back as October 6th, 1815, on board the *Northumberland*, he had started on this subject.[1] For three years he continued working at the first version,[2] and Gourgaud took it away with him and published it in Europe.[3]

Napoleon then went over this version again, and it was published, in its second form, by O'Meara in 1820.[4] There have since then been other editions of this version.

Napoleon also threw some light on the intermediary period (1801–1814) and on the period anterior to 1793. In certain special works he speaks of these two periods, and there are also various fragments relating to them which he dictated to Las Cases and to Montholon. These fragments are contained in the *Mémorial* and in the *Récits de la captivité*, but they give a very incomplete idea of the two periods in question.

The following is a list of them:

In Las Cases's book: (*a*) A dictation about Napoleon's youth; [5]

(*b*) A dictation on the Convention; [6]

In Montholon's book: (*a*) A note about San Domingo; [7]

(*b*) A note about Napoleon's policy towards Russia; [8]

(*c*) A dictation on his religious policy; [9]

[1] *Récits de la captivité*, I, pp. 145–146.

[2] *Id.*, I, pp. 264, 265, 270; pp. II, 86, 96, 105. *Mémorial*, August 26th, 1816. Gourgaud, April 24th and 27th, May 9th, 11th, and 19th, June 12th and 16th, 1816; March 4th, 8th, 13th, 30th, May 15th and 20th, June 3rd, 1817.

[3] See Bibliography, 7.

[4] *Id.*, 8.

[5] Inserted in the account of August 27th–31st, 1815, but dictated October 5th, 1816.

[6] June 12th, 1816.

[7] April 24th, 1816.

[8] February 10th, 1818.

[9] May 15th, 1818.

(*d*) A note about Lavalette;[1]

(*e*) A note about his Home Policy;[2]

(*f*) A note about Spanish affairs;[3]

(*g*) A note about the Dresden negotiations of 1813;[4]

(*h*) The complement of the dictation about Holland (given in the *Mémoires*). This complement is about the youth of Louis Bonaparte and his elevation to the throne of Holland;[5]

(*i*) A note about the Polish question.[6]

The following fragments complete this list, but they are not contained in the *Mémoires.*

(*a*) A note about Napoleon's decision to give himself up to the English in 1815;[7]

(*b*) A scheme for a Liberal Constitution in France.[8]

(*c*) Counsels for the King of Rome.[9]

II.—*Works on special subjects.*—Still more interesting than the *Mémoires* are the pamphlets written by Napoleon at St. Helena in reply to certain publications relating to his reign or to himself. The *Mémoires* treat chiefly of military subjects and politics only occupy a secondary place. Napoleon let his deeds speak for him, he does not dwell on his sentiments and ideas. His pamphlets are generally impassioned writings, usually in reply to some attack. As they were not intended for historical works, there was no

[1] February 8th, 1820. [2] August 20th, 1820.
[3] November 21st, 1820. [4] March 23rd, 1821.
[5] English edition of the *Récits de la captivité* (Bibliography, 23), Vol. I, Chapter XIV.
[6] *Id.*, Vol. III, Chapter VIII.—This English edition is rather curious when compared with the French one. Montholon, having confidence in the great patience of the English reader, seems to have given with these *Récits* all Napoleon's dictations (whether published or not) of which he still had the manuscripts: the *Manuscrit de l'île d'Elbe*, the *Campagne d'Italie*, the note on the *Prisons d'État*, the notes on *l'Art de la guerre*; beside these some unpublished dictations, such as those just quoted, or portions of the *Mémoires*, withdrawn in 1822 as being compromising. He also gives, here and there, fragments from Las Cases mixed with his own notes (compare for instance Vol. III, Chapter VIII, *Projets de Napoléon après Moscou*, with the *Mémorial*, August 24th, 1816). In the French edition, less sure of the reader's patience, he has suppressed nearly all, with the exception of the few dictations quoted above.
[7] *Récits de la captivité*, I, p. 99 (July, 1815).
[8] *Id.*, II, pp. 380-400, (March, 1820).
[9] *Id.*, pp. 517-528, (April 17th, 1821).

need to make them impersonal, and he therefore frequently gives his own ideas and opinions.

He probably wrote his work against the Bourbons and Legitimacy in 1816, for he seems to have been engaged on it as early as November, 1815.[1] He first intended to write it in fourteen chapters,[2] but he reduced this number to ten, and it was finished in its final form in September, 1816.[3] It was published in London in 1818, thanks probably to O'Meara's efforts. It was entitled *Manuscrit de l'île d'Elbe; ou des Bourbons en* 1815.[4] This work is certainly authentic, but it has never been added to later editions of the *Mémoires.*

It was probably in 1816, too, that Napoleon wrote his notes on the Abbe de Pradt's work,[5] *L'Histoire de l'Ambassade de Varsovie.* This book was received at Longwood during the spring of 1816.[6] The notes must have been written at once. They are very short and were not intended for publication, but they were nevertheless given in the 1830 edition of the *Mémoires.*[7]

The year 1817 was a very active one. On the 18th of March, Lord Bathurst made a speech in the House of Lords in reply to Lord Holland, who had criticised the conduct of the English Government in its treatment of Napoleon. The contents of this speech were known at Longwood on the 27th of May, 1817, and on the 30th, Napoleon was dictating his remarks about it. For some months he continued this work, "wearing Montholon out," as Gourgaud tells us, and Gourgaud after Montholon.[8] He hoped to send the remarks that he was writing to Europe, either by Lord Amherst, the English Ambassador to China, who was then on a visit to

[1] Gourgaud, November 26th, 29th, 30th, 1815.

[2] *Récits de la captivité,* I, p. 296. *Mémorial,* August 27th, September 8th, 1816.

[3] *Récits de la captivité,* I, p. 387. *Mémorial,* September 8th, 1816.

[4] Bibliography 9. Another edition (not complete) under the title of *Fragments extraîts des Mémoires de Napoléon.* Paris, Librairie départementale, 1821.

[5] Bibliography, 63.

[6] June 14th, according to Montholon; April 26th, according to Las Cases.

[7] Vol. VIII, pp. 338–349.

[8] *Récits de la captivité,* II, p. 130. Gourgaud, June 13th, 14th, 16th, 20th, 21st, 25th, July 18th, 1817.

St. Helena, or by Admiral Malcolm, who was returning to Europe. Both men refused to take them.[1]

In October, 1817, Napoleon was re-writing these remarks for the eighth time.[2] He finally sent them to Sir Hudson Lowe and to the Commissioners, and they were published in Europe in 1818,[3] probably by O'Meara.

On the 5th of March, 1818, the letters about Napoleon, published by Dr. Warden, surgeon on the *Northumberland*, were received at Longwood.[4] Napoleon began to correct and complete these letters at once and finished his task in August, 1817.[5] This work appeared in different forms, but was finally published in England in 1817, under the title of *Letters from the Cape*. It is one of the most valuable of Napoleon's works at St. Helena.[6]

Hobhouse, one of Lord Byron's friends, sent his book to Longwood. It was entitled *Letters written by an Englishman in Paris during the last reign of the Emperor Napoleon.*[7] The volume reached St. Helena in June, 1816, but was kept back by Sir Hudson Lowe, because it had been sent in a way contrary to the regulations.[8] The letters had been read, however, by Napoleon in July, 1817.[9] In August he announced his intention of writing some notes about this book,[10] but they were not published until the 1870 edition of the *Mémoires*. The exiles were very much interested in another work which appeared in Europe in 1817. It was entitled *Manuscript received from St. Helena in an unknown way.*[11] Later on it was discovered that the author was a certain Lullin de Châteauvieux. He gave an account

[1] *Récits de la captivité*, II, p. 147. Gourgaud, July 2nd, 1817.
[2] *Id.*, II, pp. 209–210.
[3] *Récits de la captivité*, II, p. 211. Gourgaud, October 7th, 1817. See Bibliography, 11.
[4] See Bibliography, 28.
[5] *Récits de la captivité*, II, pp. 97, 171. Gourgaud, March 16th, June 21st, August 15th, 16th, 22nd, 28th, 1817.
[6] Bibliography, 6, 6(*a*), 6(*b*).
[7] *Id.*, 64.
[8] *Napoléon en exil.* Sir Hudson Lowe was authorised, too, by Hobhouse to keep back the work if he deemed it necessary (Forsyth, I, p. 243).
[9] *Récits de la captivité*, II, pp. 149, 201. Gourgaud, July 5th, August 28th, 1817.
[10] On the 23rd of September they were not written (see Gourgaud).
[11] Bibliography, 49.

of Napoleon's life which was supposed to have been written by Napoleon himself. This literary mystification had great success, as everyone was curious about it. The book was given to Napoleon on the 5th of September, 1817, and, like all Europe, he wondered who was the author of it.

He was very much interested in it [1] and, three days after receiving it, had written the forty brief notes,[2] which O'Meara and Gourgaud published later on in Europe.[3] These notes were re-written and the second version of them appeared in the 1822 edition of the *Mémoires.* Another work, which has not hitherto been included among Napoleon's writings, must belong to the year 1817. It is entitled *Letters from the Island of St. Helena* (exposing the unnecessary severity exercised towards Napoleon).[4] It was published in 1818 and a translation of it was given in the *Receuil de pièces authentiques sur le captif de Sainte Hélène.*[5] There seems to be no doubt that these letters were written by Napoleon. They are supposed to be from the captain of an English ship. The form is very much like that of the *Letters from the Cape.* The treatment of the character of the honest English sailor with his traditional frankness and his brusque cordiality, together with the introduction of certain anecdotes dear to the St. Helena [6] writers, point to the pen, or at any rate to the inspiration, of Napoleon. These letters refer to the affair of the bust [7] and give, with excellent dramatic effect, exactly the same version of the story as O'Meara gives.[8] After 1817 it is very difficult to get exact information. Las Cases and Gourgaud were no longer there, and Montholon was so much occupied that he could only take brief notes. It is only

[1] Gourgaud, September 5th, 6th, 8th, 1817. *Récits de la captivité,* II, p. 182.

[2] Gourgaud, September 8th, 1817.

[3] Bibliography, 12 and 12(*a*).

[4] Bibliography, 10.

[5] *Id.*, 5.

[6] The anecdotes concerning the English prisoners of Verdun and of Givet. Compare *Napoléon en exil,* August 17th, 1817, and *Mémorial,* November 5th, 1816, where Las Cases guarantees the *authenticity* of these letters (without the sense of the word being very clear).

[7] One of the most irritating of the affairs of Napoleon's stay at St. Helena. It is a question of a bust of the King of Rome that Napoleon accused Sir Hudson Lowe of wanting to keep back or destroy.

[8] *Napoléon en exil,* June 6th, 10th, 11th, 18th, July 4th, 17th, 1817, etc.; and a letter from O'Meara to M. Finlaison, August 18th, 1817. B. M., Vol. 20,146.

possible, therefore, to establish in a somewhat vague way the dates of all later writings. The works by Mathieu Dumas,[1] and Rogniat,[2] and Jomini's[3] last volumes reached Longwood in December, 1818. It is probable that Napoleon's notes on these volumes were written in 1819.[4]

La Révolution de Saint Dominique[5] by P. de Lacroix came under Napoleon's notice at the beginning of 1820. It was probably about the middle of the year when he annotated this book. The *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de Charles XIV Jean*[6] arrived in December, 1820. Napoleon was at work on this book during the last months of his life. It is evident from certain conversations between Montholon and Sir Hudson Lowe that the *Mémoires de Fleury de Chaboulon* had been read at Longwood about the middle of the year 1820,[7] and they were probably annotated about that time.[8]

There is no evidence to show when the *Quatre Concordats* by the Abbé de Pradt[9] arrived at St. Helena, but the date of publication of this work proves that Napoleon's annotations must have been made during the last two years of his life.[10]

III. The works of the last series do not bear on the subject of this book, so that it is only necessary to give a list of them without entering into detail.

[1] Bibliography, 65. [2] *Id.*, 66.
[3] *Id.*, 67.
[4] These notes were published for the first time in the 1822 edition of the *Mémoires*. It should be noticed that the 1822 edition and that of 1870, although from the same original manuscripts, differ perceptibly on certain points. The 1870 edition is shorter. It is possible that the publishers of the latter edition, who seem to have used the text somewhat freely, wished to curtail the length of some parts and avoid repetitions. In Note VII, for instance, on Rogniat, there are two pages on Turenne, the substance of which is to be found again in the *Précis des campagnes de Turenne*. In Note XIV there is a similar development, sometimes word for word alike, to the one contained in the *Manuscrit de l'île d'Elbe* on the campaign of 1813. On this latter point, though, it is very possible that the publishers of the 1822 edition, who were not bringing out the latter work, wanted to utilise an interesting part of it and so inserted it in these notes.
[5] Bibliography, 71.
[6] *Id.*, 72. [7] *Id.*, 69.
[8] Forsyth, III, p. 237. [9] Bibliography, 73.
[10] These different notes appeared for the first time in the 1822 edition of the *Mémoires*. As we have seen, the first version of the notes on Fleury de Chaboulon was not published before 1867 in the *Commentaires de Napoléon*.

THE EXILE.

A sketch from life at Longwood, April, 1820.

(*a*) Studies of certain military chiefs: *Le Précis des campagnes de Turenne et de Frédéric II*, published in the 1822 edition of the *Mémoires;* the *Campagnes de César*, published in 1836 by Marchand with a fragment of a literary character.[1]

(*b*) Some notes on Lloyd's book,[2] of which there are two versions.[3]

(*c*) Some theoretical works on the art of war: *Projet d'une nouvelle organisation de l'armée* and *Essai sur la fortification en campagne*. Both of these were published in the 1870 edition only. There were also some notes dictated to Gourgaud on the subject of artillery and of permanent fortification. These notes were among the papers taken away by Gourgaud,[4] and have only recently been published.[5]

This list will give an idea of Napoleon's work at St. Helena, of its extent and of its variety. It represents considerable effort, not only on account of the number of pages written, but on account of the care, precision, method, and literary quality of it. The literary value of it is so well known that it is only necessary to add a few brief remarks. Napoleon did not aim at writing brilliant or eloquent works. He merely wished to be clear and persuasive. There are only a few eloquent passages, as his eloquence was that of deeds rather than words. The beauty of certain passages lies in their clearness, their sequence and simplicity. Some chapters of the Italian campaign are of the highest literary value, on account of these qualities. Then, too, in certain passages of argument, there is hard and fast logic, a continued holding of the ground and good reasoning.[6] In the *Lettres du Cap*, everything is told in a lively way with dramatic effect. Everything interests the reader and is not mere literature. It is probably the somewhat severe style, the absence of anecdote and phraseology which prevented the *Mémoires* from having any really popular success. A disconnected diary

[1] Bibliography, 14.
[2] *Id.*, 74.
[3] *Id.*, 18.
[4] See Gorrequer's report, already mentioned.
[5] Bibliography, 16, 17.
[6] See the notes on *l'Art de la guerre* or the passage of the *Campagnes de Frédéric* on capitulations (Chapter V).

such as the *Mémorial de Sainte Hélène* was preferred to the *Mémoires*, and even writings more or less fantastic, such as Bourrienne's *Mémoires* and those of the Duchesse d'Abrantès.

After studying the manner in which Napoleon's written *Mémoires* were composed, it will now be interesting to have some details about the other *Mémoires* and about the various Memorialists.

CHAPTER VI

LAS CASES

Emmanuel-Auguste-Dieudonne-Marius-Joseph, Marquis de Las Cases, Seigneur de la Caussade, Palleville, Couffinhal and Spugets, was born in 1766 at the Château de Las Cases near Revel in Haute-Garonne. His family belonged to the old nobility and owed its name, according to him, to the exploits of an ancestor who went to fight the Moors in Spain. After a combat in which he distinguished himself, this warrior received from the King of Portugal, "todas las cases" (all the houses) in the neighbourhood of the battle-field. He afterwards lived in Spain, and the celebrated Bishop of Chiapa was one of his descendants. Another of his descendants settled in France and was the ancestor of the memorialist.

Napoleon's biographer was born at the Château of Las Cases and, when old enough, was sent to a Parisian boarding-school. Later on he went to the Military School of Vendôme, where he took a high position. In 1780 he was sent to the Military School of Paris. It was here that he made the acquaintance of General Hédouville and of the future political emigrant, Phélippeaux. He left this school in 1782 and entered the Navy. He embarked on the *Actif*, took part in the last campaign of the American war and also in the siege of Gibraltar (1782-1783). From 1784 to 1789, he made cruises in American waters on the *Téméraire*, the *Patriote* and the *Achille*. He visited San Domingo, Newfoundland, the United States and Martinique. It was here

that he made the acquaintance of Baronne de Tascher and of her niece, Vicomtesse Josephine de Beauharnais.

In 1789, after a brilliant examination, Las Cases was appointed Lieutenant in the Navy. He was at that date a keenly intelligent and cultured man. His knowledge was fairly extensive and thorough and he had the social advantages of the nobility of that time. He was young, though, and inexperienced, and he was to obtain his experience in a hard school.

He was an ardent royalist, and he spent the winter of 1789 at the Château de Vaudreuil. The society in which he mixed was brilliant but imprudent, and the one idea was to run full tilt against all the new ideas.

"It is difficult to understand," he wrote later on, "when the *Châteaux* were being burnt down everywhere, how this one escaped that honour. It was certainly unjust, for we deserved it and did all in our power to bring it about." [1]

As a natural result of the influence of this society on Las Cases, he joined the political emigrants at Worms in 1791.

He was with Condé's army at the siege of Thionville, in 1792, and after the general helter-skelter he went to England. When once there, in spite of his connections, he learnt what poverty meant.

"I gave lessons," he says, "at such distances that my shoe leather cost me double the shilling that I received for the lesson."

During the hard winter of 1794, he remained in bed nearly all day long in order to keep warm, covering his feet with his empty trunk, the contents of which he had sold. He was fortunately prevented from taking part in the Quiberon expedition.

He managed to find some lessons to give, and he was greatly helped by the sincere and platonic friendship of Lady Clavering, a Frenchwoman who had married in England. From the lessons he gave, he obtained material for a

[1] This quotation, and those of this chapter, when no other source is mentioned, are taken from the papers belonging to Comte de Las Cases, Register *b*, *Mémorandum de mes années*.

Geographical and Historical Atlas which he published in 1799 under the name of Lesage.

This venture was a great success, and, the same year, he married a friend of his childhood, Henriette de Kergariou.

In 1802 he was taken to France as the tutor of Lady Clavering's children, but when once there he went about freely. The eleven years of exile had matured him. His culture, too, was now more thorough, thanks to the lessons he had been obliged to give. He also had a better knowledge of England and of the manners and customs of the English.

He was slow in rallying to the Empire. Decrès, Clarke, and other friends tried to influence him and offered him various posts. Joséphine, who remembered meeting him at Martinique, wanted him to be Chamberlain, but this he refused in 1805. He would not be presented at Court until 1806, and even then he still held aloof. He was gradually making a little money by the sale of his Atlas. In 1808 he was made Baron of the Empire, but he did not come to the front until 1809, when he offered his services on the occasion of the English expedition to Flushing. He was appointed provisional Deputy, Captain of General d'Hastrel's staff, Chief of Prince de Ponte-Corvo's staff, and he served in the Antwerp army from September, 1809, to January, 1810.

All this brought him to the front, and he was appointed Chamberlain on the 21st of December, 1809, and *Maître des requêtes* to the Council of State on the 27th of June, 1810.

He became Count of the Empire in August, 1810, and at the same time received some rather important missions. On the annexation of Holland he was appointed to superintend the collecting together of objects relating to the Navy. (Decree of July 10th, 1810.) In Illyria his mission was to settle the questions concerning the Illyrian debt. (Decree of June 6th, 1811.) Finally, on the 18th of April, 1812, he was appointed to inspect the mendicity depôts and the central houses of detention in the western half of the Empire (west of the line drawn from Antwerp to Toulon).

Las Cases was made Knight of the Order of the Réunion

on the 11th of April, 1813. On the occasion of the 1813 campaign he gave a thousand francs, a horse, and his contingent as Councillor of State as a patriotic offering.

He was appointed Chief of the First Battalion of the 10th Legion of the National Guard (January 11th, 1814) and he commanded the entire Legion at the battle of Paris. After the fall of Napoleon he behaved with great dignity, refusing his adhesion to the Provisional Government until the abdication was officially known, and not sending it in until the 12th of April. On the reorganisation of the Council of State by the Bourbons, he asked for the post of State Councillor. In his letter he did not attempt to disown anything in the past, but declared that "at all times when he had taken upon himself any duty he had always fulfilled it to the end." His request was refused and he then went to spend some time in London, "in order to divert his thoughts from the misfortunes of his country." During the Hundred Days, he became State Councillor (March 23rd, 1815) and Chamberlain. The *Mémorial* tells how he contrived to accompany Napoleon to Rochefort on the 25th of June, and on the 2nd of August to St. Helena.

On the 25th of November, 1816, after attempting to send a secret message to his friend Lady Clavering and to Prince Lucien Bonaparte, he was dismissed from Longwood and, on the 30th of December, sent away from St. Helena. He was kept at the Cape until August 20th, 1817 and then allowed to return to Europe. He arrived in England on the 15th of November, but was not allowed to stay there and was shipped to Ostend. Finally, after being driven away everywhere, he found refuge at Frankfort under the protection of Austria in December, 1817. He spent his time there from 1817 to 1821, or else in various German towns and in Belgium. On the death of Napoleon he was able to return to France.

From 1817 to 1821, particularly before Madame Montholon's return, he was Napoleon's proxy in Europe, keeping him supplied with money and with books. He also sent memorials in his favour to the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle. In recognition of this Napoleon left him

300,000 francs in his will, but only 50,000 francs were paid to him.

In 1823, Las Cases published his *Mémorial de Sainte-Hélène*, which had great success and has been republished many times.

The Revolution of 1830 gave him an opportunity of playing a political part in his old age. He was Lieutenant-Colonel in the 2nd Legion of the National Guard for the suburbs of Paris and elected Deputy of the St. Denis district in June, 1831, and Officer of the Legion of Honour on the 19th of October, 1831. When on the *Bellerophon*, Napoleon made him Knight of the Legion of Honour. He was among the agitators in the Chamber of Deputies until the year 1834, and was re-elected at St. Denis, with a programme hostile to the Molé Ministry. He died in the year 1842.

Las Cases has been read more than any of the St. Helena writers, more even than Napoleon himself. The popularity of his work was so great that the author has been lost sight of in it. The public knows that a work entitled *Le Mémorial* was written at St. Helena and generally attributes this work to Napoleon. Very few people therefore have formed any opinion about Las Cases except historians, and they differ very much in their judgment of him. One historian treats him as "an experienced diplomat who inspired Napoleon with the arguments he used."[1] Another speaks of him as "a Liberal trumpeter, employed by Napoleon for amusing the Liberals."[2] The author who speaks of him in this way owns candidly that his anger with Las Cases is caused by the fact that the latter did not give him the information he wanted with regard to Napoleon's beliefs.[3] Lord Rosebery only sees in him "a rhetorical little man very devoted to his master."[4] A more correct portrait of him is necessary.

It certainly is the rhetoric which might go against him at present.

[1] Bondois, *Napoléon et la société de son temps*. Paris, Alcan, 1895.
[2] Beauterne, *L'Enfance de Napoléon*, Paris, Fulgence, 1846.
[3] Beauterne, *Sentiments de Napoléon sur le christianisme* (Bibliography, 103).
[4] *Napoleon, The Last Phase*, Chapter X.

The long harangues in the *Mémorial* on the greatness and on the fall of Napoleon are very tiring to read.[1] The same may be said with regard to such long passages as the one in which the conduct of the English Ministers towards Napoleon is discussed. "What is there to say," asks Las Cases, "in reply to a British Minister, who gets up and affirms such and such a thing?" . . . . The eight pages of eloquence which follow[2] make one think of the *Conciones*. Then, too, there are lists of historical personages, and all this interspersed with more passages to the glory of Napoleon.[3] There is a certain amount of jargon, too, in some of the pages. When Las Cases is leaving St. Helena, he exclaims: "I shall return, but by a purified route. I shall bring with me all that I hold most dear, and we shall surround with pious and loving care *the immortal monument on that rock at the other side of the Universe, which is now being fretted by the inclemency of the weather, and the bad faith and hardness of men.*"[4]

It is only fair, though, to Las Cases to remember that he had been brought up in the midst of the rhetoric of Louis XVI's reign, that he had matured in the midst of the jargon of the Revolution, that he had lived at Court and in the Council of State in the very midst of the pathos of the Empire. Everyone had been given to exuberance and futile eloquence since the days of Rousseau, so that if Las Cases were rhetorical, the fault was with his century. Under all the rhetoric, though, was the talent of an excellent barrister. This fact cannot be denied. In his correspondence with Sir Hudson Lowe, during his stay at Ross Cottage,[5] and in the famous document entitled the *Griefs de Longwood*[6] there is, besides the eloquence, great precision and delicate shrewdness in the argument, a sort of brisk facility in the reasoning, a delight in giving all the different shades, in changing ground, and a science of effect which betrays the finished advocate.

[1] November 12th, 1816: 'O vous, penseurs philosophiques," etc.

[2] *Mémorial*, August 10th, 1815. [3] September 14th–18th, 1815, etc.

[4] December 1st–6th, 1816.—Compare: "The brilliancy of the country increased to such a degree . . . ." (Preface, I, XXIX); "A mind that is endeavouring to get free of its earthly amalgams . . ." (July 26th, 1815); "A burst of power and glory such as the world had never known. . . ." (September 26th–30th, 1815).

[5] *Mémorial*, Vol. IV, pp. 284–295. [6] *Id.*, Vol. IV, pp. 371–403.

COMTE DE LAS CASAS

It seems almost as though such facility of invention in the handling of ideas and facts might be dangerous in the historian. There is certainly some ground for fear, but allowance must always be made for education and surroundings. Las Cases had been four years in the State Council. He was accustomed to reports, to the discussion of business. He understood examining questions in detail and under all aspects, he knew how to refute objections and how to be plausible.

As regards Las Cases, too, it is very evident that his staunch moral qualities were a sufficient preservative against that indifference which some advocates have for the truth.

Las Cases had received two educations, and he appears to have taken advantage of both of them. Of his education under the old *régime* he had retained the general culture, and it was this that Napoleon appreciated in him. It must not be forgotten that he was the author of Lesage's Atlas.[1] On the *Bellerophon* Maitland noticed that Napoleon enjoyed talking to Las Cases. Napoleon owned this himself to Montholon.[2] Gourgaud appreciated him before jealousy turned his head.[3] Planat de la Faye speaks of his intellectual qualities.[4] Beside his agreeable conversation, he had a very correct knowledge about things. Napoleon liked to meet with this in those who were with him, as he was able to assimilate it by means of clever questioning. Together with this culture, Las Cases had the suavity of the man of the world and of the nobleman.

[1] Quérard, who is often slanderous, makes out that Las Cases was not the author of the *Atlas* and that he bought it from a French, Irish, or English priest (*Supercheries littéraires*, Vol. II, p. 670). The poverty of Las Cases during the emigration and the fact that he tried to make a living out of the *Atlas* make this affirmation very improbable. On the other hand, the value of the *Atlas* was violently attacked by the genealogist, Nicolas Viton, in a pamphlet published in 1813, which denounces numerous errors in it (see Bibliography, 76). A note by Las Cases in the *Mémorandum de mes années* points out that this attack may have been made "out of hatred to his political opinions." In any case Las Cases may have been mistaken in some of the genealogies of German houses of the Middle Ages and nevertheless have drawn real profit out of his studies for the compiling of the *Atlas.*

[2] *Récits de la captivité*, I, p. 118.

[3] "He would be good at the head of the Cabinet; he is a well-informed man, who could take M. de Bassano's place," said Gourgaud, when consulted by Napoleon as to what could be done with Las Cases (July 5th, 1815).

[4] Letter of June 26th (Bibliography, 111).

He could also be witty, so that Madame Bertrand, who was a society woman and very witty herself, regretted his departure very much and the loss of the delightful conversations in which he used to shine.[1]

Planat speaks of his "fresh, quick imagination," and there are certainly evidences of this in the *Mémorial.* He tells things in a light, lively way.[2] He has veritable inventions of his own in the way of style. For expressing the fact that the exiles of St. Helena did not belong to the same class of society and had not therefore received the same sort of education, so that it was sometimes difficult for them to agree with each other, he says: "And so we were a mass at Longwood thanks to the circles we formed rather than to cohesion."[3] The little quarrels he describes picturesquely as *piquasseries.*[4] The man of the *ancien régime* was very manifest in the devoted follower of Napoleon.

The Marquis de Las Cases had received a second education, though and, as this was a practical one, it had made of him a clever administrator. He was a Count of the Empire, and Chamberlain to His Imperial Majesty. He had been *Maître des Réquêtes* in the State Council for four years and had been entrusted with three important missions.

Las Cases perhaps thought too highly of his own capabilities and it certainly is amusing to hear Napoleon telling him, at St. Helena, that he should have entrusted him with still higher posts if it had not been for the jealousy of his Ministers. He specially mentions Decrès in this respect, and yet Decrès was a friend of Las Cases.[5] This same idea is to be found in the manuscript notes by Las Cases, under the heading of *Occasions de fortune perdues.*[6] After his mission to Holland he was very nearly appointed to the maritime Prefecture of Toulon. Decrès is said to have opposed this, because, as Napoleon explained at St. Helena, "Decrès knew

[1] Letter from Bertrand to Las Cases, July 27th, 1817 (B.M. 20,119, p. 142).

[2] Compare his account of Napoleon's arrival at the siege of Toulon (September 1st–6th, 1815) with that by Napoleon in his *Mémoires.* Las Cases wants to interest the reader; Napoleon considers himself bound by the "seriousness of history."

[3] December 15th–16th, 1815.

[4] *Mémorial,* April 17th, 1816.

[5] *Id.,* June 21st, 1816.

[6] Papers communicated by Comte de Las Cases (register *b*).

that I went about things very quickly and he saw vaguely that this might have led to Las Cases becoming Minister."

Another time he was almost made an admiral. Decrès is also said to have prevented the carrying out of the maritime plans, which his mission to Illyria had suggested to him. All this seems rather strange.

Confidence is restored, though, after reading the principal works of his administrative life, the reports of his various missions, and of his work in the State Council.[1] It is very evident from his writings that he was a keen observer, consequently these notes, many of which are written on his journeys, are a valuable help when studying the state of France in 1812. His inventive powers are as evident here as they are in his discussions, and are here put to practical use. On all maritime questions, more particularly, Las Cases had many ideas, most of which seem very plausible ones. Only a specialist on such subjects could judge of their real value, but the main lines sound most feasible. The same may be said of his decisions with regard to the *mendicity dépôts.* We have one distinct proof that Napoleon, who certainly was a competent judge in such matters, was pleased with his services. The Home Minister had proposed Portal and Merlet for the mission of the *mendicity dépôts,* but Napoleon changed the names on the documents for those of Belleville and Las Cases.[2] From this fact it is evident that Las Cases was something more than the "rhetorical little man" that Lord Rosebery calls him.

He had all the characteristics peculiar to the men of the close of the eighteenth century. He was essentially a sentimental man, as is evident in every page of the *Mémorial.* There are touching effusions mingled with ecstatic admiration when he speaks of Napoleon, and violent indignation when he refers to Sir Hudson Lowe. This exaggeration gives to his work an appearance of mere rhetoric in many instances, but underlying it there is undoubtedly a considerable amount of

[1] See Bibliography of unpublished sources—and the *Mémorial,* March 27th, June 17th and 21st, July 15th and 21st, 1816.

[2] Decree of April 18th, 1812, *Archives nationales,* A. F., IV, plaq. 518, No. 8.

very sincere feeling. At times this exaggeration of sentiment betrayed itself in the very actions and aspect of Las Cases. Gourgaud[1] and Major Gorrequer[2] speak of his convulsive agitation at the moment of his departure from St. Helena. There is something very real in that.

Las Cases was a nobleman by birth and education, and he had some of the finest qualities of the nobleman. He was generous and cared little for money,[3] although he knew the importance of it for maintaining the independence and the social standing of the family. He gave largely to the contributions for General Foy, Laffitte, and for Doumesnil's widow. As long as he lived he gave an annual sum of money to Pourrez, who had been pensioned under the Empire for having protected Napoleon on the 18th of Brumaire, and who was deprived of his pension under the Restoration. It is from his notes and from his will that this information is obtained, but it is from another source that we learn of the important sum of money he gave to Béranger,[4] when the latter was in difficulties. He was reserved, too, and did not care to push himself. The details he gives about his tribulations on his journey to France from St. Helena are noted with a view to exciting sympathy with Napoleon and indignation with his persecutors. In his stories about St. Helena he never makes the most of himself, and very rarely mentions his companions by name. He generally speaks of "one of us."[5] His companions were jealous of the favour he was in, and were not always loyal to him. He mentions some of the little strifes they had, but never with any bitterness or spite. He simply wanted to explain certain facts.[6]

Las Cases may be considered then as an intelligent and cultured man, although perhaps a trifle superficial. He had a sensitive and loyal nature, but was perhaps too much given to drawing on his sentiments for oratorical effects and to giving, thanks to his inventive capacity, an over-abundance

[1] December 29th and 30th, 1816. [2] B.M. 20,117, p. 368 *sqq.*, 388 *sqq.*
[3] He even gambled, a nobleman's vice.
[4] *Journal du Docteur Ménière*, Paris, Plon, 1903, p. 268.
[5] For instance, March 30th-31st, April 5th-8th, April 17th-27th, July 9th-11th, October 6th-7th, 1816, etc.
[6] December 15th-16th, 1816, etc.

of copy. He was, however, a dependable witness. There is one point which must be carefully examined, and that is his reason for going to St. Helena. Chancellor Pasquier, in his *Mémoires*,[1] wonders how it came about that Las Cases, a great royalist, should have changed his opinions on his return from England in 1802 to such a degree that he should wish to accompany Napoleon to St. Helena. The long fidelity of Las Cases to a fallen monarchy and then his enthusiasm for a dethroned Emperor were calculated to surprise a man who never adhered too long to a *régime* that was likely to disappear. After considering the conduct of most of the political emigrants on their return to France, there is much to admire in the slowness and the discretion of Las Cases in his evolution. There were not very many of his fellow emigrants who had not rallied to the new order of things before 1809. In his preface to the *Mémorial* he explains the motives of his conversion to the Empire. There seems no reason for calling these motives in question, but perhaps a legitimate ambition to play a part in the State might be added to them. His conduct in 1814 cannot be blamed. He refused to consider himself released from his allegiance to Napoleon until the latter's formal abdication. As he was then free, he had every right to endeavour to continue his career. As he had been repulsed by the Bourbons, he no longer owed them anything, and could therefore take his place once more in the State Council of the Hundred Days.

With regard to his decision to go to St. Helena, though, there must have been more than the correct attitude of a faithful servitor. There must also have been the affection of an enthusiastic admirer. The *Mémorial* and his private notes prove that this was so. There are other proofs too, such as the eighteen months spent at St. Helena, his four years' exile at the Cape, in Germany, in Belgium, and his care for Napoleon's interests during that exile. All this was at a time when it was dangerous to be a Bonapartist. Then, too, Las Cases lent Napoleon a hundred thousand francs on leaving St. Helena. He refused to accept any bond for this sum,[2] so that he risked losing it. His health, too, was

[1] Vol. I, p. 405, Paris, Plon, 1894–1895. [2] B.M., 15,729, fol. 59.

impaired by the climate. If Las Cases endured all this for the mere sake of collecting anecdotes from Napoleon and making money out of them, it certainly was a very risky speculation. He was unwise, too, if he counted on Napoleon's posthumous generosity, as the fifty thousand francs he received after Napoleon's death could not possibly have covered all his losses.

The accusations against Las Cases came in the first place from Sir Hudson Lowe. He declared that the devotion of Las Cases was simply for the sake of "collecting materials for his historial work." [1] The European Commissioners, particularly Balmain,[2] and Gourgaud [3] echoed this statement. Among those accusers there was not a single impartial one. Sir Hudson Lowe always believed that Las Cases incited his prisoner against him; [4] he considered him a clever and dangerous enemy. It is quite comprehensible, therefore, that he should have spoken in an unkindly way. The representatives of Europe, in coalition against Napoleon, were very likely to take part against his faithful followers. As to Gourgaud, jealousy actuated him to speak in this way, and Las Cases was not the only object of his jealousy.[5]

On the other hand, Las Cases had his defenders. Montholon wrote of him in 1841: "It is my firm conviction that the devotion of Comte de Las Cases was disinterested." [6]

[1] See Forsyth, IV, p. 94.

[2] "M. de Las Cases is taking away with him valuable documents for history; it is evident, at present, that this was his object in coming to St. Helena" (Report of December 24th, 1816).

[3] May 31st, 1817.

[4] Forsyth, I, p. 406; II, pp. 139, 142; IV, p. 89.

[5] Montholon even and Bertrand were not always very indulgent towards Las Cases. He was a noble, and had been a political emigrant, he was not a military man, but a new-comer in Napoleon's circle, so that he was not looked upon with favour by men who had arrived by feats of arms, men who had known nothing of the former *régime*, and who saw themselves eclipsed by him in their master's favour. On account of his quality of political emigrant and of his exaggerated politeness as a courtier, he was called at Longwood the *Jesuit* (Gourgaud, November 16th, 17th, 18th, 1816; Forsyth, II, p. 204; IV, p. 86). A sort of coalition against him was formed at Longwood (Gourgaud, July 22nd, 1816), and Napoleon was obliged to intervene. It had been insinuated to Napoleon that Las Cases might be an agent of the Bourbons, appointed to keep watch over him.

[6] *Sentiments de Napoléon sur le christianisme*, by Beauterne, documentary evidence.

Planat, who was so straightforward, saw in him "a generous martyr to the most perfect devotion."[1] General Lamarque, who, it is true, is very well treated in the *Mémorial*, considered that "he was an honour to human nature."[2]

It is evident, therefore, that Las Cases was not an intriguer, and that he was disinterested and intelligent. His enthusiasm for Napoleon was apt to make him exaggerate, but he was certainly a faithful witness, and there does not seem any reason to doubt the veracity of the conversations reported by him. It is scarcely likely that he would have dared to change the words of the oracles uttered by his idol.

[1] *Mémoires du roi Jérôme* (Bibliography, 106), Vol. VII, p. 326. See also Planat's letter of November 10th, 1821 (Bibliography, 111).

[2] *Mémoires de Lamarque*, Paris, Fournier, 1835-1836, Vol. I, p. 246. See, in Appendix IV, a discussion on the conditions under which Las Cases left St. Helena.

CHAPTER VII

"LE MÉMORIAL DE ST. HÉLÈNE"

"WHAT can we do in that out-of-the-world place?" asked Napoleon when starting for St. Helena.

"We will live the past over again," answered Las Cases. "You can read about yourself, Sire."

"Well, we will write our memoirs, then," said Napoleon.

That was not enough for Las Cases. He did not want anything that Napoleon might say to be lost, and so, even on the *Northumberland*, he began keeping a diary.[1] He continued this during his stay at St. Helena, and had it copied by Saint-Denis, Napoleon's valet, whose handwriting was very good.[2] When he was sent away from Longwood his diary was confiscated by Sir Hudson Lowe, and the English authorities did not return it to Las Cases until the end of 1821.[3] It is interesting to know in what state the *Mémorial* was at that date. The papers seized comprised two copies of the diary. First there was the rough copy. containing, in about fifteen note-books, the account of various events and of Napoleon's conversations from June 20th, 1815, to November 25th, 1816. Then there was the copy of this which Saint-Denis had only completed as far as the end of August, 1816. The diary at this time was not a

[1] September 7th–9th, 1815.

[2] *Mémorial*, October 5th, 1816. *Napoléon en exil*, November 27th, 1816.

[3] *Récits de la captivité*, I, p. 445. *Mémorial*, IV, p. 639. Various letters from Bertrand, Montholon, Holmes can be seen, written to Lord Bathurst, asking that Las Cases should have his papers returned to him (July–October, 1821), R. O., Vol. XXXIII.

[4] R. O., Vol. XI. List of Comte de Las Cases's papers.

NAPOLEON EMBARKING ON BOARD THE BELLEROPHON.

From a drawing by Beaugean.

mere series of notes, although Las Cases spoke of it when it was confiscated as "jottings without any form, which had to be corrected and modified."[1] There are certain proofs showing that these notes had already been revised and were almost ready for publication. A list of the confiscated papers was made out by order of the Governor, and on this list the first and last phrase of every note-book is given. These identical phrases are continually found in the *Mémorial.* It is therefore evident that at the time the diary was taken away from Las Cases it already had a literary form.

Before going any further it is interesting to ascertain what part Napoleon may have had in the composition of this work, and whether Las Cases actually wrote it or only gave his name to it.

Up to the date of November 25th, 1816, there were just a few short dictations by Napoleon in the diary. These dictations fill about six pages of the Garnier edition, which is more than two thousand pages long.[3] With the exception of these dictations, Las Cases gives the work as his own. According to him, Napoleon had not read it until October 5th, 1816, and even then he only read part of it. He approved of it, and promised to dictate some anecdotes. He then suddenly changed his mind, and gave Las Cases to understand that he preferred to have nothing to do with it. He probably realised that by adding his dictations to the diary it would lose its interest as a free, haphazard account of events, and it would have no value as a relatively independent work.

There seems, therefore, no reason to doubt the statement of Las Cases when he declares himself the author of the *Mémorial.* It may seem somewhat contradictory that when Las Cases was arrested, Napoleon should have claimed a diary written by his orders,[3] which, when revised, was to be submitted to him for his approval.

According to Las Cases the diary was not written to order, and Napoleon had not said that he would examine it again. There is no doubt, though, that in making this claim Napoleon wished to prevent this collection of his conversa-

[1] *Mémorial*, IV, p. 285. [2] See I, p. 95; III, pp. 613, 532.
[3] Forsyth, IV, p. 47.

tions from remaining in the hands of Sir Hudson Lowe or from being taken away by Las Cases. As he had not read the work through, he thought that it might be unwise to publish it, and so he preferred keeping it himself. In order to arrive at this end he supported his claims by reasons that were somewhat fictitious, whilst Las Cases, for the sake of keeping his work, declared that Napoleon knew nothing about the *Mémorial*.[1] The truth appears to be between the two statements, as Las Cases gives it in his book.

The *Mémorial* was returned to Las Cases in 1821 and was published towards the end of the year 1823. During those two years it was revised, and various omissions, additions, and alterations made. With the exception of what Las Cases states himself, there is nothing to give any information as to the nature and extent of these alterations. The author declares that he merely omitted any personal anecdotes or epithets which had nothing to do with the subject and would therefore have been gratuitously unkind.[2]

There are certain passages which are replaced by dotted lines.[3] Las Cases explains [4] that these originally treated of rather delicate subjects, either compromising anecdotes or details about plans of escape. They had been written in a secret way, by means of initials and signs that had been agreed upon and, on returning to France, after five years without seeing his diary, he failed to grasp the meaning of these passages himself.

With regard to these alterations, though, Forsyth makes an accusation [5] which it is necessary to examine. According to him, Las Cases omits any passages of his diary which were favourable to Sir Hudson Lowe or which were contradictory to the story of Napoleon's martyrdom. The object of this was to make the *Mémorial* serve as a weapon against the Governor and the English Ministers. If such alterations were proved the author of the *Mémorial* would be convicted of

[1] Forsyth, II, p. 78.
[2] *Mémorial*, IV, p. 62. Compare April 11th–12th, 1816.
[3] *Id.*, April 27th, May 3rd, June 30th, July 21st, September 29th, 1816, etc.
[4] *Id.*, August 6th, October 29th, 1816.
[5] I, pp. 7, 31.

great duplicity. As Sir Hudson Lowe made out a list of the passages which were omitted,[1] it is easy to see whether Forsyth was right in his accusations. Some of these passages are quoted by Forsyth, but without their context.[2] "Nothing remained to us," writes Las Cases, "except moral weapons, and in order to use these to the best advantage, we had to reduce our attitude, our words, our feelings and even our privations to a system, so that a great number of people in Europe should take an interest in us and so that the Opposition in England should wage war with the Government for its violence to us." This passage taken by itself and left vague is apt to give the idea that the system proposed meant an alteration of facts, but on reading the details, which Forsyth does not quote, the whole thing appears to be a very harmless little diplomatic scheme. There was no attempt to invent grievances which had no foundation, but merely to impute the ills really endured to certain persons. The exiles were not to complain, but to let the bad treatment they suffered be reported in such a way that the onlookers would pity them and excite the sympathy of all those who cared for them in Europe. They were in this way to supply the Opposition with the weapons it wanted by letting it see these very real grievances. They were only "to complain there of the country itself and in England of the Administration."[3] The interpretation of all this is that the exiles were to endeavour to excite pity for the prisoner, but that, in order not to alienate the rest of the nation, as few people as possible were to be held responsible for his sufferings.

This passage from the diary shows that at that date, November 30th, 1815, the exiles only meant to complain of the country itself. They had no evil intentions with regard to Admiral Cockburn and still less with regard to Sir Hudson Lowe, who did not arrive until four months later.

In 1823, Las Cases probably thought it was not worth

[1] B. M., 20,215. *Extracts from the unpublished part of Count de Las Cases's Journal.* [2] I, p. 7.

[3] B. M., 20,215, p. 1. That is: only blame the climate and the position of the island at St. Helena and not the agents of the Government—and in England, complain of the Ministry and not of the English nation.

while to speak of their diplomacy, and so he omitted the passage, but this is no proof of his insincerity.

The following is another of the alterations in the diary. In the manuscript there is a list, dated June 17th, 1816, of various commissions entrusted by Las Cases to some of the officers of the *Northumberland* who were leaving for Europe. This passage does not appear in the published volume. The reason of this is very obvious. Las Cases did not want to compromise these obliging officers, probably Lieutenant Blood and Dr. Warden.[1]

On April 16th, 1816, the manuscript diary states that Sir Hudson Lowe came to call on Napoleon and was not received. "The Governor," it says, "hesitated for some time and then, evidently annoyed, said that *he wished it to be thoroughly understood that his visit had only been a matter of politeness. He had come as soon as he had landed, but that his visit had no other object than that of presenting his respects, and that he had not come at all to treat of business.*[2] The passage in italics was omitted. There certainly is some trace of ill-will here, as the Governor's courteous words are omitted, but it is not a matter of any great importance. All the other alterations mentioned by Sir Hudson Lowe are of no importance whatever. This must have been evident to Sir Hudson Lowe himself, as he never published any of these extracts to use against Las Cases, although he seems to have been authorised at Downing Street to do so.[3] Considering this, it is rather surprising that Seaton, in his work on Sir Hudson Lowe[4] and Napoleon, should speak again with mysterious importance of the passages that were omitted from the diary. It is very probable, though, that he was merely quoting Forsyth and had never seen the two texts.

There were very many more additions than omissions. There is an account of the tribulations of Las Cases from 1816 to 1821. Beside this there is the first version of the Italian campaign. This is really nothing to do with the

[1] B. M., 20,215, p. 17. [2] B. M., 20,215, p. 53.
[3] Letter from B. Wilmot-Histon to Sir Hudson Lowe, November 3rd, 1823, B.N. 24, p. 327.
[4] Bibliography, 99.

Mémorial and should be considered quite separately.[1] Then there are some additional notes, sometimes introduced with the initials N.B. These notes are personal recollections or anecdotes intended to illustrate or to complete an account of something,[2] discussions on contested points,[3] quotations taken either from Napoleon's dictations or from various works.[4] There are fresh accounts, too, and documentary evidence. These additions to the original *Mémorial* do not make it any more interesting. Four of them, nevertheless, have been greatly discussed. These consist of documents intended to prove that Napoleon's intentions in certain political circumstances were those he declared at St. Helena. The proofs given are three letters from Napoleon—one to Murat,[5] the second to Bernadotte,[6] and the third to his brother Louis,[7] together with the copy of a document, entitled "*Instructions given to M—— for his guidance in the mission he is undertaking in Poland.*"[8] The question as to the origin of these documents must be studied, in order to judge the historical value of the *Mémorial*, and the degree of confidence to be accorded to Las Cases. Lord Rosebery has discussed this subject,[9] so that it is not necessary to go into detail. The reader should be reminded that neither the originals, the minutes, nor yet any authentic copies of these documents exist and that, in spite of the opinion of Thiers,[10] and of Méneval,[11] it seems to be proved by Lanfrey,[12] by M. Rocquain,[13] and by Comte Murat,[14] that these letters were not written on the dates given. They are nevertheless written with such talent, there is such vigorous reasoning and such

[1] I, pp. 445–490; II, pp. 182–244, 381–462, 507–523, 537–548; III, pp. 452–494.

[2] November 11th–13th, 1815; February 29th, April 3rd, 28th, May 12th, June 1st, 5th, 7th–8th, 17th, 27th, September 11th, October 22nd–23rd, 1816, etc.

[3] III, p. 540.

[4] III, pp. 175, 316, 359, 419, etc.

[5] II, p. 562.

[6] III, p. 165.

[7] III, p. 516.

[8] IV, p. 23.

[9] *Napoleon, The Last Phase*, Chapter I.

[10] Thiers, *Histoire du Consulat et de l'Empire*, Paris, Lheureux, 1845–1869, VIII, p. 671.

[11] *Mémoires*, Paris, Dentu, 1894, II, p. 155.

[12] *Histoire de Napoléon Ier*, Paris, 1867–1875, Charpentier, IV, p. 260; V, p. 271.

[13] *Napoléon et le Roi Louis*, Paris, Firmin-Didot, 1875.

[14] *Murat, lieutenant de l'Empereur en Espagne*, Paris, Plon, 1898, pp. 139–162.

a knowledge of facts, that it seems probable that Napoleon was the author of them. If this were so the next question that arises is how Las Cases obtained them. Lanfrey affirms that they are forgeries manufactured at St. Helena for the sake of justifying certain parts of the legend. In this case Las Cases, who gave them to the public, would deserve very little confidence. Lord Rosebery believed this. "These fabrications," he says, "lie like a bar sinister athwart the veracity of his massive volumes."

The question is an involved one and those who have discussed it have generally started with the erroneous idea that Las Cases was the first to publish these documents.

The fact that they are preceded by the initials N. B. proves that Las Cases did not bring them with him from St. Helena, as these initials always denote later additions. On referring to the *Bibliothèque historique*, one of the Liberal periodicals of the Restoration, all these documents will be found published one after the other: "*Instructions à M——*,"[1] the letter to Bernadotte,[2] the letter to Louis,[3] and the letter to Murat.[4] They were all published as early as 1819, four years before the *Mémorial.*

It might still be urged that Las Cases had supplied the *Bibliothèque historique* with the documents. He certainly had something to do with this paper, for there is a note from him in it explaining his motives in returning to Europe,[5] and another one on the *Manuscrit de St. Hélène.*[6]

It might be urged, too, that his trouble in reproducing these documents in the *Mémorial* after their publication in the *Bibliothèque historique* proves that he was responsible for them. This argument does not hold good though, for the simple reason that these documents are not the only ones of the kind given by the *Bibliothèque historique.* There is one entitled "*Instructions to M. D——*,"[7] relating to Polish affairs in 1812, like the "*Instructions to M——*." There is a letter, too, from Napoleon to the Emperor of Austria, dated

[1] V (1819), p. 201.
[2] VII (March, 1819), p. 13.
[3] VII, p. 141.
[4] VIII (May, 1819), p. 1.
[5] I, second note-book.
[6] IV (1818), p. 329.
[7] II, p. 374.

from the Surville farm, after the victory of Montereau (1814).[1] Not one of the publishers of the Napoleonic correspondence knew of the existence of these documents. If Las Cases had brought them from St. Helena, he would certainly have published them all, as he would never have allowed anything to be wasted that came from St. Helena. He would have put them in the place of honour, too, and not among the notes with the initials N. B. It seems, therefore, clear that Las Cases was not guilty. It is still a mystery where the documents came from. For the present there is no solution whatever to the problem, and very probably there never will be.[2]

The earlier publication of these documents by the *Bibliothèque historique* gives us the key to another enigma. The letter to Murat was also published by Montholon in one of Napoleon's dictations on Spanish affairs, in the *Récits de la captivité*. If Las Cases had been the only one to give it earlier, it would have seemed as though Napoleon had manufactured the letter and dictated it to M. Montholon, after dictating it to Las Cases in 1820, or else that Montholon, in 1847, had borrowed it from Las Cases to use in his work. Neither of these suppositions would hold good though, as the text of the letter in the two works differs in several passages.[3] If Napoleon had dictated this letter to two of his collaborators, he would have dictated it in the same way. If

[1] XI, p. 331.

[2] It must be remembered that before appearing in the *Mémorial*, the letter to Murat and the *Instructions to M——* and to M. D.—— appeared in the *Introductions à l'histoire de l'Empire français*, by Régnault-Warin, Paris, Domère, 1820, II; the letter from Bernadotte in his *Correspondance avec Napoléon* (Bibliography, 68), and in the *Mémoires pour l'histoire de Charles XIV Jean* (Bibliography, 72). Las Cases, therefore, was not the first to publish these famous documents. The publisher of the *Correspondance* seems to have had special lights on the letter to Bernadotte : he says that the real date is March 8th, 1811, and not August 8th, as the *Bibliothèque historique* prints it. Las Cases dates it August 8th.

[3] In Las Cases: "he *has* all the courage, and he will have all the enthusiasm . . . ." In Montholon "he *will have* all the courage, he *will have.*"—In Las Cases: "the obstacles which are *inevitable* . . . ." In Montholon: "which are *invincible.*"—In Las Cases: "England sends *despatch boats to the forces* every day." In Montholon: "*Reinforcements to the fleet* . . . ."—In Las Cases: "Am I to take upon myself the power of a great *protectorate?* . . . In Montholon: "of a great *protector.*"—In Las Cases: "his *Government* and his favourite." In Montholon: "his *yoke* and his favourite."

Montholon had taken the letter from the *Mémorial* he would not have modified the text. Everything is clear when the fact is known that the *Bibliothèque historique* published these documents first. The collection of this periodical had been sent to St. Helena and the volume containing Murat's letter must have arrived before Napoleon's dictation to Montholon in which the letter is given.[1] Napoleon had no need to manufacture evidence in the form of such documents, as some unknown friends in Europe were doing this for him. It is quite possible, too, that he believed them to be genuine. A mistake of this kind is quite possible in a correspondence like his. It was certainly from the *Bibliothèque historique* that he obtained the letter which he dictated to Montholon. There is a slight difference in the text, but this is easily accounted for by the fact that Napoleon dictated very quickly. Montholon, too, may have copied it rather carelessly, as it was a letter that anyone could read in the paper from which it was taken. Taking all these things into consideration it does not seem as though "the bar sinister," of which Lord Rosebery speaks, exists.

The question of the alterations remains, but these do not appear to have been considerable. According to the inventory taken of Las Cases's papers, the first and last phrases of several of the chapters remain unaltered. Some changes, however, were made.

Las Cases sometimes made these alterations for the sake of placing several conversations on the same subject together. He mentions some of them under their respective headings. We have, for instance, the origin, family and childhood of Napoleon;[2] the Egyptian campaign;[3] the Directory;[4] the return from Elba;[5] the French prisoners in England;[6] the Duc d'Enghien's trial.[7] This method has its disadvantages, as it frequently prevents the reader from being able to date certain interesting information given by Las Cases.

[1] The dictation was on the 21st of November, 1820. Volume VIII, sent from London on January 7th, 1820, must have arrived some time before November.

[2] I, pp. 77, 93.

[3] I, p. 164.

[4] II, p. 507.

[5] III, p. 458.

[6] IV, p. 68.

[7] IV, p. 253.—Compare I, p. 303.

The alterations do not, however, appear to affect any of the essential points.[1]

After looking through Las Cases's diary Napoleon seemed to be pleased with it. This was very natural, as the whole work was in praise of himself, and the fact that it was written by Las Cases was a proof to the public of its trustworthiness. "People will say," observed Napoleon, "that he certainly ought to know, for he was his State Councillor, his Chamberlain and his faithful companion."

Later on Napoleon says again: "People will think it is all quite reliable, for he is a straightforward man, and he would not tell lies."[2]

Las Cases speaks with great pride of his book in his private notes. "The *Mémorial de Sainte-Hélène*," he says, "is a book that will live. Time will increase its value instead of diminishing it, as it will gradually lose its topical character and remain purely historical."

Without absolutely echoing this *Exegi monumentum*, it may be granted, after the examination just made, that a work written by a straightforward, intelligent man who noted everything, edited his notes almost immediately and published them as soon as possible after editing them, is one of the most dependable sources of information it

[1] One of the last of these charges he probably could not help. The letter to Lucien Bonaparte, which was taken from Las Cases and published by Forsyth (IV, p. 24) is not just the same as the one given by Las Cases himself (IV, p. 303). Las Cases must have recomposed it from memory and, with his taste for amplifying, he has lengthened it a great deal and enriched it with *eloquent* reflections. The essentials of both letters remain exactly the same.

[2] September 19th–22nd, 1815. Napoleon is speaking of the *Mémoires*, but what he says applies to the *Mémorial*.

For the editions of the *Mémorial*, see the catalogue of the *Bibliothèque nationale*, Lb. 48, 1954; see, for what the Napoleonic writers have taken from it, Lb. 48, 1957, 1958, 1959.

The letter to Murat has obtained remarkable success in historical literature. It has penetrated even into the popular histories of Napoleon (the *Histoire populaire de Napoléon*, for instance, by Chauvet, Rheims, Quentin Dailly, 1848), and the most serious works have also used it: Lacretelle (*Histoire du Consulat et de l'Empire*, Paris, Amyot, 1846), Norvins (*Histoire de Napoléon*, Paris, Dupont, 1827), Thibeaudeau (*Le Consulat et l'Empire*, Paris, Renouard, 1844). De Bausset and Savary give it in their *Mémoires*. Publishers of selected works from Napoleon have also made use of it. (Pujol, Paris, Belin-Leprieur, 1843; Martel, Paris, Savine, 1888.)

would be possible to have. The author was impulsive, so that his interpretation of facts is open to controversy. He was honest, though, and his report of Napoleon's recollections, just as he heard them, may be depended on. His *Mémorial*, therefore, appears to be a work of great value.

CHAPTER VIII

O'MEARA

There is very little information to be had about O'Meara, except during the time he spent at St. Helena, consequently all that is known about him can be summed up briefly.

Barry Edward O'Meara was born in Ireland in 1786. His father was an officer in the English Army. He began his studies in Dublin, completed them in London,[1] entered the 62nd Regiment as assistant-surgeon in 1804 and went to Egypt, Sicily, and Calabria. He was dismissed from the Army in 1808, at Messina, for having taken part in a duel.[2] He then entered the Navy and served on the *Adventurer*, the *Sabine* and the *Victorious*. He was Surgeon-Major on board the *Bellerophon* when Napoleon embarked on it. Napoleon liked him and invited him to be his doctor. He accepted the offer and went with Napoleon to Longwood. He was on excellent terms always with the captive and remained with him as his medical man until he was recalled by the English Government on the 25th of July, 1818. On his return to Europe, he wrote a letter to the Admiralty attacking Sir Hudson Lowe violently. This was on the 18th of October, 1818, and the reply to it was his dismissal from the Navy. He appealed to the public, wrote various articles in the *Morning Chronicle*, published several pamphlets about Napoleon's situation and, in 1822, his *Napoleon in Exile*. Sir Hudson Lowe brought an action against him,

[1] *Napoléon en exil*, I, p. 3.

[2] See his letter February 27th, 1823, in the *Morning Chronicle*, in which he exposes this affair, with documents in support of what he states.

but, as too long a time had elapsed since the grievances about which he complained, he was obliged to let the matter drop. After 1822 nothing more was heard of O'Meara until his death in London in 1836. The main lines of his life can thus be summed up briefly, but the period from 1815 to 1822 must be given in detail. Forsyth has attempted the somewhat complex study of this period of his life, but he was not sufficiently impartial for his task.

When O'Meara accepted Napoleon's offer, he had no special reason for becoming his admirer and his ally. He was an excellent English officer, very zealous in his service, and his talent was generally acknowledged. Maitland praised him, not only in the certificate which O'Meara published at the beginning of *Napoleon in Exile*,[1] but also in his account published in 1826, at a time when O'Meara was as much compromised as possible with the Bonapartists.[2]

He was a well-educated and well-bred man.[3] He was thirty years of age at the time, and this fact helps to explain his attitude. Curiosity and a wish to advance more quickly, by rendering conspicuous services to the State, were probably the two reasons which induced him to go into exile for a few years to a place like St. Helena.[4] He accepted Napoleon's offer,[5] but, by way of maintaining his own independence, he refused the salary of £480 which Napoleon proposed to allow him. Later on, he even refused the £240 with which Napoleon wanted to compensate him for the reduction of his pay, as this was reduced from £500 to £322 when he left the Navy.[6]

[1] *Napoléon en exil*, I, p. 5, note. [2] Bibliography, 22.

[3] See Henry (Bibliography, 37), II, p. 10. "His address and manner were agreeable and *gentlemanlike* . . . . His deportment was that of a gentleman."

[4] He might have expected gratitude from the English Government. The latter, from a sentiment easy to understand, liked Napoleon having a doctor of his own choice.—About O'Meara's wish to have a pecuniary recompense, see his letter to Sir Hudson Lowe, August 6th, 1816 (copy), in which he asks for an increase of salary (B.M. 20,145); see also Forsyth, I, pp. 93–94.

[5] See his letter to Admiral Keith, August 11th, 1815 (copy), informing him of his acceptance and of the conditions he makes (B.N. 3, document 1).

[6] The first refusal is confirmed by John Bowerbank (Bibliography, 27). On Napoleon's offer to him, O'Meara replied that: "the British Government was his master and would remunerate him."

ADMIRAL COCKBURN.

After a Portrait by Sir William Beechey.

SIR HUDSON LOWE.

The position O'Meara was called upon to occupy was, of course, a false one. Napoleon wished his doctor to be entirely dependent on him and to be always in attendance. As O'Meara was English, the captive hoped to take advantage of this for obtaining certain services which his French companions could not render him, because they, like himself, were not free to come and go at will. The services he required were various commissions in the town, purchases to be made, messages to be taken, news and newspapers to be brought to Longwood when ships came in. It was only natural that the English authorities should not approve of Napoleon's English doctor doing for him what they would not allow his French friends to do. On the other hand, the presence of an English official in Napoleon's house must have seemed to them an excellent opportunity of watching over the captive without this being evident to him, and consequently without hurting his feelings. When O'Meara left the island, Napoleon was obliged to show himself twice a day to the orderly officer.[1]

When O'Meara was questioned about the presence of the prisoner, he was encouraged to give details about Napoleon's sayings and doings. He was sure, in doing this, to displease either Napoleon or his guardians, and on the whole he preferred displeasing the latter, as they had less tact than their prisoner. At the beginning, things went along very smoothly, as Admiral Cockburn had broader ideas and was less strict than Sir Hudson Lowe. The germs of future conflicts began to make their appearance nevertheless. O'Meara had taken the exiles news and papers several times,[2] and Napoleon had always been so pleased that he was encouraged to continue. O'Meara was also in the habit of corresponding with one of his friends who was employed in the Admiralty, a certain Mr. Finlaison.[3] This friend, by order of those in authority, declared that he could not continue this correspondence with Napoleon's doctor, unless the Ministers might read the letters. O'Meara made no

[1] Forsyth, I, p. 57; III, p. 36.
[2] Gourgaud, January 10th, February 7th, 1816.
[3] Keeper of the Records of the Admiralty.

difficulty about this. He probably thought that the Lord of the Admiralty would be grateful for any information he received through him and would be favourable to him at any future time in consequence of this. When Sir Hudson Lowe arrived at St. Helena, O'Meara had already sent Finlaison three long letters [1] intended specially for the Ministers.

Sir Hudson Lowe landed on the 14th of April, 1816. O'Meara at once began another series of letters. These were to the Governor, to his secretary, Major Gorrequer, and to Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas Reade.

Some of these letters were written for very good reasons, and could not bring upon O'Meara any justifiable blame. As he was the natural go-between for the French, with whom he was living, and the English authorities, he took upon himself a number of trifling commissions for the former. He transmitted their various complaints and requests, such, for instance, as their desire to have a cook and to have their cooking utensils repaired. They also complained of the bad quality of the provisions and the difficulty of getting their washing done. O'Meara's pen was in demand for everything. He added to his letters a few stories about Montholon and Madame de Montholon, as he seems to have delighted in making fun of them, and he also gave a satirical description of the Longwood ante-chamber and kitchen. He had every right, of course, to write such letters, but he sometimes added jokes that were coarse.[2]

[1] Forsyth gives some of them, I, pp. 28, 85, 96. They are to be found (copies) with all the others, B.M. 20,146, 20,216. The originals are not there, but there is no reason to suspect the genuineness of the copies.

[2] The following are letters of which wé have found originals or copies. At the Bibliothèque nationale :—III, letters of June 3rd, 7th, 12th, 20th, 1816, to Gorrequer; IV, letters to Reade of August 15th and 20th, September 23rd, 1816 : letters to Gorrequer, of August 24th, September 13th and 21st; V, letters to Reade and to Sir Hudson Lowe of December 13th, 1816; Volume VI, letters of January 22nd, 1817, to Reade, September 14th, 1817, to Gorrequer, September 22nd, 1817, to Sir Hudson Lowe. At the British Museum, Vol. 20,145, letters of April 24th, May 22nd, and July 6th, 1816, to Reade (copies).—Forsyth, who gives the contents or the text of several of these letters (Vol. I, pp. 228, 232, 372; Vol. II, p. 190), also gives several that we have not found in the Archives, probably for want of further researches : letters to Reade of July 10th and 17th, of September 7th, of October 10th, 1816, of May 11th, 1817 (Vol. I, pp. 298, 303, 371; Vol. II, pp. 3, 268).

Some of his other letters seem to have had motives that were just as legitimate. He wrote a series of diplomatic letters, as he appears to have had to negotiate between Sir Hudson Lowe and Napoleon on various occasions. Napoleon proposed to take another name for the sake of avoiding all discussions about the title of Emperor.[1] Another letter was to ask for certain modifications in the restrictions,[2] and another on the question of Las Cases after his departure from Longwood.[3] O'Meara wrote, too, about Napoleon's health bulletins[4] and about the vexed question of the bust.[5] On reading these letters it is very evident that the negotiator was to be pitied. His position was a trying one between two parties equally difficult to please.[6]

There is also a collection of letters, chiefly to Sir Hudson Lowe, in which Napoleon's conversations are retailed in full. The question is whether this was indelicacy on the part of O'Meara, and whether he was acting as a spy. Comte de Balmain speaks of him as "Sir Hudson Lowe's secret agent at Longwood."[7]

In an article by O'Meara in the *Morning Chronicle* of the 17th of March, 1823,[8] he gives, in a somewhat dramatic way, the reasons which induced him to relate Napoleon's conversations to Sir Hudson Lowe. He says that if he had not consented to do this the Governor would have put Dr. Baxter in his place. Napoleon therefore ordered O'Meara to yield, as he preferred even this to the danger of being attended

[1] Letter to Sir Hudson Lowe, October 17th, 1816 (B.N. 4—original).

[2] Letters to Sir Hudson Lowe, December 7th, 27th and 29th, 1816, the two first B.N. 5, the third B.M. 20,145 (Forsyth, Vol. II, pp. 149, 154).

[3] Letters to Sir Hudson Lowe, December 16th and 21st, 1816 (Forsyth, Vol. IV, p. 51; Vol. II, p. 115;—B.N. 5).

[4] In which Napoleon would not be spoken of as General Bonaparte: letters to Sir Hudson Lowe, October 16th and 29th, 1817 (B.N. p. 5; Forsyth, Vol. IV, p. 273).

[5] Letter to Reade, June 21st; to Sir Hudson Lowe, July, 1817, (B.N. 7).

[6] See, too, the letters of October 3rd and December 16th, 1816 (B.N. 5, (originals), and that of February 24th, 1817 (Forsyth, II, p. 214).

[7] Report of September 8th, 1816. "This doctor is a clever and circumspect man. . . . He keeps an account of all his actions and words without appearing to do so, he goes everywhere, and it is through him that an infinite number of details are known which interest more or less those who are keeping watch."—(*Revue Bleue*, May 8, 1897.)

[8] Forsyth, Vol. I, p. 99.

medically by a man chosen by the Governor. O'Meara says, however, that he discontinued his reports after the odious regulations established by Sir Hudson Lowe on the 9th of October, 1816. This latter statement is certainly not correct, as more than half of these letters are dated after October, 1816. The former part of the article is also rather suspicious. It appears to be a somewhat dramatic version of the truth, intended to make an effect on the public. It will therefore be advisable to set forth the facts that are really known.

It is quite true that Sir Hudson Lowe, soon after his arrival at St. Helena, wished Dr. Baxter to take O'Meara's place. He says himself that he should have insisted on the change if Napoleon had not refused to be attended by this doctor.[1] There is nothing to prove that he insisted on O'Meara reporting Napoleon's conversations to him, but it is true that these reports won the Governor's favour for O'Meara.[2] From the very fact that Sir Hudson Lowe says O'Meara's reports were generally unsolicited, he owns that he sometimes asked for them. The text of some of these reports proves this.[3] It is possible that O'Meara, for the sake of currying favour with the Governor, made the first advances himself. The question is—was he authorised by Napoleon? The truth about the matter seems to be contained in O'Meara's report of two conversations with Napoleon, on the 5th and 6th of May, 1816. The reports are given in his book, *Napoleon in Exile*. In reply to Napoleon, O'Meara tells him that he is his doctor and not a spy entrusted with keeping watch over him. He says that it is not his business to send reports about him and that he shall not do so, but he adds that it is impossible to keep absolute silence about what he says and does, as he is frequently obliged to negotiate between him and the Governor.

[1] Letter to Lord Bathurst on the 20th of January, 1818 (Forsyth, Vol. IV, p. 345, *sqq.*).
[2] *Id.*, p. 347.
[3] In his letter to the Governor, October 31st, 1816 (B.M. 15,729), O'Meara says that he sends the conversation "you were desirous of having yesterday."

Napoleon replies that he is quite satisfied and that O'Meara has only to act in a straightforward way. He says that he does not wish to insist on absolute silence with regard to what he says and does, and there is no reason why O'Meara should not repeat his idle talk. This appears to be a half permission which is very feasible. Napoleon was quite sure of O'Meara's devotion and did not object to his being a mouthpiece for some of his favourite themes.[1] The subjects of the conversations reported by O'Meara should be noted. His first letters bear on subjects which he might consider himself bound, as a loyal Englishman, to repeat to his superiors. One of them treats of the English expedition to Algiers in 1816,[2] another of the battle of Waterloo.[3] There are others treating of the plan for invading England in 1804,[4] of the state of England at that time,[5] of the Irish Catholics,[6] of Napoleon's agents in England.[7] O'Meara may have been thinking of these subjects when he said to Sir Hudson Lowe in October, 1817:

"If Napoleon said something of political importance, if he were to tell some anecdote likely to throw light on any part of his history or which might be useful, I would tell you of it."

This is somewhat far-reaching, and most certainly various subjects gradually crept into O'Meara's letters which he need not have reported to the Governor. Among such subjects are the criticism of *Warden's letters*,[8] *the battle of Brienne*,[9] the *dissolution of the "Chambre introuvable,"*[10] the *rôle* of Murat

[1] Compare Las Cases, who was only present at the conversation of May 5th.

[2] Letter to Reade of July 8th, 1816, B.N. 4, Document 40. Forsyth, vol. I, p. 296.

[3] Letter to Sir Hudson Lowe of October 31st, 1816, Forsyth, Vol. II, p. 41.

[4] Letter of January 28th, 1817, to Sir Hudson Lowe, B.M. 20,214, p. 77, (original). Forsyth, Vol. II, p. 192.

[5] Letter to Sir Hudson Lowe of February 1st, 1817, B.M. 20,145. Forsyth, Vol. II, p. 218.

[6] Letter of February 2nd, 1817, B.M. 20,145 (copy). Forsyth, Vol. II., p. 225.

[7] Letter of March 5th, 1817, to Sir Hudson Lowe, B.M. 20,145. Forsyth, Vol. II, p. 229.

[8] Letter of March 10th, 1817, to Sir Hudson Lowe, B.N. 8. Forsyth, Vol. II, p. 252.

[9] Letter of March 15th, 1817, to Sir Hudson Lowe, B.N. 6. Forsyth, Vol. II, p. 255.

[10] Letter of May 28th, 1817, B.N. 6, document 119.

and his death.[1] O'Meara certainly seems to have gone beyond the permission he had received.[2] He acknowledges this himself and says to Sir Hudson Lowe, on the 18th of December, 1817, that he had done so at his request and because it might interest the Government. "In certain things," he says, "I thought I might go rather beyond my promise without this mattering."[3] It is evident, therefore, that O'Meara's conscience was rather elastic.[4]

He was not strictly loyal, either, in another case. He continued his correspondence with Finlaison, although it was read by the Admiralty. He wrote eleven long missives full of details, from the time of Sir Hudson Lowe's arrival until his own departure.[5] Later on O'Meara declared that this correspondence was undertaken simply for the sake of fighting against the Governor's influence in London in favour of Napoleon.[6] As a matter of fact it was only when O'Meara had quarrelled with the Governor that his reports about him began to be unfavourable. It is therefore evident that, for the sake of winning favour in high places, O'Meara, in certain instances, was disloyal to Napoleon. It is not surprising that he was looked upon rather suspiciously at Longwood for a long time[7] and that Napoleon should have been displeased about his reports to the Admiralty.[8]

[1] Letter of June 30th, 1817, B.N. 6, document 123. Forsyth, Vol. IV, p. 195.

[2] See, too, the letter of March 28th, 1817, B.N. 6, document 116 (Forsyth, Vol. II, p. 259), and the letter of June 4th, 1817 (B.M. 20,145—copy).

[3] Forsyth, Vol. II, p. 389.

[4] General remark: the originals of O'Meara's letters which are neither to be found at the Bibliothèque nationale nor at the British Museum, must have been acquired in 1846, on the first sale of the Governor's papers, by Mr. Dawson Turner, who bought eighty-four documents. We do not know their after-fate.

[5] April 22nd, June 19th, October 10th, December 29th, 1816. June 29th, July 17th, August 18th, November 1st, 1817. May 10th, June 30th, July 12th, 1818 (B.M. 20,146, 20,216). Forsyth quotes important parts from them (Vol. I, pp. 182, 235, 387; Vol. II, pp. 70, 162, 163, 325).

[6] Article in the *Morning Chronicle*, February 27th, 1823: "This gentleman (Finlaison) was my appointed organ of communication with the Admiralty, and through him I regularly transmitted a detailed account of the flagitious treatment which Napoleon was receiving. . "

[7] "Is not the doctor the Governor's spy?"—Gourgaud, February 28th, 1817.

[8] Gourgaud, September 10th, 1817.

O'MEARA

O'Meara's willingness to give Sir Hudson Lowe information explains the good understanding that existed for a long time between them. When O'Meara asked for an increase of salary, the Governor seconded his request at first.[1] He was very much annoyed, though, to find that O'Meara had kept a copy of the letter of August 23rd, 1816, for several days.[2] He was also displeased to find that O'Meara was corresponding with the Admiralty,[3] but his displeasure did not last long.[4] He was rather annoyed, too, about O'Meara's report on the subject of young Las Cases's health.[5] It was not until May, 1817, that there was really tension between them. O'Meara continued taking newspapers to Napoleon which the Governor had not seen first.[6] He did not defend the Governor sufficiently, in his conversations with Napoleon, about the affair of the bust.[7] All these petty quarrels irritated O'Meara, and he stopped giving his reports of Napoleon's conversations. This vexed Sir Hudson Lowe and, as a climax, the doctor refused to give them any more.[8] This was in November, 1817. In December he declared that he had promised Napoleon that he would not recommence.[9] Sir Hudson Lowe prepared his best pen, wrote a double charge against O'Meara, on the 20th and 25th of January, 1818, and asked for his recall.[10]

[1] Forsyth, Vol. I, p. 355.

[2] Addressed by Montholon to Sir Hudson Lowe, refusing to receive the Commissioners in their official *rôle*.

[3] The Admiralty, on the contrary, was very pleased about it (see the *Morning Chronicle* of February 27th, 1823), and defended O'Meara in spite of the ill-humour of Sir Hudson Lowe and of Lord Bathurst, the Colonial Minister. Finlaison said purposely to O'Meara (letter of February 25th, 1817): "We did hear that the Governor had determined to send you home. Lord Melville, however, immediately applied to Lord Liverpool to interfere and prevent it."

[4] Forsyth, Vol. I, p. 384; Vol. IV, p. 345. *Napoléon en exil*, October 9th, 1816.

[5] After he had been taken away from Longwood, O'Meara said that he ought to be sent back to Europe (Forsyth, Vol. IV, p. 348).

[6] Forsyth, Vol. II, p. 329; Vol. IV, p. 350. *Napoléon en exil*, May 23rd, 1817.

[7] Forsyth, Vol. IV, p. 352. *Napoléon en exil*, July 17th, 1817.

[8] Forsyth, Vol. II, p. 383; Vol. IV, 358. *Napoléon en exil*, November 25th, 1817.

[9] Forsyth, Vol. II, p. 387; Vol. IV, p. 360. *Napoléon en exil*, December 18th, 1817.

[10] Forsyth, Vol. IV, pp. 345, 356.

During the second half of the year 1817 O'Meara had seen that it was impossible to please both the Governor and Napoleon and, as he was greatly irritated with Sir Hudson Lowe, he seems to have made up his mind to serve Napoleon only. In spite of the Governor's denial of the accusation, he seems to have given way to violent fits of anger[1] on various occasions. Added to O'Meara's other grievances, it has been said that he had pecuniary ones also, and a passage in one of Gourgaud's letters seems to point to this.[2] It is very certain, though, that such reasons were not the most powerful ones in influencing O'Meara. His was a concentrated, violent nature, capable of deep hatred.[3] The irresponsible and indifferent way in which he answers the most terrible accusations, in his various works, is very significant. Napoleon always treated him in a friendly way and had confidence in him, and the effects of this treatment were soon manifest. O'Meara endeavoured to create a party for Napoleon in St. Helena. Among the Commissioners, he won over the Comte de Balmain almost entirely, as he was more liberal in his views and less "Holy Alliance" than his colleagues. When there was a discussion about the interruption of his reports to the Governor, Balmain took O'Meara's side.[4] He even allowed himself to be persuaded that the Longwood news had only been given to Sir Hudson Lowe as a topic of conversation and that O'Meara had always behaved in a perfectly straightforward manner. Balmain spoke up for him in his own despatches to St. Petersburg and

[1] See Montchenu's reports, May 22nd, 1818, and June 2nd, 1818 (*Affaires étrangères*, 1804, document 170): "He has disgusted two excellent Colonels, who have left under the pretext of their health. . . All the servants the Governor brought over with him from Europe have left him, and his household staff has already been renewed twice. . . . He has been extremely rude to Comte de Balmain. . . . With Baron von Sturmer he had a scene fit for a cab-driver. . . ."

[2] Gourgaud, October 4th, 1817: "The doctor was not so pleasant to me before I gave him my money. Ah! I am quite sure of that!"

[3] Doctor Henry (Bibliography, 37) does not think that O'Meara was corrupted by Napoleon, "for he would scorn a pecuniary bribe"; but flattery and friendship made of him "the admirer, agent, and tool of Napoleon."

[4] Report of December 31st, 1817 (*Revue Bleue*, May 2nd, 1897). Compare Sturmer's report (Bibliography, 40) of April 27th, 1818.

LONGWOOD.

in his conversations with Sir Hudson Lowe.[1] O'Meara had won over some of the officers of the garrison and the Navy. Napoleon himself seems to have won over Balcombe by his cordiality,[2] by the business that he put into his hands and perhaps, too, by his money.[3] As a result of this, Balcombe's house became the centre of a little coterie favourable to Napoleon. Sir Hudson Lowe owns, in one of his reports, that it was very difficult to convince certain officers that O'Meara deserved his punishment.[4] It is not easy to say exactly who were O'Meara's partisans at St. Helena. Dr. Stokes was certainly one, and also Lieutenant Reardon of the 66th, who was his intimate friend. Some light is thrown on this subject by the papers belonging to the lawsuit which Sir Hudson Lowe brought against O'Meara, when the latter published his *Napoleon in Exile*.[5] Captain Fernandez and Captain Younghusband of the 53rd, Lieutenant Birmingham and Lieutenant Reardon of the 66th, Major Poppleton of the 53rd, formerly orderly officer at Longwood, deposed in favour of O'Meara and attacked the ex-Governor violently. O'Meara's partisans were chiefly men of lower rank, whilst those of higher rank deposed in favour of Sir Hudson Lowe.[6]

[1] See his reports of April 15th and 22nd, May 11th, June 18th, 1818 (*Revue Bleue*, May 29th, 1897).

[2] Agent at St. Helena for the Indian Company, agent for the Exchequer, banker and surveyor.

[3] There is one question obscure, namely, that of the letter of exchange for 72,000 francs, given by Napoleon to Balcombe when the latter left St. Helena (March 27th, 1818). Mrs. Abell, *née* Balcombe, says in her *Souvenirs* (Bibliography, 38), that the 72,000 francs were never claimed and that the letter of exchange was destroyed. Napoleon affirms in his Will that it was paid. Was this a gift or a mere advance? The firm of Balcombe and Fowler maintained afterwards the first hypothesis, but Montholon, in several conversations with Sir Hudson Lowe (B.M. 20,130, p. 233, *sqq.*), maintains energetically the contrary. Balcombe does not appear to have been very sure, but Montholon might have thought he was rendering him a service by maintaining that Napoleon had not made him this gift: he was sparing him accusations of corruption. This question is one of the numerous little mysteries of St. Helena which will only be elucidated by the careful study of the lawsuits to which Napoleon's Will gave rise.

[4] Forsyth, Vol. IV, p. 400.

[5] B.M. 20,230–20,232.

[6] Colonel Wynyard and Colonel Lascelles, Sir G. Bingham, former Governor of the Island, etc. A letter from O'Meara to Joseph Bonaparte, dated November 15th, 1832, recommends Captain Reardon to Napoleon's brother as "a man who has rendered services to your brother, and conse-

When Napoleon sent two snuff-boxes to the clergymen, Boys and Vernon, by O'Meara, and a tea-service to Dr. Henry, by way of thanking them for all they had done for Cipriani during his illness and after his death, Sir Hudson Lowe imagined that he had caught O'Meara in the act of intriguing in favour of Napoleon. It is very difficult to discover the truth in this affair, but, insignificant as it evidently was, it irritated and alarmed the Governor greatly.[1]

It was towards the close of this year, 1817, that the following publications appeared in London: *Observations on Lord Bathurst's Speech in the House of Peers*, *Letters from the Cape of Good Hope* and *Letters from St. Helena.* In the latter, which was really not circulated until 1818, the question of the bust was treated in detail. At St. Helena, nothing was known as to the way in which these manuscripts were sent to London. No manuscripts could have been sent earlier, and none were sent after this.[2] It is most probable that O'Meara and Balcombe were the culprits.[3] Sir Hudson Lowe was convinced of this, and it was also the firm conviction of Gors, the Marquis de Montchenu's secretary.[4]

O'Meara was, in this way, of great use to Napoleon, but his

quently has been very ill treated by the Government, and finally obliged to leave his regiment . . ." (*Chronique médicale*, March 15th, 1903). Poppleton, according to a letter from Sir Hudson Lowe, June 8th, 1823, to Mr. Clarke (B.N. 13, Agenda 1823, Document 2), had connived with Napoleon in his secret correspondence. Another crime was his custom "of going fishing when he was orderly officer at Longwood," leaving the care of watching over Napoleon to O'Meara (B.N. 18, Vol. 14).

[1] Forsyth, Vol. II, p. 431; Vol. IV, p. 432. Henry, *Events*, Vol. II, p. 37. B.M. 20,213.

[2] Unless they were sent by those who left the island, namely, Gourgaud, O'Meara, Madame de Montholon.

[3] This is not contradictory to Montholon's assertions (*Récits*, Vol. II, p. 97), that the *Lettres du Cap* were taken to Europe by an officer of the garrison who was returning to England. It is very probable that this officer belonged to O'Meara's coterie, and that the latter was the intermediary. The same observation holds good about the passage from Balmain (Report of August 14th, 1818; *Revue Bleue* of May 29th, 1897) in which Montholon declares: "It was by giving up the profit of our publications to travellers, to officers, merchants, captains of store-ships that everything got through and was printed in Europe. The *Observations sur le Discours de Lord Bathurst* arrived there in this way. . . " O'Meara, being English and free in his movements, was the very agent required to go between Napoleon and these travellers.

[4] Report of August 29th, 1819, and of February 9th, 1890 (*Affaires étrangères*, 1804 (a), documents 27 and 53).

quarrel with the Governor made his position very difficult. After the affair of the snuff-boxes he was requested to observe the same regulations as the French of Longwood. This new order was given in April, 1818, but, as Napoleon refused to be attended by him under such conditions, the Russian Commissioner expostulated with Sir Hudson Lowe, and the order was not insisted upon.[1] O'Meara's recall was not due to the Governor's complaints, but to a totally unforeseen circumstance.[2] Gourgaud, on his departure from St. Helena and on his arrival in England, said certain things about Napoleon which were considered in London as a revelation very unfavourable to the exile. What he said was that Napoleon's illness was a mere comedy and that the English Government was only keeping O'Meara at St. Helena for fear of being blamed for taking away a prisoner's doctor when he was seriously ill. This declaration of Gourgaud's will be examined more closely in the chapter devoted to him. The English Government recalled O'Meara, and he received orders to leave St. Helena on the 25th of July, 1818.[3] At the time of his departure from the island he was more than ever devoted to Napoleon and bitterly hostile to Sir Hudson Lowe. What awaited him in England must have angered him still more. He was reckoning on the support of the Admiralty and, almost as soon as he landed, he addressed to his superiors his accusation against Sir Hudson Lowe. This was on the 28th of October, 1818.[4] He insinuated that the Governor had tried to persuade him to poison Napoleon. This accusation was considered to deserve severe punishment, and O'Meara was accordingly struck off the Navy List with neither pay nor pension allowed him.[5] From this time forth he was as hostile to the English Government as to the Governor of St. Helena, and became Napoleon's most zealous agent in London.

[1] Forsyth denies categorically Balmain's intervention (Vol. II, p. 444). He is mistaken in this. See Balmain's report of May 11th, 1818 (*Revue Bleue*, May 29th, 1897).

[2] Forsyth, Vol. II, p. 472.

[3] *Id.* Vol. II, p. 473.

[4] *Id.*, Vol. IV, p. 415.

[5] Lord Melville would still have defended him ; but Lord Liverpool declared : "It is too bad !" (Henry, *Events*, Vol. II, p. 43).

O'Meara had a very active colleague in William Holmes, a man whose name so frequently appears in the various accounts treating of Napoleon and his affairs.

It is difficult to say what Holmes's life had really been, as all information about him comes from untrustworthy sources. He seems to have been the business man of officers in the Army [1] and the Navy.[2] Sir Hudson Lowe says that he was not much respected and that he was never at the head of any respectable house. The Governor was not an impartial judge, but there seems every reason to think that he was not altogether wrong. However that may be, Holmes was certainly O'Meara's business man and also his friend [3] and it was through him that he had dealings with Longwood.

According to a letter from Holmes himself, it appears that the intercourse began in the following way.[4] O'Meara (more or less authorised by Napoleon) asked Holmes, about the beginning of 1818, to be the financial agent for the exiles in London. Napoleon had come to the end of the £4000 taken from him on the *Northumberland*. He had been allowed to dispose of this money in small sums. He had also used up the £4000 lent to him by Las Cases, as well as the money Bertrand had lent him from his own fortune. The amount that the sale of the silver had produced had come to an end, too, and Napoleon did not want to break into his last reserve fund. Holmes was therefore asked to try to raise money in Europe for the Longwood finances.[5]

The result of his first efforts was to do harm to O'Meara

[1] Army booker.

[2] Navy agent "whose employment is to draw the pay of officers who are in distant stations, meet their bills and keep their accounts." (B.M. 20,130, p. 233, Sir Hudson Lowe's conversation with Montholon, July 17th, 1820.)

[3] "Independently of my being Mr. O'Meara's agent, I have for many years been his private and intimate friend. . . ." (Letter from Holmes to Lord Bathurst on the 14th of November, 1818, B.M. 20,134, p. 274.)

[4] To M. Goulburn, January 26th, 1819 (B.M. 20,125, p. 203).

[5] "Application was made to me as an agent to endeavour to ascertain particulars about certain funds which were supposed to exist, or, if that should be found impracticable, to discover if there were friends who, when informed of their necessities, would offer pecuniary assistance. . . . I was requested to accept bills drawn by him to the amount of £1,800 at the rate of £200 a month, and I was also desired to send out occasionally books, pamphlets and newspapers. . . . Such communications were made to me as enabled me to ascertain that a sum not exceeding £3,000 would be de-

and to compromise his friend, Dr. Stokes. His reply to O'Meara's proposals was contained in letters which he did not address direct to him, fearing that they might be opened.[1] He sent them under cover to Stokes and to Fowler, Balcombe's partner, believing that they were both O'Meara's friends. Unfortunately, when the letters arrived, O'Meara had already left the island and, fearing to be compromised, Fowler and Stokes handed them all over to the Governor. This revelation of the help O'Meara was giving to Napoleon in the arrangement of his financial affairs was the death-blow to his party at St. Helena,[2] and even Balmain was from that time forth unfavourable to O'Meara.[3]

Holmes was, nevertheless, able to act as Napoleon's financial agent in London and he also sent books to Longwood. Madame de Montholon applied to him in order to send her husband £48 a month for his private expenses.[4] Montholon appears to have accepted this money in the name of Napoleon.[5]

In 1817, Lavalette had handed over to Prince Eugène £32,000, and in 1820, £2,880 of this money was given to Holmes for Napoleon's requirements.[6] O'Meara meanwhile was busy with his pen. As early as 1818 the *Morning Chronicle* published details about his quarrels with Sir Hudson

posited in my hands, and also to obtain certain information which I was directed to procure concerning the state of the funds."—(Letter mentioned in the previous note.)

[1] See the preceding letter, the letter to Lord Bathurst on the 14th November, 1818 (B.M. 20,124, p. 274), the letter of August 8th, 1817, to Lord Bathurst, in which Holmes complains that his letters to O'Meara do not arrive (R.O. 12).

[2] Forsyth, Vol. III, chapter xxi; Vol. IV, p. 400.

[3] Reports of December 20th and 23rd, 1818, of January 25th, 1819 (*Revue Bleue*, June 5th, 1897).

[4] Letter from Madame de Montholon (Brussels, October, 26th, 1819) to her husband (B.N. 14, p. 15, 66 copy). There is the letter, too (September 15th, 1819) in which O'Meara introduces Holmes to Madame de Montholon. He begs her "to consider him in everything as if it were I who had the honour of applying to you, and to believe all he tells you with reference to the affairs that interest us" (communicated by the Vicomte du Couëdic de Kergoualer).

[5] Letter from Montholon, November 5th, 1819 (B.N. 14, p. 18).

[6] In 1819 already he had paid O'Meara 24,565 francs 65c. for Stokes's account, by way of indemnifying the misfortunes brought upon him by his intercourse with Napoleon. He had also paid 2,370 francs 36c. for O'Meara himself (*Mémoires du prince Eugène*, X, pp. 410–411. Bibliography, 105).

Lowe, and polemics then began. When Hook's book appeared, things were given more definitely, but the work was ultra-favourable to the Governor.[1] O'Meara replied to it by a detailed account,[2] and his publication made him known to the Napoleonic clan. Joseph Bonaparte wrote to congratulate him.[3]

O'Meara then took upon himself to publish Napoleon's works. He had received the notes on the *Manuscrit de Sainte-Hélène* [4] and he published them in 1820.[5] He also brought out in Paris, London and Philadelphia the second version of the Campaign of 1815.[6] He published a letter in the *Morning Chronicle* in 1821, on the malady of which Napoleon had died [7] and, in 1822, his *Napoleon in Exile* appeared.

It seems, though, that as early as the end of the year 1819, O'Meara and Holmes were disliked by the French at Longwood, and that their efforts were not approved at St. Helena. There are many proofs of this disapproval, whether real or feigned. In several of Montholon's conversations with Sir Hudson Lowe, he accuses Holmes of interfering in what did not concern him, and of meddling with Napoleon's affairs without having been invited to do so. He denies, too, that Napoleon had employed him.[8]

At about the same date Montholon expressed his annoyance, when talking to the Marquis de Montchenu, because O'Meara had published memoirs about the Campaign of 1815.

[1] Bibliography, 30.
[2] *Id.*, 22, 22 (*a*).
[3] Letter of May 10th, 1820, *Mémoires du roi Joseph*, Vol. X, p. 253 (Bibliography, 104).
[4] *Napoléon en exil*, September 7th, 1817, Note.
[5] Bibliography, 12.
[6] Bibliography, 8.
[7] *Id.* 21.
[8] Conversation of July 17th, 1820 (B.M. 20,130, p. 233), in which Montholon speaks with contempt of O'Meara and of Holmes "and of their occupying themselves with matters which did not concern them, and in which they were not authorized to interfere." Conversation of August 27th, 1820 (R.O. 29): "Mr. Holmes had been thrusting himself forward with his offers to them for a twelvemonth past, but they had constantly refused to employ him; in fact, they had paid no attention to him; they would not run the risk of employing a person of whom they knew nothing. MM. Buonavita and Antommarchi, it was true, had employed him for themselves, but they had had nothing to do with this." Conversation of 27th January, 1821: "Mr. Holmes is a man without any character, with whom they did not wish to transact any business." (R.O. 32).

He acknowledged that they were authentic, but claimed that they were his property and that O'Meara had no right to have published them.[1] In the correspondence between Montholon and his wife, the same sentiments are expressed. Montholon speaks of O'Meara's *Exposition* as a "collection of stupidities and trivialities," and declares that his conduct and that of Holmes was "all intrigue," and that it had "a bad odour."[2] Madame de Montholon echoes this sentiment.[3]

It may be, though, that de Montholon and his wife were playing a part. It may have been to their interest to deny their intercourse with O'Meara and Holmes for the sake of not compromising themselves, and also in order to conceal their own plans. It was scarcely likely, at any rate, that they would express their real sentiments in letters which they knew would probably be opened on the way.[4] In support of this theory, there is the fact that Montholon sometimes gave the Governor wrong information in answer to his questions. After Napoleon's death he said that they had sent O'Meara Books VII, VIII, IX, and XI of Napoleon's *Mémoires*, but not for publication.[5] This was doubly inexact. Book XI was never written, neither was Book VII.[6] Book IX must have been taken away by O'Meara and not sent to him, as a letter from Holmes proves that on the 21st of October, 1818, scarcely a month after O'Meara's return to England he had the manuscript of Book IX in hand.[7] Then, too, at

[1] Conversation of June 28th, 1820 (*La captivité de Sainte-Hélène*, p. 191, Bibliography, 42).

[2] Letter of November 5th, 1819, B.N. 14, p. 18.

[3] "I think the same as you about his underhand dealings and his mania for putting himself forward" (Letter of June 9th, 1820, B.N. 14, p. 31).

[4] This correspondence is from extracts given by the Governor.

[5] Extract from a despatch from Sir Hudson Lowe to Lord Bathurst, May 14th, 1821 (*Affaires étrangères*, 1805, p. 164, document 123).

[6] Napoleon is said to have spoken in Book XI of the events posterior to Waterloo (Book X should be read). Book VIII may correspond to the return from the Island of Elba and to the Hundred Days. It is difficult to say what subject Book VII would have treated.

[7] "General Gourgaud was not authorized to publish (*sic*) his *Battle of Waterloo*. It is true he took some fragments from St. Helena, which the Emperor had dictated to him and he used these, but it was not right of him, for it is I who possess the work as the Emperor wished it to be published, that is, entirely dictated by himself. At present I cannot give it to the public, because it differs in several points from that by Gourgaud." (*Kaiser Franz I und die Napoleonideen*, Bibliography, 109.)

the very time that Madame de Montholon, in her letters to her husband, appears to know nothing about the publication of the memoirs of the Campaign of 1815, her letters to O'Meara prove, almost beyond a doubt, that she was collaborating with him in this publication.[1] At any rate there could have been no serious quarrel between them, as she continued to write to O'Meara and he did her commissions for her in London.[2] Later on, when Sir Hudson Lowe brought a lawsuit against O'Meara, the Montholons helped the doctor's side considerably by their evidence.[3] It seems, therefore, that the quarrel must have been merely a diplomatic one, as it did not interfere with their intercourse.

It has been necessary to go somewhat into detail about O'Meara. The result of this is that his figure will stand out more clearly. He was intelligent and might have made a brilliant career for himself, but, hoping to advance more quickly, he took up a false position and consequently ruined his own prospects. It was his appreciation of Napoleon's kindliness and his resentment against Sir Hudson Lowe and the Ministry which flung him into the Bonapartist camp, rather than a conviction of the good of the cause. He placed his intelligence at Napoleon's service and also his talent as a writer, but his hatred for the opposite side was not always concealed beneath his studied coldness.

In spite of his apparent impartiality and of his tranquil style there is great violence underneath, and this violence made him sometimes careless of the truth. It is therefore very evident that O'Meara is to be depended on chiefly as a reporter of Napoleon's conversations.

[1] Letters of February 14th, March 28th, 1820: "The work on W. is a great success." (Letter of February 6th, 1821). (Communicated by Vicomte du Couëdic de Kergoualer.)

[2] See also two letters from Madame de Montholon to Holmes, March 30th, 1820 (R.O. 30), and April 1st, 1821 (R.O. 33).

[3] B.M. 20,230, p. 135; 20,232.

CHAPTER IX

THE "NAPOLEON IN EXILE"

AMONG the Napoleonic Gospels, the *Mémorial de Sainte-Hélène* and *Napoleon in Exile* have had the largest circulation. The latter book had many editions in English and French, and it has been translated into several languages.[1] The work certainly deserved its success, for it is very interesting. The author sinks his own personality, and there is no attempt at declamation or mere literature. O'Meara's one object was to tell his readers about his patient at St. Helena. He tells us in his Preface that, in his anxiety to remember all that Napoleon said, he immediately went to his own room after every conversation he had with him and wrote down, as nearly as possible, every word that he had uttered. In order to keep these notes safe he then copied them and sent them, in separate parcels, to his friend Holmes. This he was able to do through friends of his who were officers of the Navy in the fleet stationed round St. Helena. It was probably a rough copy of this diary that Montholon fetched from the pharmacy, read to Napoleon, and then sent to its author in England, just after O'Meara's recall by the English Government.[2]

O'Meara's habit of writing so constantly was noticed by his companions, and it certainly was not only the diary that he wrote.

Montholon noticed that as soon as O'Meara went to his

[1] See the catalogue of the Bibliothèque nationale, Vol. III, Lb. 48–1961 *sqq*. Kircheisen, *Bibliographie Napoleons*, Leipzig, Kircheisen, 1902.
[2] *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. II, p. 315.

room he began to write, and this seemed suspicious.[1] As early as March, 1817, Napoleon remarked that he supposed his doctor, like Dr. Warden, would publish "his book" on his return from St. Helena,[2] and this publication was discussed openly by the exiles in June of the same year.[3] Napoleon did not dislike the idea of it, and this was only natural, for O'Meara about this time was very much attached to him. Later on he remarked that if O'Meara ever wrote a diary it would be very interesting.[4] This sounded vague, but he probably knew that the diary would be published. He was able to judge of its interest, as he read it in manuscript after O'Meara's departure, and found very few corrections to make. He did not collaborate in *Napoleon in Exile* any more than he did in the *Mémorial*, but he approved of it, and more unreservedly than he did the *Mémorial.*

It is very probable that the diary was considerably modified before it was published. It is interesting to compare it with the other writings by the same author, his reports to Sir Hudson Lowe, for instance, and his letters to Finlaison. In *Napoleon in Exile* there are none of the spicy anecdotes and the insinuations about Napoleon's companions, and even about Napoleon himself, which are to be found in the former effusions.[5] Dr. Henry's criticism of O'Meara's *Exposition* might serve equally for his *Napoleon in Exile*: "It is more remarkable for the *suppressio veri* than for the *assertio falsi.*"[6]

O'Meara had the good taste to curtail the insipid story of his quarrels with Sir Hudson Lowe in his work. The proportion of really useful pages—that is, those devoted

[1] Forsyth, Vol. III. p. 29.
[2] *Napoléon en exil,* March 13th, 1817.
[3] Gourgaud, June 10th, 1817.
[4] Gourgaud, October 26th, 1817.
[5] Compare Forsyth, Vol. II. p. 9, and O'Meara, October 15th, 1816: O'Meara omits the description of the wretchedness of the French, when they signed the declaration which obliged them to submit to the same restrictions as Napoleon.—Compare Forsyth, Vol. II. p. 33, and O'Meara, October 16th, 1816: He omits the insinuation that Montholon was a liar. —Compare Forsyth, Vol. II, p. 225, and O'Meara, March 11th, 1817: He omits the contradiction given by Napoleon to the story, according to which Gourgaud saved him at Brienne, etc.
[6] *Events,* II, p. 41.

NAPOLEON.

From a drawing made at St. Helena in 1820 by Captain Dodgin of the 66th Regiment.

to his conversations with Napoleon—is greater in his book than in those of the other Memorialists. It may not be possible to trust O'Meara implicitly when he relates various things which took place at St. Helena, but by comparing the *Napoleon in Exile* with his correspondence when at St. Helena, it will be seen that he can be trusted with regard to the report of his conversations with Napoleon. There is very little difference to be noted between his reports in the book and those in his letters to Finlaison and to the Governor.

There is, however, a difference in the conversation of January 17th, 1817. In O'Meara's letter to the Governor, relating this, he gives a passage which is omitted in the *Napoleon in Exile*. The conquest of England is being discussed and, in the letter, Napoleon's words are as follows: "After the conquest I should have acted according to circumstances, according to my strength. If I had been strong enough *I should have annexed England*; if not, I should have established a Government in accordance with my views."[1]

This passage does not exist in the book. If O'Meara omitted it for the sake of not making Napoleon odious to the English, his value as a reporter would be considerably diminished. By reading the conversation of March 26th, 1817, it will be seen that the omission was made for quite a different reason. In this conversation O'Meara reminds Napoleon of his plan of annexing England. Napoleon replies at once that this was quite a misunderstanding, for he had never had any such intention.[2] It appears, therefore, that O'Meara omitted this passage in his book, believing that he had misunderstood Napoleon's words, and that the phrase as he had given it had never been pronounced.

In conclusion it is evident that, as O'Meara noted Napoleon's conversations almost immediately after they took place, and as he published them very soon afterwards, he may be considered a very sure source of information as far as

[1] Forsyth, II, p. 196.

[2] Forsyth, Vol. II. p. 262. Forsyth says in a note that the part of the conversation relating to this subject is omitted in *Napoleon in Exile*. He is mistaken, as it is only the place that is changed.

obliged to make in Corsica, he made the acquaintance of the Bonaparte family. Napoleon was on leave at the time, at Ajaccio, and he gave lessons in mathematics to young Montholon.

At the age of sixteen Montholon joined General Joubert's Staff as a simple volunteer. The General had just married his sister, and Montholon was present at his brother-in-law's death at Novi. He remained in the army in Italy with General Championnet, as sub-officer in the Engineers, and from this time forth his military career was fairly brilliant. He was a Lieutenant in 1800, Captain in 1801, Commander of a squadron in 1807, Adjutant Commander in 1809, and he took part in the campaigns of the Empire. He was appointed Chamberlain to Napoleon and made Count of the Empire in 1809, and, for a short time, he was in the diplomatic service. This was in the year 1811, when he was appointed Plenipotentiary Minister to the Grand Duke of Würzburg. He went to this post at the beginning of 1812,[1] but on the 8th of October of the same year he received orders, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, from Napoleon, who was then at Moscow, to resign office. The reason of this was that Montholon had just married Albine-Hélène de Vassal,[2] the divorced wife of Comte Roger, a Swiss financier who had represented the Helvetian Confederation in Paris during the Revolution. She had a son by this marriage. Napoleon disapproved of Montholon marrying her, both on account of the divorce and of the financial set in which Madame de Montholon had moved hitherto.[3]

[1] *Archives des Affaires étrangères*, Germany, 67, years 1810–1811.

[2] "His Majesty commands me to inform you that it is his will that you should immediately cease to exercise the function of Minister to the Grand Duke of Würzburg. His Majesty considers the marriage you have contracted incompatible with the honourable functions he had deigned to confide to you" (work quoted, fol. 191).

[3] This marriage was not agreeable either to Montholon's mother, who had become Madame de Sémonville. A police report of July 20th, 1812 (*Archives nationales*, F. 7, 6811, No. 1729), gives some curious details about the ceremony. The marriage, celebrated almost clandestinely at Draveil, took place only thirty-six days after the declaration of the divorce of Albine-Hélène de Vassal from Comte Roger, whilst she was living in a flat at Draveil, taken some six months previously, probably in order that the ceremony might be performed there.

In 1813, Montholon was appointed to various military posts, but, either because he was still annoyed or else because he was ill, he refused to accept them. In the month of March, 1814, he was entrusted with defending the department of the Loire from invasion.

Under the Restoration he was in favour, thanks either to his name or to Sémonville's influence. He was promoted to the rank of Major-General, and his hereditary office of Master of the Hounds was confirmed by the Comte de Provence, who had become Louis XVIII. Montholon, nevertheless, held aloof and joined Napoleon at once on his return from Elba. Napoleon appointed him his *aide de camp* and, on the 15th of June, 1815, General of Division, but this promotion was not confirmed. When Napoleon abdicated, Montholon went with him to Rochefort, then to England, and afterwards to St. Helena ; and all this in such a simple, natural way that his attitude has been commented on.[1] He took his wife and his two-year-old son, Tristan, into exile, but Madame de Montholon was obliged to leave the island with her children [2] in 1819, as the climate of St. Helena did not suit her. Montholon did not leave until May, 1821, after Napoleon's death.

In his will Napoleon left him a sum of two million francs and other legacies which should have brought him in ten thousand pounds. He was also appointed one of Napoleon's executors. All this was a proof of the appreciation in which he was held for his "filial care during the six years of exile, and also to compensate for the pecuniary losses he sustained during this long sojourn in St. Helena." Montholon met with many difficulties as Napoleon's executor, and he only received a very small proportion of the sum bequeathed to him, as Napoleon, in his bounty, had exceeded the capital at his disposal.[3]

Montholon, together with Gourgaud, undertook to publish Napoleon's *Mémoires* (1822–1825). After this he commenced

[1] *Vie de Planat de la Faye*, p. 215.

[2] Two children were born at Longwood.

[3] The Second Empire made up the legacies (1854), but Montholon was dead.

several industrial enterprises, failed in 1829, but was able to clear his name in 1838. Under the July Monarchy he was once more in the army, but was not called into active service. In 1840 he took part in the Boulogne affair, and in consequence spent six years at Ham. As soon as he left prison, he wrote his *Récits de la captivité*, which he published in 1847. He was a Deputy in the Legislative Assembly in 1849 and he died in 1853.[1]

Lord Rosebery speaks of Montholon as a "correct and kindly man of the world." This he certainly was, but he was still more. He was a charmer and diplomat. All those who had anything to do with him at St. Helena speak of his affability, his intelligence and his shrewdness. "He was most agreeable," says Dr. Henry, "pleasant, courteous, with good manners and an excellent story-teller . . ."[2] Montchenu[3] says that he was a "clever, witty man," and Baron Sturmer that "he was evidently very shrewd and witty, but," he adds, "he looks wily, as though he could intrigue well."[4]

As Sturmer did not look upon the exiles with any kindliness, the second part of his criticism seems to confirm the first part. Thanks to Montholon's character, his education and the Court traditions in which he had been brought up, there was a certain superiority about him. This is very evident in his everyday intercourse and discussions. It is easy to see it in his conversations with Sir Hudson Lowe, to whom he was frequently sent as Napoleon's Ambassador. The Governor was determined to enforce all the orders that he considered necessary, and Napoleon was determined to resist them. The ease, graciousness and tact with which Montholon endeavours to conciliate the two men is very evident, even through Major Gorrequer's dry statements.[5]

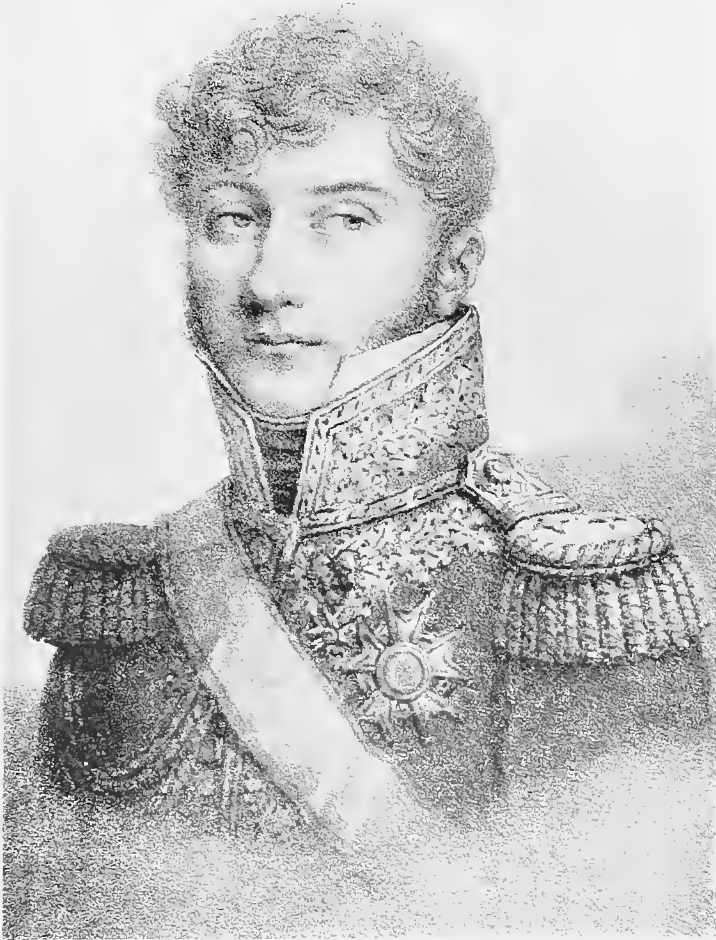
[1] Besides the *Mémoires* and the *Récits*, Montholon published a pamphlet *De l'armée française* (Bibliography, 79) and articles in the *Dictionnaire de la conversation*.

[2] *Events*, Vol. II, p. 91.

[3] Report of May 19th, 1821 (*Affaires étrangères*, 1805, p. 1801, document 128).

[4] Conversation between Sturmer and Sir Hudson Lowe, September 11th, 1817 (R.O. 11).

[5] See, for instance, Forsyth, Vol. I, p. 359; Vol. III, pp. 26, 60, 260 *sqq.*, etc.



THE COMTE DE MONTHOLON.

Sir Hudson Lowe discovered a curious feature of Montholon's diplomacy, although he may perhaps have somewhat exaggerated it. "No man can speak more clearly and explain things more accurately than the Comte de Montholon when he thinks this necessary," he says, "but if he wishes to insinuate something, to avoid noticing some remark, or to make no reply, he at once pronounces his words in a rapid, indistinct way, he speaks in such a manner that it is difficult to catch the sense of his words, or even, indeed, to hear them."[1] Montholon certainly had great facility and ease of manner, mingled with a diplomacy that was natural in a man accustomed to Court life and who was essentially shrewd and tactful. He was not so well educated as Las Cases, but he had better taste and was quite as intelligent. As regards Montholon's character, the St. Helena testimonies are by no means so favourable. It is constantly insinuated that he went so far in his diplomacy as to have an utter disregard for truth. According to Comte de Balmain,[2] this was the general opinion on the island. The Longwood domestics are said to have called him "the Liar," just as they called Las Cases "the Jesuit."[3] Gourgaud[4] and O'Meara[5] repeated this accusation and put it into the mouth of Napoleon.[6] Such an accusation is regrettable in a man whose stories have any historical importance. It must be remembered, though, that Napoleon had a rough, military way of speaking, and he may have treated Montholon as a liar once or twice without that really having any importance. Gourgaud disliked Montholon and was jealous of him; O'Meara and the Commissioners were not very favourably inclined to the French of Longwood. Servants are not generally given to singing the praise of those who employ them, and St. Helena was very much like a little provincial town, as the absence of all amusements gave more zest to gossip and slander.

The facts which O'Meara and Gourgaud report, even if

[1] Forsyth, Vol. III, p. 221.
[2] Report of September 8th, 1816 (*Revue Bleue* of May 8th, 1897).
[3] Forsyth, Vol. IV, p. 86. [4] Gourgaud, January 11th, 1816.
[5] Forsyth, Vol. I, p. 373.
[6] Gourgaud, July 9th, 1817. Forsyth, Vol. I, pp. 92, 364.

true, are of no great importance. Montholon was perhaps guilty of incorrect statements in two or three instances. These were promptly pointed out by Napoleon, and at once enlarged on by the ill-will of those around him. To sum up briefly, there does not seem to be sufficient evidence for doubting Montholon's sincerity.

The gravest accusations have been brought against him. The sincerity of his devotion to Napoleon has been called in question. It has been said that he went to St. Helena on account of the state of his finances, that he left Europe in order to escape his creditors.[1] He has been accused of feigning devotion to Napoleon[2] in the hope of exploiting, later on, the last remains of his master's fortune. There are certain facts which seem to bear out this accusation. Montholon was undoubtedly very extravagant, he loved pomp and luxury. There are proofs of this given by the most kindly disposed witnesses.[3] Then, too, he had very little knowledge of business matters, as is proved by his commercial failures. It has also been said that his wish to leave Napoleon, after Madame de Montholon's departure from St. Helena, shows that his devotion was not absolutely sincere.[4] These arguments do not hold good, as if Montholon had only been seeking fortune and honours he would have had a better chance of obtaining them in 1814, by rallying to the Bourbons, than in 1815, by throwing in his lot with a man who no longer had any power. In France, Sémonville was there to help him, the Chamber of Peers was also open to him and lucrative posts at Court. The amount, and even the existence, of Napoleon's fortune must have been very problematic to his companions in exile, so that if Montholon counted on that he must have been most unwise.

[1] Balmain, report of September 8th, 1816 (*Revue Bleue* of May 8th, 1897).

[2] Gourgaud, January 7th, 1816, March 7th, 1817.

[3] *Vie de Planat de la Faye*, p. 406. *Mémoires du roi Joseph* (Bibliography, 104), Vol. X, p. 319. Compare a letter from Montholon to a friend, December 11th, 1815. He asks him for a lady's maid "who can do hairdressing and make dresses perfectly. . . . It is as you see a marvel that I ask you to send, but, as it does not matter how much the wages are, I hope you will be able to find her for me" (R.O. Vol. V).

[4] A haste which is proved by his letters to his wife (1819–1821), some of which have been kept (B.N. 14, pp. 1–72), and published by the author of this work: *Lettres de monsieur et madame de Montholon* (1819–1821).

The legacies intended for him, and placed by Napoleon in charge of Prince Eugène and of Marie-Louise, remained a dead letter.[1] Even the funds which Napoleon had deposited with Laffitte, and which the banker had very wisely realised, were claimed by the Austrian Government, in the name of the Duc de Reichstadt.[2] When the payment was finally made to Montholon it was far from being integral. During the discussions to which Napoleon's will gave rise, there is nothing in Montholon's conduct which shows any great avidity on his part. Antommarchi has rendered justice to his disinterestedness in this affair.[3] Montholon can scarcely be blamed for wishing to leave St. Helena when his wife, who was suffering from liver complaint, had returned to Europe. His sacrifice in accompanying Napoleon had been quite a voluntary one. Very many of those who had been better treated than Montholon never thought of leaving Europe for the sake of their devotion to the exile. It was an almost superhuman sacrifice to expect of him—to stay there without his wife and children, unable as he was to attend to his own private affairs, and frequently ill himself and spitting blood.[4] In spite of all this, whenever Montholon was making plans for his departure, he always said that he would never leave until someone came to take his place.[5] When he saw that his efforts to find someone all proved fruitless, he determined to give up the idea of returning to Europe[6] and to persuade his wife to come back to St. Helena. She had just consented when Napoleon died.[7]

[1] *Mémoires du prince Eugène*, Vol. X, p. 418 *sqq.*

[2] See Schlitter (Bibliography, 110.)

[3] See the *Derniers moments de Napoléon, sub finem.*

[4] See letter from Montholon to his wife, June 6th, 1820 (B.N. 14, p. 29). *Journal du Docteur Verling* (Manuscript Bibliography), second register, August 7th, 1819.

[5] Letter from Montholon to Sir Hudson Lowe, May 27th, 1819: "My intention is to join her, as soon as I have been able to conciliate my departure with the duties that keep me at Longwood" (B.N. 10, document 257). Letter from Madame de Montholon, December 13th, 1820: ". . . since you do not think you ought to leave until someone comes in your place . . ." (B.N. 14, pp. 49–50).

[6] Letter from Madame de Montholon, June 12th, 1820 (B.N. 14, pp. 35–36); November 16th, 1820 (p. 49); December 13th, 1820 (pp. 49–50); from Montholon, March 17th, 1821 (pp. 57–58).

[7] *Souvenirs de Madame de Montholon*, p. 224 (Bibliography, 47).

There is still another accusation which can only be touched upon with regret, but which cannot be passed over in silence, as if it were justified it would be impossible to have any respect for Montholon. It has been categorically stated, and this statement has been repeated recently,[1] that Madame de Montholon was Napoleon's mistress at St. Helena. If this were true, Montholon's reputation would suffer as much as his wife's, for, considering that the exiles lived together in a comparatively small house, Montholon could not have been ignorant of his own dishonour, and must have lent himself to the situation for the sake of getting some benefit from it. The accusation is too grave for anyone to accept without serious proofs. The only persons to whom the statement can be attributed appear to be Madame Bertrand, Gourgaud,[2] and the Marquis de Montchenu.[3] All three witnesses are equally suspicious. Madame de Montholon, in spite of the tone of her *Souvenirs*,[4] does not seem to have always found a sisterly affection in her companion in exile. Dr. Verling noticed[5] that Madame Bertrand was often guided by sentiments of "female jealousy." In one of O'Meara's letters[6] he compares Madame Bertrand to a tigress from whom its young have been taken, every time that any attention was shown to Madame de Montholon. Gourgaud, too, in his diary, refers to Madame Bertrand's jealousy. She could at times be very fascinating, and her good qualities are acknowledged by all who knew her, but, subject as she was to fits of anger, it is

[1] Frédéric Masson, *Napoléon et les Femmes*, Paris, Ollendorff, 1893, *sub finem*.

[2] *Journal du Docteur Verling* (Manuscript Bibliography), first note-book, October 3rd, 1818: "Extraordinary conversation with Madame Bertrand. . . . She attributed very plainly the influence General Montholon now possesses with Napoleon to his wife, asserted that his little Napoleone did not at all resemble him. Said that Gourgaud had openly declared the little girl was Napoleon's," etc.

[3] Report of March 12th, 1818: Madame de Montholon "has at last arrived at the Imperial bed." The object of the Montholons in living at St. Helena "is to bury their patron, as they hope to get the best part of the heritage" (*sic*) (*Affaires étrangères*, 1804, p. 301, document 152). *Id.* In the report of July 1st, 1819 (1804 (*a*), p. 71, document 20). *Id.* in the report of August 29th, 1819: "Montholon has been very sad ever since the departure of his wife: she was his intermediary with his master" (1804 (*a*), p. 105, document 27).

[4] Chap. xi.

[5] In the conversation quoted above.

[6] Forsyth, Vol. I, p. 29.

quite possible that, in her jealousy, she may have uttered an accusation which she herself did not believe to be true. As to Gourgaud, it is well known that he was extremely jealous of Madame de Montholon and also of Montholon, Las Cases, and anyone else who disputed with him the monopoly of the Emperor's affection. His testimony *ab irato* is not worth anything. As regards M. de Montchenu, he always welcomed any gossip unfavourable to the partisans of the usurper, without taking the trouble to see whether such gossip were founded on fact. This takes away all value from his statements. Then, too, the accusations are contradictory. According to Montchenu, "Madame de Montholon shared the Imperial bed" in March, 1818. Madame Bertrand and Gourgaud infer that Napoléone de Montholon and Josephine-Napoléone were the children of Napoleon and Madame de Montholon. As the former was born on the 18th of June, 1816, and the second on the 26th of January, 1818, the two accusations do not tally. Gossip of this kind does not really concern the historian, but it is interesting to discover what gave rise to it.

The cause of all the jealousy seems to have been the fact that, after the departure of Las Cases, Napoleon preferred the society of the de Montholons, and that they were more in his confidence. It is quite easy to understand the cause of this preference. Gourgaud, thanks to his trying character, was often unbearable, whilst de Montholon was a veritable charmer. The Bertrands had no right to complain that they were kept aloof, as it was entirely their own fault. They had not cared to sacrifice themselves entirely to the Emperor, as they wished to reserve some of their time and their affection for their own family.[1] Napoleon did not understand any such reservation. He expected absolute devotion, complete self-sacrifice. He found this in Las Cases and, when Las

[1] They refused to live at Longwood in Napoleon's house, and settled some little distance away at Hut's Gate. See the effect produced on Napoleon, *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. I, p. 192; Gourgaud, January 25th, 1816, February 12th, 1817. When Bertrand's wife was not invited to Longwood, her husband preferred dining with her rather than with Napoleon (*Récits de la captivité*, Vol. I, p. 195; Gourgaud, May 5th, 1817). Compare the *Avant-propos de la campagne d'Égypte*, published by Bertrand, p. xxxvii.

Cases left St. Helena, Montholon took his place and stayed on with Napoleon for two years after his family had gone away, devoting himself absolutely to him, and spending his whole days with the captive.[1] Beside this devotion there was a charm about Montholon such as Bertrand did not possess. The latter was of humble birth and, although he was of great value in his profession, he was lacking in general culture and in the social graces.

There was a similar difference between Madame de Montholon and Madame Bertrand. The latter was beautiful and dignified. She could be very pleasant and witty, and she somewhat eclipsed her companion at first. Madame de Montholon was gentle and even-tempered,[2] and there was nothing of the haughty demeanour in her peculiar to the Grand Marshal's wife.[3] Besides being always amiable, she was clever and tactful. This was universally acknowledged at St. Helena. Comte de Balmain spoke of her departure as an irreparable loss.[4] Montchenu's candid terror of "the cleverest, the most intriguing, and the wittiest person at Longwood," that "dangerous viper,"[5] is another testimony to her intelligence and her shrewdness.

It seems only natural that her wit and her character should have charmed Napoleon, especially as at St. Helena he was not by any means spoiled, for there was so little society for him. A very good idea of Madame de Montholon can be obtained from her *Souvenirs*, written with such humour and simplicity. It was not surprising that

[1] Letter from Montholon, July 14th, 1819: "At three o'clock I go to the Emperor, we dine at four and I stay with him until he goes to sleep, generally at eight o'clock or half-past eight. Yesterday, though, the evening was lengthened out until half-past ten" (B.N. 14, pp. 3–4). Letter of November 19th, 1820, from which it is evident that Montholon spent more than ten hours with Napoleon (B.N. 14, pp. 51–52).

[2] Forsyth, Vol. I, p. 29.

[3] See in the *Journal de Verling*, January 1st and 2nd, 1818. On the 1st of January, Madame Bertrand, by way of thanking Verling for his care, sent him a tea-service, by a domestic, with her compliments. On the 2nd of January, Madame de Montholon, personally and in a very amiable way, presented him with a gold chain. Verling's impression is very easily seen in the tone with which he relates this.

[4] Report of July 1st, 1819 (*Revue Bleue* of June 12th, 1897).

[5] Report of July 1st, 1819 (*Affaires étrangères*, Vol. 1804 *bis*, p. 71, document 20). Compare reports of January 21st, 1820 (1804 *bis*, p. 169, document 147), and July 20th, 1820 (1805, p. 28, document 68).

Napoleon regretted her departure. He did not conceal this regret from her husband, and Montholon spoke of it to his wife with pride quite exempt from suspicion. "The Emperor," he says, "very much regrets your departure. His tears flowed for you, perhaps for the first time in his life."[1]

It was therefore entirely on account of his sincere devotion and his qualities of mind that Montholon won Napoleon's confidence. It seems very evident that he was trusted implicitly. Napoleon called him *mon fils*[2] and entrusted him with the care of transmitting his last counsels to the King of Rome.[3] He thus served as intermediary between the dying Emperor and the imprisoned prince. Montholon was, as it were, Napoleon's Minister of Foreign Affairs at St. Helena,[4] and this fact lends a special value to his work. It now remains to study the way in which he wrote his book and the importance of it.

[1] Letter of July 2nd, 1819 (B.N. 14, p. 1). Compare letter of December 5th, 1820 (*Id.* p. 53): "The Emperor said to me lately: 'Your wife planted flowers on my tomb; since her departure only thorns grow there.'" Considering that Montholon knew these letters were seen by the Governor, it is evident that he would not have written such phrases if he had thought that an evil interpretation might be given.

[2] *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. II, p. 412.

[3] *Id.* Vol. II, p. 516.

[4] The impression here given by Montchenu (Report of May 19th, 1821, 1805, p. 181, document 128) appears to be absolutely just: "Do not be surprised," he makes Napoleon say to Bertrand, "if I have placed all my confidence in Montholon: he is a man of quality, and he understands me; as for you, I lifted you out of the mud to make a *grand seigneur* of you. I have given you a great deal, you have a fortune and I shall increase it still more, but Montholon has my confidence." Montholon is "the confidant of all his secrets."

CHAPTER XI

MONTHOLON'S BOOK

MONTHOLON, too, was seized with that mania for writing which prevailed at St. Helena. Las Cases had set the example, and Montholon wrote his diary, or rather he was in the habit of taking notes about the daily events and conversations.[1] Only one of these notes remains in its original form. It consists of three pages relating a conversation which took place on the 10th of March, 1819.[2] When Montholon returned to Europe he took these notes with him, but he did not hurry to publish them. It was not until after 1840, during his stay at Ham, that he began to prepare them for the printer.

He was no doubt urged on by his fellow captive, Prince Louis Napoleon, who considered that this publication would be of service in the Bonapartist cause. The Pretender gave security to the publisher, Pavby, for the risk of bringing it out.[3] *Les Récits de la captivité* appeared first as a serial in *La Presse* from January 5th to March 23rd, 1846. The work was very hastily compiled at first. It was then revised, a considerable number of the dictations added, and published in English in the same year.[4] Montholon was once more free in July, 1846. He revised the work again, made various additions and omitted some of the dictations. This third form of the *Récits* was then published in France.[5]

[1] *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. I, p. 237.
[2] *Carnet historique et littéraire*, March 15th, 1898.
[3] *Papiers et Correspondance de la famille imperiale*, Vol. II, pp. 145–149, Paris Imprimerie Nationale, 1870.
[4] Bibliography, 23.
[5] Bibliography, 23 (*a*). There was also an edition in Brussels, in 1846, and it was translated into Italian, German, &c.

There are two observations to be made about this tardy publication. Unless Montholon had very exact and very detailed notes, he ran a great risk of forgetting a great deal, or of unconsciously modifying certain facts, by allowing such an interval of time to elapse between taking the notes and publishing them.

It does not seem as though Montholon had very exact and detailed notes. Some of those that he used [1] when compiling this 1846 edition exist, and they seem to be merely a summing up or copy of certain passages of Las Cases's *Mémorial.*[2] If Montholon were thus obliged to depend on the publications of his companions in exile when writing his own memoirs, the notes he had taken could not have been very full nor very complete. This seems to be confirmed by the disproportion in his work, as one of the two volumes is devoted to half of the year 1815 and to the year 1816. Montholon could have made use of O'Meara and Las Cases for this period. In his second volume half the book is given to the year 1817. Las Cases left St. Helena at the end of 1816, but Montholon could still borrow from O'Meara for the year 1817. He crowds the history of the next three years and a half into this second volume. There is scarcely anything in the *Récits* about the years 1818 to 1821 and, as Montholon was then the only one left at St. Helena, it is just this period which would have been the most valuable.[3] Some of Montholon's correspondence with his wife still exists, but unfortunately he does not relate Napoleon's conversations in his letters.

On account of all this, and also because so long a time had

[1] *Souvenirs de la comtesse de Montholon*, p. 171, *sqq.* (Bibliography, 47).

[2] The Appendix I is taken word for word from Las Cases, June 7th, 8th, 9th, 1816. See especially the phrase: "Napoleon finished this conversation by sending *my son* to fetch the Gospel . . ." a phrase which is found in Las Cases. This cannot be Tristan de Montholon, aged three years. It must then have been Emmanuel de Las Cases, and the passage is a mere copy. The Appendix II is also taken from Las Cases, July 31st and August 17th, 1816. The Appendix IV is a summing up from Las Cases, August 27th, 31st, September 1st–6th, 1815.

[3] It is true there may be another way of explaining the increasing poverty of Montholon's book. As his companions in exile, Las Cases, Gourgaud, O'Meara left one after the other, Montholon was more taken up in working with Napoleon and in entertaining him. His notes may have suffered by this.

elapsed between the days of St. Helena and the publication of the *Récits*, it will not be advisable perhaps to trust entirely to Montholon's work, more particularly with regard to dates. There are also proofs that the editing of the book was done too hastily, and this fact alone accounts for many of the mistakes in the *Récits*.[1]

In some parts of the work Montholon appears to have only copied the notes, just as he had taken them at St. Helena, keeping to their original form and speaking in the present tense. Then all at once a verb is used in the past tense, which shows that Montholon, instead of merely copying, is telling what he remembers, so that instead of the notes taken in 1815 and 1816, we are reading recollections written in 1846. This sudden change is somewhat puzzling, as it does not only occur in relating events from one day to another, but at times in an account of the same day.[2]

Another peculiarity of Montholon's is still more trying. When he gives up his diary form he begins to tell about something in such a way that it is impossible to discover the exact date of the event related. This is more especially the case when he is referring to periods about which notes were lacking. In 1818, when only Bertrand was left, Montholon was so absorbed by "the filial service, which thanks to the Emperor's affection he was able to render him," that he had only time to jot down stray notes.[3] When compiling these notes later on he wrote a series of dry, vague accounts of the years 1818, 1819, and 1820.

Another peculiarity of Montholon's was to give useless repetitions. He was rather apt to sum up the events of a whole period and then to give a detailed account of them in diary form.[4] The result of this is that the reader is sometimes led to think that the same event took place twice over.

[1] Montholon tells us too (*Récits*, Vol. I, p. 237) that during the legal perquisitions at his house on the occasion of the Boulogne affair his notes were interfered with, and that some of them even were lost (March 7th to April 5th, 1816).

[2] See, for instance, February 15th, February 21st, May 29th, 1816, etc.

[3] *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. II, p. 265.

[4] *Id.* Vol. II, pp. 244 and 268.

It is unfortunate that, on account of Montholon's lack of precision, the *Récits* cannot be depended on. It ought to have been of greater value than the *Mémorial*, or than *Napoleon in Exile*, as it is the only work which takes in the whole period of the St. Helena captivity.[1] The fact, too, that Montholon was Napoleon's confidant makes these notes more valuable as the echo of his ideas and thoughts. There is no proof that Napoleon knew of the existence of these notes. He knew that Madame de Montholon was keeping a diary,[2] and it is probable that he was aware of the fact that her husband kept one too. He could not have attached much importance to it, though, on account of the scarcity of the notes and of the want of sequence in them. It was only much later on that Montholon thought of publishing a book composed of these notes. Like the works of Las Cases and of O'Meara, Montholon's book seems to have been quite genuine and not the disguised work of Napoleon.

Its tardy publication, its comparative briefness and dryness, and the fact that most of the events and the conversations contained in it had already been published, will account for the poor success it had and make it less important to the historian than the preceding works. In spite of all this, whatever Montholon has to say is always of great value from the fact that he was Napoleon's confidant and almost his only companion during the six years spent at St. Helena.[3]

[1] From June 21st, 1815, to May 4th, 1822.

[2] Gourgaud, March 16th, 1817.

[3] We shall not speak again here of Napoleon's dictations included in the *Récits*, as we have spoken of them in Chapter V.

CHAPTER XII

ANTOMMARCHI

THERE is very little known about Dr. Antommarchi, so that it is only possible to give a copy of articles contained in biographical dictionaries. He was born at Morsiglia, in Corsica, in 1789. He studied at the University of Pisa, took his degree as doctor, and then went to Florence. In 1818 he was prosector at the Sainte-Marie-Nouvelle Hospital and a member of the University of Pisa. He was editing the posthumous works of the anatomist Mascagni, whom he had known personally, when Chevalier Colonna, Chamberlain to Madame Mère, proposed that he should go to St. Helena to take O'Meara's place as Napoleon's medical adviser. He accepted, left Rome on the 25th of February, 1819, London on the 9th of July, and arrived at St. Helena on the 21st of September, in the same boat with the priests Buonavita and Vignali and the domestics Coursot and Chandelier. He did not leave the island again until the 13th of May, 1821.

In a codicil to his will, Napoleon recommended him to Marie-Louise for a pension of 6,000 francs, which, however, she never paid. Antommarchi obtained a part of this sum from the funds left with Laffitte.[1] This was only the commencement of his misfortunes. Almost as soon as he reached Europe he had endless contentions with Mascagni's heirs on the subject of the publication of the *Grande Anatomie*,[2] and when once the work was published he was

[1] *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. II, p. 543. *Derniers moments de Napoléon*, Vol. II, pp. 145, 156, 164.

[2] *Planches anatomiques du corps humain, exécutées d'après les dimensions naturelles*, etc., published by Comte de Lasteyrie ; Paris, 1824.

violently attacked.[1] Antommarchi was accused of having given Mascagni's work under his own name. The book he published entitled *Les derniers moments de Napoléon* in 1825, was not a great success, and his cast of Napoleon's face, of which he gave replicas, was rightly or wrongly declared not authentic. Even those who believed it to be authentic accused Antommarchi of displaying the most absolute ignorance of phrenology in his work.[2] On the occasion of the Polish insurrection in 1831 he volunteered his services. He arrived at Warsaw on the 17th of May, was appointed Head-Surgeon in the Hospital for officers and Inspector General of the Military Hospitals. Before long he had quarrelled with his Polish *confrères*, whom he qualified as "upstart barbers." He quarrelled with the medical Faculty of Warsaw also and sent in his resignation on the 23rd of August, 1831. His resignation was accepted politely but promptly. Antommarchi returned to Paris, but he did not succeed there. In 1836 he went out to America to seek his fortune, and died in Cuba in 1838. He was spoken of in an unkindly way after his death. In Hoefer's *Biographie générale* it is insinuated that two of the works he was supposed to have written had never been seen. One of these works was on cholera and the other on the lymphatic vessels. The implied accusation does not hold good though, as the works exist.[3] Antommarchi's merit as an anatomist is generally acknowledged, but as a doctor it has been contested. He has been severely criticised because he treated Napoleon for liver complaint, whereas he died of cancer in the stomach.[4] It is only fair to say that he followed in the footsteps of O'Meara and of Stokes and that Dr. Arnott agreed with them all. At St. Helena his medical skill was judged differently at various epochs. Thanks to the carelessness of Cardinal Fesch, who had neglected to supply him with a letter of introduction, a certain distrust was felt when he arrived, and it was rumoured that Napoleon

[1] *Lettres des héritiers de Paul Mascagni à M. le comte de Lasteyrie;* Pisa, Capurro, 1823.

[2] *Étude phrénologique du masque de Napoléon,* by Ombros; Lyons, Rossary, 1834.

[3] Bibliography, 92, 93.

[4] Héreau, *Napoléon à Ste.-Hélène: Opinion d'un médecin sur sa maladie et la cause de sa mort;* Paris, Louis, 1828.

did not welcome him.[1] Things gradually improved, however. Antommarchi advised Napoleon to do some gardening and, as this exercise was beneficial to his health, and at the same time did away with the necessity of leaving his own grounds,[2] Antommarchi was thought more of.[3] Later on, when Napoleon's health grew worse and the doctor was powerless in his efforts to cure him, he was once more in ill repute. Montholon complains several times of Antommarchi's carelessness and negligence and also of his conceit. He endeavoured, too, to relieve the dulness of the place by various sentimental diversions.[4] Napoleon complained bitterly of the choice that had been made of a doctor. On the 9th of April, 1821, Antommarchi requested to be allowed to leave Longwood, as he felt that he was of no use there.[5] He was invited to think the matter over, and finally he decided to stay, but the fact that he asked to leave and the reasons he gave for his request speak volumes. Montholon says that he was frivolous and presumptuous and, certainly, from his

[1] According to Henry (*Events*, Vol. II, p. 76), Napoleon sent him away, saying to him: "Va-t'en, f . . . hête." See, on the other hand, the *Derniers moments*, Vol. I, p. 75. Montholon confirms, too, what Antommarchi says. "He has talent," he wrote to his wife on the 1st of October, 1819 (B.N. 14, pp. 16–17).

[2] Napoleon had given up going out, in order to avoid being watched by the orderly officer or the sentinels.

[3] "Dr. Antommarchi's treatment has done the Emperor a great deal of good," Montholon wrote in his letter of February 8th, 1820 (B.N. 14, pp. 23–24). The impression of satisfaction felt at Longwood increased at Jamestown just as the impression of distrust had done: "The French attribute his almost miraculous cure to the great skill of the surgeon Antommarchi," wrote Balmain on the 14th of February, 1820 (*Revue Bleue*, June 12th, 1897).

[4] See R.O., 32, account of Montholon's conversation with Sir Hudson Lowe on January 21st, 1821: "Antommarchi's manners were too frivolous and presuming; he began by giving himself a great deal of importance; on his arrival he fancied all the island was at his disposal. Women were necessary to him, and he thought everything ought to give way to him."—B.N. 14: "Antommarchi's conduct," wrote Montholon on the 9th of April, 1821, "is inexplicable; it would be impossible to be less careful or more frivolous. Nothing will alter him, and women's skirts have such an attraction for him that he neglects everything. I do not think he has ever once been found here" (p. 65).

[5] Conversation with Major Gorrequer (B.M. 20,133, p. 28): "As he has found it impossible to afford *i seccorsi della mia professione* at Longwood, he has determined to apply for permission to return to Europe. If he could have given his professional assistance, he would most willingly have stayed so long as he was useful; but, as he found that he was of no use, he felt most anxious to return to Europe."

Mémoires, it is very evident that he was intensely conceited. According to him, the English and Italian Governments were alarmed because the prosector of the Florence Hospital went out to Napoleon. On arriving at St. Helena, Napoleon overwhelmed him with compliments and praise.[1] Antommarchi was evidently as dense as he was vain. He misunderstood the military stories he heard, and told them again in a ridiculous way.[2] He expatiated on all subjects,[3] and sometimes he was generous enough to place his own eloquence in the mouth of other people.[4] Occasionally in his book, in the midst of the most pompous speeches, he breaks off into short dialogue, after the fashion of Alexander Dumas. All this was due to his innate love of theatrical effect and his desire to make the most of himself.[5]

It is somewhat difficult to be sincere and at the same time to play an important part and not to own to anything that might detract from one's own importance. Lord Rosebery has spoken of passages in Antommarchi's book, in which he is in direct contradiction with Montholon,[6] and, according to Forsyth,[7] Montholon was in the right in these cases.

It certainly is curious that Antommarchi was not allowed to see Napoleon for some time and that he should nevertheless have been able to give a detailed account of the symptoms and progress of the disease and of the conversations of the patient.[8] The question is whether all these details were invented or simply given with wrong dates. The latter supposition is the more favourable one for Antommarchi.

[1] *Derniers moments*, Vol. I, p. 86 : " Oh, well, no one could do anything better, no one could talk better, you are a charmer . . . you have the skill of Corvisart." Vol. I, p. 99 : " You will take rank among the first physiologists of the century." Vol. I, p. 192 : "Your *Prodrome* is a revolution." Vol. I, p. 201 : "Your method appears to me new and right. . . ." Vol. I, p. 275 : " Doctor, it is a magnificent work with your illustrations" ; etc.

[2] *Derniers moments*, Vol. I, pp. 143, 179.

[3] *Id.*, Vol. I, p. 7 ; Vol. II, p. 247 : "At Toulon, he usurped the victory," etc.

[4] Vol. I, p. 81 : "I shall die," etc. ; Vol. I, p. 114 : "It is all so far away from the beautiful Italian skies," etc.

[5] *Id.*, Vol. I, pp. 2, 22, 33, 36, 60, 62, 133 ; Vol. II, pp. 44, 51, 77, 137, 140.

[6] Chapter ii.

[7] Vol. III, pp. 262, 286.

[8] *Derniers Moments*, Vol. II, pp. 41, 43, 46, 48, etc.

Montholon was not the only one to notice these discrepancies. Marchand [1] gives several inaccuracies in Antommarchi's statements, and the reason of these is always the desire of the doctor to appear to the best advantage himself.

It is impossible to put much faith in a witness who does not appear to have been very intelligent and who had so little regard for the truth. No information either is forthcoming as to the conditions under which the *Derniers moments de Napoléon* was written. Was it written from notes that were edited after the doctor's return to Europe? Was it written entirely at St. Helena, or was it merely a medical diary, to which Antommarchi added his recollections in a haphazard way later on?

The book begins from the time when Antommarchi was asked to go to St. Helena, that is, from December, 1818, and continues until June, 1823. The account is sometimes given without any indication of date,[2] and at times it is written from day to day. There is very little that is interesting in the first part, and the other part cannot be depended on. Napoleon probably knew that his doctor kept a diary of his illness, but as he had very little to do with him it is not at all likely that he troubled to enquire whether Antommarchi were preparing his *Memorial.*

Antommarchi has been accused [3] of enriching his book by additions taken from other publications, and this is very possible, as *Napoleon in Exile* was published in 1822, the *Mémorial* in 1823, and the *Derniers moments de Napoléon* in 1825. Antommarchi no doubt wished to make the most of his opportunities,[4] but it seems very probable that he borrowed largely from those who brought out their books before him, as there is perhaps not one single account in his work which is not already given by the other Memoralists. .

[1] Preface to the *Précis des Campagnes de César* (Bibliography, 14).

[2] *Derniers moments,* Vol. I, pp. 1–75, 168–190, 215–236, 245–267, 272–278, etc.

[3] Touchard-Lafosse, *Précis de l'histoire de Napoléon;* Paris, Thoisnier-Desplaces, 1825.

[4] Without much success, it appears. With the exception of the edition of 1825 and the recent new edition of Garnier's, the *Derniers moments de Napoléon* were never published apart, but always as a complement to the *Mémorial* (in the 1842 edition, for instance), and to the *Napoleon in Exile* (in the Spanish edition of O'Meara, Paris, Bossange, 1827).

It is quite possible that Antommarchi obtained Napoleon's conversations from the works of O'Meara or Las Cases, and that he only added to them the charm of his own style. There is one example of this kind in which the bombastic doctor makes use of anecdotes already well known. In the *Letters from the Cape*[1] there is an account of Admiral Cockburn sending an invitation to Napoleon and addressing it to General Bonaparte.

"Send this card to General Bonaparte," said Napoleon to Bertrand, "the last news I have of him dates from the battlefield of the Pyramids and of Mount Thabor."

Antommarchi tells us in his book[2] that Sir Hudson Lowe, who was somewhat anxious about Napoleon, said to him:

"What does General Bonaparte do?"

"I do not know," replied the doctor.

"Where is he?"

"I have no idea."

"Do you mean that he has disappeared?"

"Absolutely."

"But when?"

"I do not know exactly."

"But at what time?"

"I fancy the last battle at which he commanded was the Battle of Aboukir, I have heard nothing of him since then."

There is another page on this theme, for the doctor certainly had the dramatic instinct, but his book cannot have much value historically if he compiled it in this way.[3]

It does not do therefore to depend on Antommarchi's work, but the loss is not really great. The short account he gives is largely made up of documentary evidence in support of what he has to say and of digressions,[4] which considerably shorten the more useful part of the book. Even in this part of it there is scarcely anything that is not to be found elsewhere. The historian need not therefore count on Antommarchi's book, *Derniers moments de Napoléon*, for obtaining any information.

[1] Fifth letter. [2] *Derniers moments*, Vol. II, p. 51.

[3] Compare, too, the *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. II, p. 550; *Derniers moments*, Vol. II, p. 113: the account of the corroboration of Napoleon's death by the English doctors.

[4] *Derniers Moments*, Vol. I, pp. 220, 260, 286, 291, 304, 310, 335, etc.

CHAPTER XIII

THE MINOR WRITERS

BESIDE Las Cases, O'Meara, Montholon, Gourgaud, and Antommarchi there is a whole crowd of minor writers who have added their contributions to Napoleonic history. Among such writers were English officers in the army or navy, who had either accompanied the exile to St. Helena or who had been on guard when he was there. There were travellers, too, who during a short sojourn on the island had obtained an introduction to the captive. There were also professional writers who drew upon their fertile imagination and supplied French readers with detailed accounts calculated to delight them. There are very many such writers, and for the most part the Napoleonic history of the minor Memorialists is not to be depended upon. The writings of Gourgaud will be considered later on in this volume.

Among the unauthentic works on St. Helena, the most remarkable is, perhaps, the volume published under the title of *Le Mémorial de Sir Hudson Lowe, relatif à la captivité de Napoléon à Sainte-Hélène.*[1] It is quite certain that Sir Hudson Lowe never published any work in defence of himself at St. Helena. His faithful historian, Forsyth, blames him severely on this account.[2] This fact alone is a proof that no such work was ever written and, for anyone well up in the subject, the perusal of the book would suffice. It is

[1] Paris, Dureuil, 1830. There have been Dutch, German, and Swedish translations of this. M. Kircheisen, in his *Bibliographie Napoléons*, (Leipzig, Kircheisen, 1902), mentions this work without specifying its apocryphal character.

[2] Vol. III, p. 345 *sqq.*

cleverly put together from material borrowed from O'Meara and Las Cases, and it is written by someone who had his own private ideas about Napoleon. It is a confession, too, under the pretence of being an apology. Sir Hudson Lowe is supposed to plead guilty to all of which he was accused. Nothing could possibly be more improbable than this, for Sir Hudson Lowe was convinced that he had always acted in accordance with his duty, and he certainly never felt any remorse. This *Mémorial* is therefore nothing but a very skilfully executed forgery.

There is another forgery of this kind which was still more evident, but which nevertheless had great success among Napoleonic literature. This work was entitled *L'Histoire des trois derniers mois de la vie de Napoléon Bonaparte, écrite d'après des documents authentiques, par S——*.[1] It matters little to know that S—— stood for Simonin, as the documents given were certainly not authentic. The whole work is a collection of imaginary episodes and of historical facts ridiculously distorted, so that it is of no use whatever.

There is still another of these books, comic in its absurdity. It is entitled *Chagrins domestiques de Napoléon Bonaparte à Sainte-Hélène*. It is said to be published from papers taken from his cabinet the night of the 4th to 5th of May, 1821.[2] This remarkable production was translated into Spanish.[3]

The *Bonaparte à Sainte-Hélène*, by James Tyder (surgeon in the English Navy), appears to be a very French book, and is devoid of all interest.[4]

The same might be said of the romantic account by John Monkhouse, an officer in the Royal Marines.[5] This book seems to be equally fictitious, but there is a certain liveliness about it.

Besides these works there is a whole series of utterly useless books, which are nevertheless authentic. They are written

[1] Bibliography, 61.
[2] Bibliography, 60. Quérard (*Supercheries*, Vol. III, p. 603) gives the work as being by Charles Doris.
[3] Burdeos, Lawalle, 1821.
[4] Bibliography, p. 55. We have not found any English edition.
[5] *Id.*, p. 58. Same observation. Norvins, in his *Histoire de Napoléon* (1827), has made use of this more than doubtful source.

by various officers, travellers, and commercial people who saw Napoleon, perhaps for an hour or two or perhaps during a fortnight, and who then thought it their duty to write an account of this great event.

Among such writers were certain officers on the *Bellerophon*: Maitland,[1] for instance, and his sub-officers,[2] the officers of Admiral Hotham's fleet,[3] Mr. Littleton, a Member of Parliament,[4] Colonel Wilks, the former Governor,[5] Herbert John Clifford, a lieutenant in the Navy, who stayed for a short time at St. Helena,[6] Basil Hall, who was also there for a time,[7] Theodore Hook, a colonial official who was returning to England,[8] Dr. Arnott, who was with Antommarchi during the last phase of Napoleon's illness.[9] All these people and very many more have given their testimony. Sometimes it is interesting, in an indirect way, but it is generally just a brief account of very little importance.

There are other writers, too, who were perhaps better informed, but whose accounts are also of very little historical value. Mrs. Abell, *née* Elisabeth Balcombe, daughter of the purveyor of St. Helena, seems to have improvised upon her childish recollections. She tells us things which are amusing, but which sound somewhat doubtful occasionally.[10] Lieutenant-Colonel Basil Jackson, of St. Helena, gives us very few of his recollections, and yet these ought certainly to have been interesting.[11] In the *Campagnes d'Egypte* and in the *Précis des guerres de César* there are just a few recollections given in the preface by Bertrand and Marchand, and yet it is known that both these men wrote more than this. There are other works which are useful for general history, and there are some which are of great value for giving more details about Napoleon and his companions in exile, but these are not of any great service for the subject studied

[1] Bibliography, pp. 33, 33 (*a*).
[2] *Id.*, pp. 27, 34.
[3] *Relations du Capitaine Senhouse, Revue hebdomadaire,* September 11th 1897.
[4] Bibliography, p. 43.
[5] *Id.*, p. 48.
[6] *Id.*, p. 45.
[7] *Id.*, p. 36.
[8] *Id.*, pp. 30, 31. The number 31 is the French adaptation of number 30.
[9] *Id.*, p. 32.
[10] *Id.*, p. 38.
[11] *Id.*, p. 39.

in this book, as they are not collections of Napoleonic conversations.

Among such publications are Forsyth's *History of the captivity of Napoleon at St. Helena,* written from the papers of Sir Hudson Lowe;[1] the reports of the Commissioners of the Powers;[2] the Comtesse de Montholon's *Souvenirs,*[3] and those of Major Walter Henry.[4] There is also Dr. Verling's unpublished diary.[5] This is interesting, but, although he lived some time at Longwood, he never attended Napoleon professionally. Dr. Warden's *Letters* were famous in their day and they ought to have been useful, for, as the doctor was army surgeon on the *Northumberland,* he obtained his information from the French of Longwood, more particularly from Las Cases.[7] The tone of these letters is most childishly conceited, and there are accounts of long and most improbable conversations with Napoleon.[8] All this makes them appear somewhat doubtful. The *Lettres du Cap* were written in reply to them and, as the true facts were given in these about matters which Warden had discussed, as well as Napoleon's opinion about these matters, Warden's Letters were of no further use.

There are still three more works which are useful for the study of our subject. The first of these is the *Diary of Lady Malcolm.*[9] She was the wife of the Admiral in command of the cruising fleet stationed round St. Helena in 1816–1817. Her diary is written simply. It contains several detailed conversations with Napoleon which make it extremely interesting.

[1] *Id.*, pp. 96, 96 (*a*).

[2] The Reports of Comte de Balmain (Bibliography, p. 44) are very witty and interesting. Those of Baron von Sturmer (Bibliography, pp. 40, 40 (*a*) are much less so. Those of the Marquis de Montchenu are at times ridiculous and at times amusing (Bibliography, p. 42). The publisher of this last work, M. Firmin-Didot, seems to have gone through volumes 1804–1805 of the *Archives des Affaires étrangères* and to have omitted volume 1804 *bis*.

[3] Bibliography, p. 47. [4] *Id.*, p. 37.

[5] Bibliography of unpublished writings, *Archives nationales.*

[6] Bibliography, pp. 28, 28 (*a*).

[7] *Mémorial,* May 19th, 1816.

[8] Warden, who scarcely knew any French, could only have talked to Napoleon through an interpreter.

[9] Bibliography, p. 46.

The other two works might really be considered as only one. First comes Admiral Cockburn's diary[1] and then that of his secretary, Glover.[2] On comparing these two works, it is very evident that the secretary's diary is merely the rough copy or memento of the Admiral's.

In the first place most of Napoleon's conversations are given in both in almost identical terms. One of the writers must have been using the notes of the other one.

The Admiral frequently omits many of the needless details.[3] He sums up, in a brief account, what Glover tells day by day.[4] Then, too, he frequently adds his own private reflections.[5] Lord Rosebery speaks of all this in his work.[6] As regards Napoleon's conversations the two books are of about the same value, although Admiral Cockburn gives perhaps rather more than his secretary. This work is really of great service as there are many of these conversations. They are sometimes important ones, and they appear to be faithfully reported. Among what Lord Rosebery styles "the light artillery of St. Helena" the Glover-Cockburn diary is one of the most important batteries.

[1] Bibliography, p. 35. [2] *Id.*, p. 41.

[3] About the games at cards (August 9th, 1815) Napoleon's companions (August 6th, 7th, 12th).

[4] September 7th–23rd, 1815, September 23rd–October 6th, October 6th–22nd, etc.

[5] See August 9th, 10th, 13th, 19th, September 17th, 23rd, 1815.

[6] *Napoleon, the Last Phase*, Chapter iv.

CHAPTER XIV

NAPOLEON AND THE PRINCIPLES OF 1789

AFTER examining the works written at St. Helena, discovering their origin and the way in which they were written, and determining their relative value, it will be interesting to see that the essentials of the Napoleonic legend are really to be found in the works of Napoleon and his companions and that there is perfect conformity between the Memoirs and the Memorials and absolute concordance in the Memorials themselves.

The exile insisted repeatedly on the following points:

Napoleon was the representative of the principles of 1789.

He was the defender of the law of nationalities.

He was pacific and only went to war against his will.

He always respected religious principles and, whilst upholding the rights of the State, he always approved the influence of religion on society.

Although the family and dynasty of Napoleon were to a certain extent, through their mistakes, responsible for the downfall of the Emperor, they nevertheless deserved public esteem and the confidence of the nation.

The most perfect accord is to be found on all these points in the real Napoleonic works, the Memoirs and the Memorials. All the different authors refer to each other's works, without any fear of finding contradictory statements on any of these themes. Las Cases, the most celebrated of the Memorialists, refers to the *Letters from the Cape*,[1] to

[1] *Mémorial*, November 20th, 1816.

various other works on special subjects,[1] and he also guarantees the truth of O'Meara's statements.[2]

In the *Letters from the Cape* we are referred to the *Manuscrit de l'île d'Elbe*,[3] to the account of the Italian campaign and to the Egyptian one.[4]

There are many other instances that could be cited, for certainly this absolute agreement among the Memorialists is a most convincing proof in favour of our theory.[5]

First then, Napoleon maintains that he was the representative of the principles of the Revolution. From sheer necessity he was armed and a conqueror, although by nature pacific. He upheld these principles in spite of the Royalists in Vendémiaire,[6] in Fructidor,[7] and in 1815.[8] He applied these principles, too, in his government.[9] He "consecrated the Revolution and infused it into the laws."[10] He was "the Messiah" of the Revolution, and for all nations his name was "the war-cry of their efforts."[11] The principles of the Revolution were summed up in two words, in two ideals: Liberty, Equality.

Equality had been the great wish and passion of the French middle class and of the people. It was for the sake of equality that they had accepted Imperial despotism, and later on the Restoration had been obliged to leave them this.

[1] To the *Notes sur l'Art de la guerre*, October 25th, 1816; to the *Notes sur les Quatre Concordats*, August 17th and November 11th, 1816.

[2] *Résumé* of July–October, 1816.

[3] Third Letter, commencement.

[4] Third Letter.

[5] There is scarcely any need to remark that in this and the following chapters it is Napoleon who speaks, and that all which is not an exact quotation is a *résumé*.

[6] "If the Convention succumbs, what is to become of the great truths of our Revolution?" (*Treize Vendémiaire*, Version by Las Cases, publisher, Garnier, Vol. I, p. 452).

[7] Las Cases, June 9th, 1816. *Campagne d'Italie*, 18th of Fructidor.

[8] In 1814, the Seigneurs and the priests had got back the ascendancy which they had in the former *régime* and they treated the people in the same haughty way; everyone was awaiting the return of feudal rights, and already felt the chain which had been broken by the Revolution" (*Cent-Jours*, Chapter VII, p. 7).

[9] "The principles of the representative government and of the Imperial monarchy which were those of the French people since the Revolution" (*Cent-Jours*, Chapter VI, p. 2).

[10] *Derniers Moments de Napoléon*, October 22nd, 1820.

[11] *Mémorial*, April 9th–10th, 1816.

Napoleon thoroughly realised the depth and intensity of this desire. There is not a single passage in the St. Helena literature which belies the passion he had always proclaimed for equality.

"I gave to the French nation all that it was possible to give of equality,"[1] he says, and then again: "I endeavoured to introduce a system of general equality—I tried to establish a Government which, although it was a strict one, was nevertheless a popular Government."[2] "It was for this reason," said Napoleon to O'Meara," that your oligarchy detested me so much."[3]

Napoleon maintained that there are two principles which are the very foundation of such a Government: an equality of the burdens and an equality of all rights. He always took both into account.

The Revolution had traced out the path for him. "It had compelled all citizens to bear the State expenses; it had established equality of rights—every citizen could, according to his talents, obtain any post. It had made civil and criminal laws the same in all places . . ."[4] Napoleon insisted on this double equality.

The heaviest burden of all, that of military liabilities, weighed equally on all shoulders during his reign.

"No man was exempt from drawing lots for conscription," says Napoleon, "and conscription was the most just, the most merciful, and the most advantageous method for the people."[5] Napoleon "did away with all exemptions, even those allowed for an under-sized man, as exemptions made the burden of conscription so heavy for the others."[6] The possession by the small peasant landholders of the National

[1] *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. II, p. 427.

[2] *Napoléon en exil*, September 7th, 1817.

[3] *Id.*, March 3rd, 1817. Compare in the *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. I, p. 142, an expression word for word like this. We may note also in the *Campagne d'Egypte*, Bertrand's version, chapter vi, Vol. I, the indication that Napoleon wanted to abolish the feudal *régime* even in Egypt.

[4] *Napoléon en exil*, January 1st, 1818. A passage almost the same is to be found in the *Manuscrit de l'île d'Elbe*, Chapter III.

[5] Note I of *L'Art de la guerre*.

[6] Note II of *L'Art de la guerre*. Napoleon speaks again (Note XVIII) of the necessity of not granting exemption in this matter.

property which had been sold, interested the rural class in the Revolution. This was a strong security for the maintenance of equality, and it had been so closely bound up with the principles of the Imperial Government that it was greatly shaken by the fall of that.

The Bourbons attacked the "irrevocability of the National domains." Under Napoleon "the decrees of the State Council had always maintained the principle of the irrevocability of the sales, even when the legal formalities had not been carried out with all due correctness." During a revolutionary crisis Napoleon considered that it was sometimes impossible to avoid this.[1] He insisted on the equality of rights even more than on that of the burdens.

"I stimulated all kinds of emulation," he says, "and I rewarded all merit."[2] "My maxim was that every career should be open to talent, without distinction of birth."[3] "I wanted everyone to be able to take any post, provided he could fill it worthily."[4] "Whenever I met with a man of merit and talent I promoted him, without asking him how many degrees of nobility he had."[5]

But the uneducated class can scarcely help being influenced by the more privileged classes, so that whilst in theory the people may rise to the highest offices, in practice their ignorance is an invincible obstacle. Napoleon's great wish was to remove this obstacle.

"If I had only been thinking of myself and of my power, if I had really had any other object in view than the reign of reason," says Napoleon, "I should have endeavoured to hide all lights under a bushel, instead of which I always tried to bring them to the full light of day."[6] "One of my principal objects was to extend the benefits of education to all classes of the people. I arranged things in such a way that the cost of an ordinary education was so moderate that the

[1] Seventh note on the Letters of Hobhouse.

[2] *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. II, p. 377.

[3] *Id.*, Vol. I, p. 142. See exactly the same expression in O'Meara, August 27th, 1816, March 3rd, 1817.

[4] *Napoléon en exil*, September 7th, 1817.

[5] *Id.*, February 18th, 1818.

[6] *Mémorial*, October 19th–20th, 1815.

simple agricultural labour could meet it. The museums were open to everyone.[1] My schools and my mutual instruction prepared the generations of the future."[2]

All means were to be employed for instructing the people. When once the country priests had been taught agriculture and the elements of medicine and law, they would have been able to enlighten their parishioners. Every regiment was to have its school "for the commencement or the continuation of instruction of all kinds, either of a scientific nature, or for the arts, or for mechanics."[3] Knowledge reaching the masses in this way would have transformed them.

But, in a country centralised as France is, the equality fixed by the laws is nothing unless the man who governs is determined to govern for everyone. The law may prescribe equality of rights and equality of charges, but if the Government is inclined to favour one class or one party, there are a thousand ways, either privately or in the details of its administration, of re-establishing inequality. Napoleon believed in the real equality. He was the sovereign of everyone, and he represented everyone's interests. He never favoured, persecuted, or excluded anyone.

"My ambition was great," he said; "I admit that, but it was based on the opinion of the masses.[4] No great things can be done in France unless the Government is supported by the masses—I always relied on everyone without any exception. I was the first to set the example of a Government favouring the interests of everyone. I neither governed through nor for the nobles, the priests, the middle class, or the working class. I governed for the whole community, for the whole of the great French family."[5] "I went ahead, supported by the approval of five or six millions of men. I always believed that the real sovereignty is with the people. The Imperial Government was a sort of Republic.[6] I am a

[1] *Napoléon en exil*, February 21st, 1818.
[2] *Mémorial*, November 29th–30th, 1815.
[3] *Mémorial*, November 14th, 1816.
[4] *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. I, p. 142. Compare a similar phrase in *Napoléon en exil*, March 3rd, 1817.
[5] *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. II, p. 520.
[6] *Napoléon en exil*, March 3rd, 1817.

man of the people, for I come from the people myself."[1] As a proof of this, Napoleon delighted to tell the story of the woman at Tarara, who saluted him as the *King of the people* instead of the *King of the nobles.*[2]

But Napoleon went on to explain that the word must not be taken in its narrow sense, and *King of the people* did not mean persecutor of the nobles and of the priests. On the contrary, in that time of civil wars, when whole classes were being withdrawn from the nation, Napoleon's one idea had been to reconcile, to amalgamate, and not to extirpate like the Revolutionists. At Marseilles, in 1794, he had saved some political emigrants.[3] During his Italian campaign he had treated the Pope with respect, and he had also treated the French priests, who had taken refuge in Italy, with great kindness. He had refused to urge the Italian democrats on to violent revolutions.[4] He had always blamed the severity of the *Directoire* after the victory of Fructidor.[5] When he was Consul he had pacified France by means of the Concordat, by his clemency with regard to the political emigrants, and by his appeal to the well-intentioned men of all parties.[6] When he was Emperor, he had rallied the old nobility by inviting it to his Court.[7] On his return from Elba, he had refused to avenge himself, and had saved the nobles from the fury of the people.[8] He troubled so little about private grudges that he had at once tried to improve the lot of the poor, provincial, political emigrants whom the Court had abandoned.[9]

He had other plans, too, for the extinction of hatred and

[1] *Napoléon en exil*, February 18th, 1818.

[2] *Id.*, August 27th, 1816. The anecdote is to be found again in the *Mémorial*, March 5th, 1816, and in Gourgaud, December 16th, 1816.

[3] *Précis des opérations de l'armée d'Italie* (1792–1795), Vol. V.

[4] Napoleon often refers to these facts. See *Campagne d'Italie*, Tolentino, Vol, VI; Négociations en 1797, Vol. II; *Mémorial*, September 1st–6th, and October 31st, 1816.

[5] *Campagne d'Italie*, Fructidor 18th, Vol. IX.

[6] *Mémoires*: Consuls provisoires, *passim*; *Cent-Jours*, intérieur, Vol. I. Compare *Mémorial*, March 27th, July 18th, 1816.

[7] *Mémorial*, November 16th, 1815: "My system of amalgamating required this." Compare March 5th, 1816.

[8] *Cent-Jours*, Chapters II, IV, V, *Mémorial*, October 16, 1816.

[9] *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. I, p. 384.

for the gradual fusion of all parties. When he was a General he had disliked the idea of appearing at the fête celebrated on the anniversary of Louis XVI's death.[1] When he was Emperor he had wanted to transform the Madeleine Church into a Temple of Glory and a monument consecrated to the memory of the victims of the Revolution.[2]

As he had always treated everyone on an equality, everyone had been devoted to him. Most of the nobility had rallied to him, and two of the nobles, Las Cases and Montholon, had accompanied him to St. Helena. The Vendeans, who had been the allies of Prussia and Austria against the Revolution in 1793, fought against the Prussians and the Austrians in 1814 to defend the Empire.[3]

All the people were the supporters of his throne, the accomplices of his so-called usurpation.

"I never usurped the crown," says Napoleon. "I lifted it out of the gutter, and the people put it on to my head."[4] "I was the chosen one of the French people, what they then worshipped was their own work."[5]

The Bourbons, we are told, failed to rally the nation to them. Logically they were the companions of the political emigrants, the allies of the privileged classes against the people. If they had wished to be the "people's kings," showing equality to everyone, they would not have succeeded.[6] In spite of themselves they had been obliged to recommence the third dynasty instead of commencing the fifth.

All this no doubt sounds as though Napoleon had a great love of equality, but, if the Revolution had abolished all distinctions, why was it necessary to establish a new Order, the Legion of Honour? Why was it necessary, too, to create a fresh nobility?

Napoleon himself answers these objections. He maintains

[1] See *Campagne d'Italie*, Retour de Rastadt (Las Cases's version).
[2] *Mémorial*, November 18th, 1815.
[3] *Mémoires*, Vendée (1822 edition), Vol. VIII, p. 184.
[4] *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. I, p. 384.
[5] *Mémorial*, March 27th, 1816.
[6] See the long demonstration of this idea in the *Note sur Fleury de Chaboulon* (1822 edition, Vol. IV, p. 298, *sqq.*). Compare *Mémorial*, January 12th–14th, February 17th, April 17th, 1816. Lady Malcolm's *Diary*, July 4th, 1816, January 31st, 1817.

that it is not contrary to the principles of equality to reward merit, and that the Legion of Honour, which could be given to everyone who deserved it, was the very symbol of equality.[1] Napoleon offered it to everyone alike, it was the reward of every kind of talent.[2] He even regretted that he had not braved the prejudices of the epoch and given it to the comedians and to singers, such as Talma and Elleviou.[3]

Similar reasons justified the creation of the nobility of the Empire. This, too, was not contrary to the principles of equality, as it was open to everyone, and new members were constantly recruited from the ranks of the people. It was not an exclusive caste; it was a selection of the best of the nation.

"An aristocracy is necessary in every nation," says Napoleon.[4] "The aristocracy of the Empire would have gradually become the object of national emulation. During my reign, every Frenchman could say to himself: 'If I deserve it I shall be Prime Minister, Grand Officer of the Empire, Baron, Count, Duke, or even King.' There was no obstacle for anyone."[5] "A reasonable democracy merely insists on everyone having an equal right to lay claim to things and to obtain them,"[6] and Napoleon, by giving to everyone this equality, could say that his nobility was the people's nobility.[7]

But when once this equality was given to everyone, rank and rewards could only be bestowed according to merit. If men, like children, appreciated being rewarded by *babies' rattles* and *gew gaws*,[8] why not acquire at so cheap a rate

[1] *Mémorial*, May 2nd, 1816.
[2] *Id.*, March 5th, 1816.
[3] *Id.*, October 6th–7th, 1816. Compare Note XVI of *L'Art de la guerre*.
[4] Compare *Mémoires*, Consuls provisoires, Vol. II: "To make a constitution in a country which has no kind of aristocracy, would be attempting to navigate in one single element. The French Revolution undertook a problem as difficult of solution as the management of balloons." Compare the *Mémorial*, July 18th, 1816, and again April 11th–12th, 1816: "The democracy raises the sovereignty, the aristocracy alone preserves it."
[5] *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. II, p. 427. Compare Note XXVI on the *Manuscrit de Sainte-Hélène* (*Mémoires*, 1822, Vol. IV, p. 245, *sqq.*).
[6] *Mémorial*, July 18th, 1816.
[7] *Napoléon en exil*, September 7th, 1817.
[8] *Mémorial*, March 5th, 1816.

their devotion for the benefit of society at large? With regard to the perpetuation of these titles which were only in name and not accompanied by any material benefit, there was nothing to be scandalised at, as it was only a case of having the right to bequeath one's belongings to one's children.[1] The principle of equality was thus secure, and this creation of a fresh nobility had a whole multitude of other advantages which Napoleon exposes in one of his *Notes sur le Manuscrit de Sainte-Hélène.* Among the advantages he gives were the following: to reconcile France to Europe, as the latter, which still retained its nobility, had no sympathy with a country having no aristocracy: to reconcile old France with modern France, by mixing the nobles of royal or feudal origin with the nobles created on the battlefields of the Revolution and of the Empire;[2] to do away with all that remained of feudality in Europe by associating the idea of nobility with services rendered to the State, and by so doing away with the old feudal idea. The old nobility would thus have been recreated according to the new principles and would have become a nobility of service.

A Montmorency would thus have been a Duke not because he was a Montmorency, but because one of his ancestors had been *Connétable* and had rendered great services to the State.[3]

In spite of all these reasons, Napoleon sometimes wondered whether he had not been wrong in admitting this exception to the principle of equality. "I fancy I was wrong," he says, "because it weakened that system of equality which the nation liked so much."[4]

His nobility had not served him much and was of no use to his son,[5] so that he came to the conclusion that it might have

[1] Note XXVI on the *Manuscrit de Sainte-Hélène* (*Mémoires*, 1822, Vol. IV, p. 245).

[2] *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. I, p. 348.

[3] *Note XXVI sur le Manuscrit de Sainte-Hélène* (*Mémoires*, 1822, Vol. IV, p. 245, *sqq.*): "Every family which counted among its ancestors a Cardinal, a Grand Officer of the Crown, a Marshal of France, or a Minister would have been able, on that account, to solicit from the Privy Council the title of duke, etc." Compare *Mémorial*, July 18th, 1816: and *Campagne de César*, Mort de César, Vol. I.

[4] *Napoléon en exil*, October 17th, 1816.

[5] *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. I, p. 521.

been better to have kept to the principle of absolute equality.[1]

The question of the principle of liberty was still more delicate. The Imperial Government might set up for being a Government favouring equality, but it was certainly difficult for it to get itself recognised as a liberal Government. . . . Napoleon's reasonings and arguments are therefore more abundant on this subject than on that of equality. In 1815, he told Benjamin Constant that liberty had been the passion of his youth and that he had had every reason to understand what it meant. Before the Revolution his *Histoire de la Corse* and his speech at the Academy of Lyons proved his republican sentiments.[2] When he was in garrison at Valencia,[3] he was by no means silent about these sentiments. Later on they were modified,[4] thanks to the excesses of the Revolution, and during the Egyptian expedition Napoleon had gradually come back to the opinion of the more enlightened minds, of those people who, as early as 1792, had come to the conclusion that the republican system was incompatible with the habits and customs of the France of that epoch.[5] Napoleon was persuaded at that time that France could only be monarchical.[6] Liberal institutions, however, may exist elsewhere than in a republic. People had more liberty under the English monarchy than under the Jacobin republic, and Napoleon, as faithful to his early ideas of liberty as he was to the recollections of his childhood, had always guaranteed civil liberty at any rate. Thanks to the Code every citizen was safe from arbitrary condemnations. The publicity of all trials and of all forms of criminal justice ensured this, and those nations who received the Code, thanks to the French conquest, had all decided to keep it afterwards.

[1] Similar regrets are to be found in the *Cent-Jours* (Chap. VIII), with regard to the *Acte Additionnel*. According to Carnot's opinion, Napoleon ought to have established two Chambers nominated by the people, and not to have created, like the English, a Chamber of Peers, which was aristocratic, side by side with the Chamber of Representatives.

[2] *Napoléon en exil*, August 25th, 1817.

[3] *Mémorial*, August 3rd, 27th–31st, 1815.

[4] *Id.*, March 27th, 1816.

[5] *Id.*, June 12th, 1816, Dictation on the Convention.

[6] *Mémoires*, Consuls provisoires, XI.

A great deal has been said about the State prisons which Napoleon re-established. These eight Bastilles, as they were called, only contained, in 1814, two hundred and forty-three prisoners. There was, at that time, a population of forty millions under the Empire. All these people were still agitated by foreign wars, and they were only just free after the terrible Revolution which had shaken the very foundations of society, for they had been a prey to civil war.[1] These prisoners were, for the most part, *Chouans* or political emigrants, who would have been condemned to death at once if they had been brought before the Courts of Justice. Napoleon had not wished for such severity, and so these prisoners were merely retained until there was a general peace. Annual inspections by the State Councillors, followed by reports to the Emperor's Privy Council, prevented any possibility of the detention being arbitrary or unduly prolonged. . . . The decree by which these prisons had been instituted was, Napoleon maintained, "a liberal regulation and a beneficent act of administration. It made individual liberty more complete and more sure in France than in any country in Europe, more so even than in England."[2]

Napoleon declared, too, that he had always disliked the institution of the *Cabinet noir*, the violation of the secrecy of letters. This was quite an old tradition at the time he came into power. He did not consider it of much use: he even thought it dangerous, and so he had kept a check on it."[3]

Religious liberty, he maintained, was as dear to him as civil liberty. "I wanted to establish universal liberty of conscience," he said. "I wanted everyone to be allowed to think and to believe in his own way, and all men, whether Catholics, Protestants, Mahometans, or Deists, to be equal."[4]

This he declared was the reason of his policy towards the Jews. He wanted to help them out of the state of inferiority

[1] Note VI on *Les Quatre Concordats,* very complete on the question.
[2] *Mémorial,* July 20th, 1816 (very similar to the Note VI on *Les Quatre Concordats*). *Napoleon en exil,* May 30th, 1817.
[3] *Récits de la captivité,* Vol. I, p. 211; Vol. II, p. 370. *Mémorial,* December 18th–19th, 1815.
[4] *Napoléon en exil,* November 2nd, 1816.

in which they were then living and to assimilate them with the other citizens.[1] The liberty of the Press also appealed to him. He considered this as the result and the continuation of liberty of thought, and during the Hundred Days he had proved this.[2]

He was by no means as authoritative as people imagined. The great State institutions had never been his servile instruments. The deliberations in the State Council, in the Legislative Assembly and in the Senate were absolutely free.

"They all acted according to their convictions," says Napoleon, "and not from obedience. The votes in the Senate were almost unanimous, because everyone was of the same opinion there."[3] The *Tribunat* was done away with not because it interfered with the authority of the master, but because it was a costly abuse and its suppression was an important economy.[4]

Napoleon did not deny, though, that he had taken all power into his own hands for a time and suspended the exercise of political liberties. This was because the "necessity of the moment,"[5] the force of circumstances,[6] had obliged him to take the Dictatorship in order to preserve France from ruin. "As long as I remained at the head of things, France was in the same state as Rome at the time when it was declared necessary to have a Dictator in order to save the Republic,"[7] says Napoleon. "My Dictatorship was indispensable," he continues, "and the proof of this is that they always wanted to give me more power than I needed."[8]

Antommarchi, in his theatrical style, quotes Napoleon's words as follows: "Circumstances were difficult, I was obliged to be severe, to postpone things; reverses came, the bow was

[1] *Troisième Lettre du Cap, sub finem.*
[2] *Récits de la captivité,* Vol. I, p. 303. *Mémorial,* June 13th, December 20th–23rd, 1816.
[3] *Mémorial,* November 1st–4th, 1815. Compare Note VIII of *L'Art de la guerre.*
[4] *Mémorial,* November 1st–4th, 1815.
[5] *Id.*, December 18th–19th, 1815.
[6] *Id.*, November 1st–4th, 1815.
[7] *Napoléon en exil,* February 18th, 1818.
[8] *Récits de la captivité,* Vol. II, p. 521.

drawn and I could not unbend it, so that France has been deprived of the liberal institutions I had planned for her." [1]

These compelling forces were of two kinds: danger from without and danger from within, or as Napoleon puts it, "dissolution from within, and invasion from without." [2] Monarchical Europe was in coalition against the principles of 1789. A concentration of power was absolutely necessary in order to resist this. Unity of action was the only hope, and so despotic power had to be given to one man.

"When people reproach me with my despotism," says Napoleon, "it is because they do not understand that it was a necessity. It was the only way of maintaining that French greatness which I had established at the cost of a hundred victories on the *débris* of an order of things which the Revolution had overthrown, but which it had not destroyed in such a way that its resurrection was impossible. People forget that our Revolution had isolated us and made us hated by all the kings of Europe." [3] "They wanted me to be a Washington, but I could only be a crowned Washington. It could only have been in a Congress of kings, among kings who were convinced and overmastered, that I could have become that. . . . I could only arrive at it by means of universal dictatorship." [4]

The necessity for this concentration and for this unity of power had been very evident after Brumaire.

"France, in the hands of several at that moment," continues Napoleon, "would have perished under the blows of united Europe. She put the helm into the hands of one man and I, as First Consul, immediately laid down the law to that same Europe." [5]

While the armies of Europe were threatening the frontiers, the revolutionary factions were threatening from within. "Those outside, in arms, were fighting our principles," explains Napoleon, "and in the name of our principles, those

[1] *Derniers moments*, May 3rd, 1821.
[2] *Mémorial*, November 29th–30th, 1815.
[3] *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. I, p. 346; Vol. II, p. 420.
[4] *Mémorial*, November 29th–30th, 1815; September 2nd, 1816. *Napoléon en exil*, February 18th, 1818.
[5] *Mémorial*, November 11th, 1816.

within were attacking me in the opposite sense. If I had given way at all there would have been a repetition of the *Directoire*. I should have been the object and France the inevitable victim of another Brumaire.[1] Licence, anarchy and all kinds of disorder were still at the very threshold of our doors."[2] "I was there between the two parties which were agitating my country and I was like a rider on a spirited horse, which rears and springs first to one side and then to the other, so that in order to keep straight on, the rider is obliged to hold his steed in."[3]

Finally Napoleon considered that if the people were to make good use of all the liberties which had been so urgently demanded, they needed a better education than they had hitherto had.

"The fundamental basis of constitutional organisation was the education which the French masses lacked at that time.[4] Those who reproach me with not having given enough liberty to the French are probably not aware that, in 1804, ninety-six Frenchmen out of a hundred could not read. All the liberty I could give to these intelligent masses, ignorant and demoralised by revolutionary anarchy and war, I did give."[5] These people were incapable of guiding themselves, they would have allowed themselves to be led by the large landed proprietors, who were for the most part royalists. "Look at the present Chamber," says Napoleon,[6] "it is more royalist than the King; it ventures to raise the banner of feudal reaction."[7] From all this we are given to understand that if Napoleon seized the dictatorship on the 18th of Brumaire it was to save France from ruin.

Independently of what Napoleon himself says about this, it is a well known fact that what he did on the 18th of Brumaire he did with the complicity of all France and that France applauded the illegal act. Napoleon never really felt that it

[1] *Mémorial*, September 7th, 1816.
[2] *Id.*, May 1st, 1816. *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. II, p. 378.
[3] *Napoléon en exil*, February 18th, 1818.
[4] *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. I, p. 346.
[5] *Id.*, Vol. II, p. 426.
[6] The *Chambre introuvable*.
[7] *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. I, p. 347.

was necessary to attempt to justify the *coup d'état* of Brumaire. He never troubled to do so, except when certain pamphlets attacked him on this particular subject,[1] and he only did so then with the disdain of a practical man for what he termed "metaphysical abstractions."[2] Usually, when he relates all this, he does not seem to think that there was anything to justify, except perhaps, the slowness and the moderation with which he had acted.[3]

The Roman Dictators only kept the power for six months and Napoleon was Dictator fourteen years. Some explanation for this seems to be necessary and he does not hesitate to give it. The reason that he continued to keep the power was that the danger continued.

"The peril was always the same," he says, "the struggle was terrible and the crisis imminent."[4]

The proof of this was given in 1815. Napoleon did not declare himself Dictator on his return from Elba, nor yet on his return from Waterloo, and this was perhaps the cause of the ruin of France.[5] If only the crisis had ended satisfactorily and general peace had been finally declared, the Dictatorship would have come to an end. "If the Russians had been conquered in 1812," he says, "I should have associated my son with the Empire, my Dictatorship would have come to an end and his constitutional reign would have commenced."[6] According to Napoleon, political despotism would thus have ceased and also the terrible administrative centralisation, which made little Emperors of the Prefects.

"The governing net-work with which I had covered the ground needed to be of great tension and to have a wonderful force of elasticity so that the terrible blows aimed at us

[1] *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. II, p. 420.

[2] *Mémorial*, July 5th, 1816: "We might as well accuse the sailor of waste when he cuts down his masts in order not to sink."

[3] See *Mémoires*, Brumaire 18th; *Mémorial*, July 5th, 1816; *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. II, p. 174. The three accounts agree perfectly, and the same characteristic anecdotes are found in them.

[4] *Mémorial*, March 11th, 1816.

[5] *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. I, pp. 228, 302; Vol. II, pp. 150, 183, 201. *Mémorial*, April 3rd, 1816. See the *Campagne de* 1815 (Montholon's version), first observation.

[6] *Mémorial*, August 24th 1816. Compare *Napoleon en exil*, February 18th, 1818.

might rebound far enough. Most of the means employed were merely intended as institutions during the Dictatorship, they were simply weapons of war. When the right time had arrived for me to slacken the reins, all the other threads would have been loosened at the same time, and we should then have proceeded to establish peace and our local institutions."[1]

There had not been time for all this, though, as reverses had come too soon.

"I was working to carry out a plan," continues Napoleon, "and I needed twenty years to acomplish my work, but Fate only allowed me thirteen of them. I considered myself as the *Constituant* of France."[2]

On his return from Elba, determined as he was to follow a pacific policy, the Dictatorship was not so necessary to him. Beside this, events had proved to him that the impatience for liberty was greater than he had supposed in France. He was therefore obliged to be thoroughly Liberal. He had always thought that the French nation only wanted equality and this he had given to them absolutely. Events had just taught him that the nation wanted liberty too, and he therefore resolved to make the French nation the freest of all people on earth.[3] People had said, and O'Meara had told him so, that if he had only conquered at Waterloo he would very soon have been once more absolute, but to this he had answered: "No, no, I should have maintained the last Constitution, for I was convinced that the former one needed great change."[4] He was asked how he would have abolished it and he replied: "I was only one man and I had not millions of arms. I had been raised to power by public opinion and I could be overthrown again by it."[5]

[1] *Mémorial*, November 7th, 1815.

[2] Note X on the *Lettres de Hobhouse.* Compare Note XXVI on the *Manuscrit de Sainte-Hélène* (*Mémoires*, 1822, Vol. IV, p. 245, *sqq.*): "Napoleon did not hurry at all in carrying out his plans; he thought he had plenty of time before him. He often said to his State Council: 'I need twenty years for my plans'—he came short of five of them." Compare too the *Rapport de Montchenu*, August, 1819 (*Affaires étrangères*, 1804 (*a*), p. 73, document 21).

[3] Note XLI on the *Manuscrit de Sainte-Hélène* (*Mémoires*, 1822, Vol. IV, p. 276).

[4] *Napoléon en exil*, April 4th, 1817.

[5] *Mémorial*, March 10th–12th, 1816.

If either he or his son should be called again to the throne of France, they would do still more for liberty. During the year 1820, he dictated to Montholon a plan of Constitution for the reign of Napoleon II. Liberty was insisted upon in this plan. The individual independence of every citizen was the subject of a special article, a sort of *habeas corpus*,[1] and this was to be guaranteed by the permanence of the judges.[2] Then, too, those who wanted liberty in France had often complained of that article of the Constitution of the year VIII which prevented anyone, unless specially authorised, from suing any agents in authority in the ordinary law courts. This article was dear to every Government and had been carefully preserved in the very midst of all the ruins and protected in spite of all revolutions.[3] Napoleon forestalled Tocqueville, as he decreed the following clauses:[4] "Every Frenchman who has been the object of an arbitrary act of civil or military authority has the right to prosecute, in the Court of Justice, anyone who has violated the common law in regard to him, and this without any special authorisation." Napoleon had the same respect for public liberty; the freedom of the Press was guaranteed.[5] If he dissolved the Chamber of Deputies, he could not leave the nation without a representative more than twenty days,[6] and if he did so the responsible Minister ran the risk of being condemned for high treason.[7] The representatives of the people had, under him, not only the right of legal initiative, but the right of appeal.[8] Every ratepayer, too, had a right to vote, and Napoleon, who was still more particular than Guizot, with regard to parliamentary corruption, declares: "The deputy who accepts a public function will be considered as resigning his post."[9] The Chambers were to control foreign affairs as well as home ones and also to sanction treaties.[10] The Constitution of '93 was scarcely more generous than Napoleon II's Constitution.

[1] *Titre* II, section ii. [2] Article 98.
[3] Tocqueville, *L'Ancien régime et la Révolution*, second part, chapter iv.
[4] Article 29.
[5] Very vaguely: *Titre* II, section iii.
[6] Article 39. [7] Article 48.
[8] Articles 40 and 43. [9] Article 93. [10] Article 105.

It was a fact that Napoleon had not been able to accomplish his work, but what he had done was nevertheless great. His code, for instance, still remains the basis of all future liberty. By ensuring individual liberty he had prepared the dawn of political liberties. "I sowed Liberty everywhere where I planted my Civil Code,"[1] says Napoleon, and, according to him, he did not only defend the principles of '89 in France, but he endeavoured to impose them on monarchical Europe. The Revolution had raised the problem of the future, that of the right of the people or of kings. Two extremes were now to be feared. The absolute victory of the people would lead to anarchy and that of kings to despotism. Napoleon had undertaken to defend the people's rights and to oblige kings to give the people satisfaction in all their legitimate desires. He had endeavoured, in this way, to keep the revolutionary movement within due bounds. He had fought the kings, in order to save all that could and ought to be saved from them. He had defended the people for the sake of having the right to modify their demands. He had been the "natural mediator in that struggle of the past against the French Revolution."[2] "He was the ark of the old and the new alliance."[3] When once he had fallen, when the umpire had disappeared, war would inevitably begin again, war that would be sanguinary and ruinous to everyone.[4]

This idea, the greatest and most elevated of all, is to be found many times in the writings of the Memorialists, but Napoleon himself exposed it more clearly and more fully than anyone else.[5]

"When I received from the French nation the mandate to govern it," he says, "I understood the necessity of getting its

[1] *Récits de la captivité,* Vol. II, p. 75.

[2] *Id.*, Vol. I, p. 275. Compare Vol. II, p. 377: "I have ennobled the people and strengthened the kings."

[3] *Mémorial,* August 24th, 1816. Compare March 10th–12th, April 13th, 18th, 28th, October 25th, 1816.

[4] See too Lady Malcolm's *Diary,* May 3rd, 1817: "I destroyed the revolutionary principles in France and in the other countries: the Allied Powers have restored them."

[5] In the *Instructions given to Gourgaud* on his departure for his mission to the Emperor Alexander (*Récits de la captivité,* Vol. II, p. 253).

social organisation into harmony with that of the other European nations, in order to close up the gulf made by revolutions, and to bring about the reorganisation of everything. I made use of kings in order to satisfy the legitimate interests of the people. This system would have had the infallible result of increasing the splendour and the security of royalty and at the same time of giving every satisfaction to the liberty of the people. The system could only be applied in a more or less liberal way, according to the development of the intelligence and civilisation of the various nations. Never had so vast an idea been conceived, appealing at the same time to royalty and to the people, for the reconciliation of two great interests which had become hostile to each other through the French Revolution—the old royalty and the people."

To sum up briefly, the people's Emperor, Napoleon, had been a disinterested hero, he had been the chief and, at the same time the moderator, of the revolutionary crusade, he had been a conqueror of just reforms and at the same time the saviour of those traditions that were necessary. Everyone owed all things to him and there had been no reason to fear him. He was necessary now for solving the great problem of social reorganisation. It could only be solved by him or by Napoleon II.

Note.—In the *Captivité de Sainte-Hélène* (Bibliography, p. 42) there are conversations between Montholon and Montchenu, in which opinions and words are attributed to Napoleon, which are absolutely opposed to those presented to us by the *Mémoires* and the *Mémoriaux* (with the exception of Gourgaud). No importance should be attributed to these conversations in which Napoleon recommends to the Restoration an anti-democratic, anti-Liberal policy, very favourable to the Church. In the first place, Napoleon might very well have given this policy as being logical for the dynasty of the Bourbons, without considering it as good in itself. Secondly, Montchenu, who has given frequent examples of the unintelligent distortion of things he heard, might very well have been mistaken. Thirdly, these conversations appear to have had, as their essential object, that of persuading and winning over Montchenu ; they end (pp. 206–207) by an insinuation that Napoleon should be allowed to return to France, where he would be treated "like Ferdinand at Valençay." This tends to explain the sudden political orthodoxy attributed to Napoleon in his conversations.

CHAPTER XV

NAPOLEON AS DEFENDER OF THE LAW OF NATIONALITIES

NAPOLEON realised that the Civil Code and the idea of equality would not be enough for winning the people over to his cause. The nations had been denationalised in the new Western Empire that he had made. His conquest of the nations had given them a clearer idea about themselves, and it was the question of nationality in Spain and in Germany which had overthrown Napoleon.

The exile of St. Helena blamed the nations for this, declaring that they had no more enthusiastic defender of the law of nationalities than Napoleon himself.

This law, he explains, is derived from that of the sovereignty of the people, and it gives to all former *subjects* of kings the right to become, by their own free will, *citizens* of any nation ,they prefer. The Germans, who were then divided into twenty different sovereignties would have been free to unite in one single body, because they resembled each other and had a fellow feeling. The Irish, who were united, against their wish, to England, wanted to be separate from England because they were different and hostile. Their wish was quite legitimate and they ought to be helped to conquer their freedom. In both of these cases it was a question of the sovereignty of the people, desiring either to be united or to be separated, and this right of the people ought to be respected everywhere.

"There are certain wishes with regard to nationality which must be complied with sooner or later and it is toward this end that we ought to aim."[1]

[1] *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. II, p. 525.

Even before General Bonaparte had such power in France, he had endeavoured to give satisfaction in all such cases. He had been chosen as arbitrator in 1797, between the Valtelins, who did not wish to be subjects of the Grisons any longer, and the Grisons, who wished to keep them under their domination. Napoleon's sentence was a striking proof of his belief in the law of nationalities, and in those days it was a new thing to hear such reasons given as the following:

"(4) One nation cannot be subject to another nation without violating the principles of public and natural rights:

"(5) The people of Valteline have clearly expressed their desire to be united to the Cisalpine Republic:

"(6) The conformity of religion and of language and the nature of the locality, of communication and of commerce seem to authorise this union, &c. . . ."[1]

Later on, a short time before his departure for Egypt, he advised the *Directoire* to pursue a similar policy in Swiss affairs. The freedom of the Vaud, of Argovia and of the bailiwicks of Tessin, which were subject to Berne or to the other cantons, was necessary, as "one people could not be subject to another people."

In reorganising Switzerland, though, according to the law of nationalities, it had been necessary to avoid insisting on excessive unity, as this would only have been artificial and irritating for men who were "separated by their customs, their religion, and their locality."[2] The *Directoire* did not apply this wise policy, but Napoleon applied it by the Act of Mediation.[3]

As a sovereign, his plans had been still more vast.

"In Europe," he says, "scattered though they may be, there are no less than thirty million French people, there are fifteen million Spaniards, fifteen million Italians, and thirty million Germans. I should like to have made of each one of these nations, one single national body."[4]

[1] *Campagne d'Italie*, Negotiations in 1797, VII.
[2] *Id.*, 1882 edition, VI, p. 290; VIII, p. 51.
[3] *L'Ile d'Elbe et les Cent-Jours*, Relations extérieures, V.
[4] *Mémorial*, November 11th, 1816.

The same characteristics did not exist everywhere. In Germany and in Italy, the people were divided and needed to be united. In Ireland and in Greece, the people had been made subject to another nation, and they wanted to be free. In Poland, it would have been necessary to free the nation and to unify it. Then there were certain nations like Spain and England, which, to all appearance, were both free and united, but which needed great transformations. They were divided by their social classes and oppressed by their Government. The agglomeration was there, but it was more moral than material. It was the soul of these two nations that wanted creating rather than the body. They needed a 14th of July, 1790.

About Germany, Napoleon does not insist much. He speaks of it twice in the *Mémorial*, with a brevity full of reserve.

"I had great ideas with regard to Germany," he says, "but I failed, and so I was to blame."[1]

No doubt there were very great difficulties, and Napoleon goes on to explain: "We had to go more slowly in dealing with the German agglomeration, not because they were not ready for concentration (*sic*): they were only too ready, and they might have turned blindly on us before they had understood us."[2]

As Napoleon was always tactful in accepting what already existed, he only attempted at first to "simplify their monstrous complications." He wavered, according to circumstances, between various plans for bringing about the final union.

One of his ideas was that Germany, not including Austria and Prussia, should be shared between three great monarchies.[3] It is also stated clearly that these three German kingdoms might have constituted a federation bound together somewhat closely. This would have formed "a vast and powerful federative monarchy, a great national union having the same flag, the same taxes, and the same interests. This would

[1] *Mémorial*, June 16th, 1816.
[2] *Id.*, November 11th, 1816.
[3] *Précis des campagnes de Turenne*, Campaign of 1647, Eighth observation.

have been the realisation of Germanic nationality without any local interest or any acquired right being interfered with." The dispossessed princes would have received compensation in the Balkans.[1]

Napoleon's plans with regard to Italy were much more clear and he often gave them in detail. In order to bring about Italian unity, he considered it necessary "to crush out the idea of locality," which was so powerful in the small Italian States. It would be necessary also to do away with the temporal power of the Popes, and to take away from foreign Powers their possessions in Italy. As far back as 1797, Napoleon had demanded the creation of the Cisalpine Republic, which had been the foundation of unity. He had insisted on this, in spite of the Directory which had wanted to give back the Milanese to Austria.[2]

In 1812, all Italy, under different names, was dependent on the same Government; the Pope no longer reigned and, thanks to the temporary domination of Austria in Venice and to that of the French in the west of the Peninsula, the idea of locality had gradually begun to disappear and to give place to a passion for unity, without which there could be no national independence. On arriving at this stage Napoleon had waited for the birth of his second son. He had intended to take him to Rome, crown him King of Italy, and then proclaim the independence and unity of the peninsula.[3]

When speaking of what he had done for Italy, he was able to reply to a reproach that he has often had made to him. It has frequently been said that no one ever trafficked more cynically with nations than he did, transferring them like herds of cattle from one sovereign to another, according to any treaty that he happened to be making. The Germans of Westphalia and the Italians of Venice could testify to this.

[1] English edition of the *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. II, chapter viii.

[2] *Campagne d'Italie*, Negotiations of 1796, VIII.

[3] See *Campagne d'Italie*, Campo-Formio, VI; Note IV on the *Quatre Concordats*; Note XXIV on the *Manuscrit de Sainte-Hélène*, 1822 edition, Vol. IV, p. 243; *Mémorial*, November 11th, 1816; *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. II, p. 277; *Derniers moments*, January 26th, 1821; *Napoléon en exil*, January, 1817.

Napoleon answers this accusation just as he does that of despotism. "How could a work be judged," he asks, "that he had not been able to finish?"

The means must not be taken for the end. It had been necessary for him to accept the Dictatorship, in order to give liberty later on. In just the same way, transitions, which sometimes seemed to be very hard, had been necessary in the constitution of nationalities. Venice might be taken for an instance of this. When General Bonaparte, in 1797, crushed its nationality and its liberty by handing it over to Austria, it was not that he wanted to destroy national life. On the contrary, he was working for a greater Italy at the expense of little Venice. By acting as he did, he knew that the various parties which divided Venice would die out, aristocrats and democrats would unite against the sceptre of a foreign nation. . . . If ever the day should arrive for creating the Italian nation, the years which the Venetians had spent under the yoke of the House of Austria would have prepared them for receiving a National government enthusiastically, whatever it might be, whether more or less aristocratic and whether the capital should be fixed at Venice or elsewhere. The Venetians, the Lombards, and the Piedmontese had needed to be entirely disorganised and reduced to elements, in order to become Italians. They had needed to be re-moulded.[1]

It was just the same, *mutatis mutandis*, with the Italian districts that had been annexed to the French Empire. This union, which, to a superficial observer, might seem like "an insult of the invader," had no other object than of "watching over, ensuring and improving the national education of the Italians."[2]

His apparent injustice was, according to Napoleon, only a means for bringing about final justice. By trafficking with the nations he had intended to make sure of their future liberty. For all this Napoleon would have needed twenty years, and he had only been allowed fifteen.

About Ireland, he speaks briefly, but very clearly.

[1] *Campagne d'Italie*, Campo-Formio, VI. See the same expressions in Note IV on the *Quatre Concordats*.

[2] *Mémorial*, November 11th, 1816.

"If I had succeeded in the invasion I had planned," he says, "I should have separated Ireland from England, and should have made an independent republic of the former." [1]

A passage in the *Mémorial* shows the interest Napoleon felt in the freedom of the Greeks.[2] About Poland, there is considerable data furnished by the St. Helena literature. The re-establishment of the kingdom of Poland was always one of Napoleon's fixed ideas.[3] In 1806, after Jena, he had thought of giving the crown of Poland to the King of Prussia, hoping to win favour by this deed and to interest a powerful State in defending Poland against Russia.[4] He discussed the matter with the Poles, but they were by no means enthusiastic and, as the campaign of 1807 had exhausted the French army, he had to content himself with freeing Prussian Poland and with creating the Grand Duchy of Warsaw. In 1812, when war with Russia became inevitable, Napoleon once more went back to his old plans. He came to an understanding with Austria and Prussia. These two States undertook to give up the parts of Poland which they occupied, in return for an indemnity.[5] For Austria this indemnity was to consist in the re-occupation of the Illyrian provinces. Russia would have been compelled to give the rest, and the integrity of Poland would thus have been re-established.[6]

When Napoleon spoke of this plan, it was always an opportunity for him to dwell on one of the advantages which would have resulted from his policy. This was the consolidation of European equilibrium. He constantly repeated his opinion that the existence of Poland was a great security for Europe, as there was always a danger of the invasion of the

[1] *Napoléon en exil*, March 26th, 1817; Forsyth, Vol. II, p. 262.

[2] March 10th–12th, 1816.

[3] *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. II, p. 254. *Napoléon en exil*, May 22nd, 27th; July 11th, 1817.

[4] *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. I, p. 219; Vol. II, p. 421.

[5] *Id.*, Vol. I, p. 220; Vol. II, p. 423. *Mémorial*, July 20th, 1816. Note XXVIII on the *Manuscrit de Sainte-Hélène*, *Mémoires*, 1822, Vol. IV, p. 269.

[6] *Mémorial*, April 28th, October 25th, 1816. *Napoléon en exil*, November 8th, 1816; March 20th, May 22nd and 27th, July 11th, 1817. *Lady Malcolm*, March 7th, 1817. *Journal de Cockburn*, September 6th–23rd, 1815. *L'Ile d'Elbe et les Cent-Jours*, Intérieur, Vol. III; Second and Ninth *Lettres du Cap*.

Russians. Poland was the indispensable barrier which might prevent the Northern Barbarians from making their inroads.[1] He spoke of this more particularly to the English, to O'Meara, Lady Malcolm and to Admiral Cockburn. The future aggrandisement of Russia was above all a danger to England and, by the treaty of January 3rd, 1815, England proved that she realised this danger. India, too, was in danger, as well as Europe, because Napoleon had not been allowed to re-establish Poland.[2] In a passage in his *Campagnes de Turenne* this idea is given in a more general way. German unity, he says, even though only incomplete, would restrain French, Prussian and Austrian ambitions. A united Italy would serve as a balance of power between Austria and France, and on the sea between France and England.

Europe could never be tranquil until it had natural boundaries for each country in this way.[3]

Spain and England were both in about the same condition as each other, in Napoleon's opinion. Their independence and their political unity were accomplished facts. The work of social union and of the sovereignty of the people was hindered by the domination or the privileges accorded to a tyrannical oligarchy, whether Lords or Hidalgos. These two nations were in about the same state as France before '89, and the policy of nationalities demanded that there should be liberty and unity in home affairs as well as in foreign affairs.

"The Spanish nation despised its Government," Napoleon declares, "it was crying out for regeneration."[4] "Its manners and customs, its territorial divisions, its old traditions, so dear to Castilian pride, were so many obstacles that had to be done away with if the Spanish nation was to be regenerated."[5]

"I felt sorry for Spain and seized the only opportunity I had for regenerating the country."[6]

[1] *Napoléon en exil*, May 22nd, 27th, July 11th, 1817. *Lady Malcolm*, March 7th, 1817. Note XXII on the *Manuscrit de Sainte-Hélène*, 1822, Vol. IV, p. 241.

[2] *Napoléon en exil*, May 22nd, 1817.

[3] *Campagne de* 1647, Eighth observation.

[4] *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. II, p. 438.

[5] *Id.*, Vol. II, p. 437.

[6] *Mémorial*, June 14th, 1816.

He maintained that if only he had succeeded the moral unity of the country would have been brought about.

"The various parties would have rallied," he says, "and in three or four years there would have been absolute peace, brilliant prosperity and a compact nation."[1]

Napoleon had all due respect for their national characteristics and he never dreamed of trying to make them French.

"King Joseph was the only foreigner among them," he goes on to explain, "I respected their territory, their independence, their manners and customs. The new monarch entered the capital with no other ministers, councillors nor courtiers than those of the former Court. My troops were then going to be withdrawn,"[2] he adds.

The Spaniards, more sensitive about the intrusion of foreigners than about the evils of their home affairs, "were disdainful of their own interests and only considered the insult."[3]

Napoleon frankly owns that it was a mistake to have wounded their national feeling by changing the Spanish dynasty.[4] In spite of this mistake he would nevertheless have succeeded in his object, if it had not been for the Russian disasters.[5] He maintains that he was always tactful in his policy and ready to acknowledge his mistakes. Even in the very midst of his last reverses, he decided to do what he ought to have done at first, send Ferdinand to Spain on condition that he would uphold the Liberal constitution there. The party which was then planning Napoleon's overthrow (he evidently means Talleyrand) prevented this plan from succeeding by delaying Ferdinand's departure from November, 1813, to March, 1814.[6]

If Napoleon had succeeded in his invasion of England

[1] *Mémorial*, November 11th, 1816. *Napoléon en exil*, November 9th, 1816; July 4th, 1817. Third *Lettre du Cap*.

[2] *Mémorial*, May 6th, 1816.

[3] *Id.*, May 6th, 1816.

[4] *Mémorial*, June 14th, 1816.

[5] *Mémorial*, November 11th, 1816.

[6] Note XX on the *Manuscrit de Sainte-Hélène*, *Mémoires*, 1822, Vol. IV, p. 238. Compare *Mémorial*, June 14th, 1816, and *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. II, p. 437 *sqq*.

he would have accomplished a similar work there to the one he had attempted in Spain.

"I should have proclaimed a republic," he says, "the abolition of the nobility and of the House of Lords. I should also have proclaimed liberty, equality, and the sovereignty of the people, and all that would soon have given me partisans. I should have allowed the House of Commons to continue, after introducing great reforms into it.[1] I should have given them a constitution of their own choice and I should have sent for the people's representatives to come to London and form a Constitution. I should have called upon Burdett and other favourites of the people to form one." [2]

When Europe had thus been divided into nationalities, formed in this free way, each one free in its own country, there would have been more harmony among the States. A certain unity, with regard to manners and customs, would have come about naturally among people who no longer had any reason to hate each other. The United States of Europe would then have become a possibility.[3]

The nations did not understand their liberator, and therefore they did not help him. After his fall they realised who were their real enemies and they regretted Napoleon. Those who had fought against him in Spain in the *guerillas*, asked for his help in 1815.[4] The Italians,[5] Poles,[6] Swiss,[7] and the Germans,[8] who were either ungrateful or else tired out in 1814, were all ready to recruit Napoleon's army if only he had conquered at Waterloo.

Napoleon maintained that he had been conquered simply because he had not been understood. His son would never-

[1] *Napoléon en exil*, January 27th, 1817.—Forsyth II, 194.
[2] *Id.*, February 18th, 1818.—*Mémorial*, March 3rd, 1816.
[3] *Mémorial*, August 24th November 11th, 1816.
[4] *Id.* February 2nd, August 27th, 1815. *Napoléon en exil*, November 9th, 1816. *L'Ile d'Elbe et les Cent-Jours*, Relations extérieures, Vol. V.
[5] *Id.*, August 27th, 1816. *L'Ile d'Elbe et les Cent-Jours*, Retour de l'Empereur, Vol. I. Relations extérieures, Vol. I, v.
[6] *Id.*,, August 27th, 1816. *L'Ile d'Elbe et les Cent-Jours*, Relations extérieures, Vol. I.
[7] *L'Ile d'Elbe et les Cent-Jours*, Relations extérieures, Vol. V.
[8] *Id.*, *Ibid.*

theless continue his work and he would take for his device his father's words: "There are certain desires with regard to nationality which must be gratified sooner or later."

It was in this way that the double work of the home organisation of every European nation and of the organisation of intercourse between nations would be accomplished in accordance with the maxims of 1789.

CHAPTER XVI

NAPOLEON, THE FRIEND OF PEACE

"I ALWAYS wanted peace," says Napoleon, "and I always offered it after a victory. I never asked for it after a reverse, because a nation recovers its men more easily than it recovers its honour." [1]

Las Cases, who always delighted in collecting anecdotes which confirmed Napoleon's declarations, quotes two speeches of his made at the time when he was in power, which illustrate this abstract theme in a picturesque way. "The lion," he said, "only asked to be allowed to go to sleep, but he was attacked all the time. The horseman would have liked to stop his steed, but how could the English sails be held in check?" [2] Napoleon considered "general peace as the only condition of regeneration in Europe," [3] and yet he could not obtain it.

"Europe never ceased making war on France," he says, "on her principles and on me, so that we had to overthrow or be overthrown. The coalition existed all the time, either publicly or privately, either openly acknowledged or denied. It was for the Allies to give us peace, for we were worn out." [4]

At the time when Napoleon, after his first Italian victories, was ready to take part in the general politics of France, this coalition was in full force. It was fostered and upheld by

[1] *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. I, p. 252; Vol. II, p. 491.
[2] *Mémorial*, November 13th and 19th, 1816.
[3] *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. II, p. 251, *sqq.* (*Instructions pour Gourgaud*).
[4] *Id.*, March 11th, May 1st, September 2nd, November 11th, 1816. *Napoleon en exil*, August 22nd, 1817.

England, who "was paying Europe for trying to kill France."[1]

England thoroughly understood that the Revolution would make France greater, that it would bring about prosperity in its home affairs, and would give it its natural boundaries. "France would thus have been the greatest miracle of civilization. . . . England would only have been a counter, France would have been the metropolis of the world. This was why England decided to slay France."[2]

After Lodi and after the conquest of Lombardy, Napoleon, who had a great deal of influence with the *Directoire*, had endeavoured to check its plans of conquest, to reduce the number of France's enemies, to pacify the continent in order to isolate England and to oblige that country to maintain peace. Thanks to Napoleon the *Directoire* in June, 1796, gave up its plans of war with Rome and Naples.[3] After the Bologna armistice he tried in vain to prevent the second rupture with the Pope.[4] At Toledo he upheld the temporal power of the Pope which the *Directoire* wanted to abolish.[5] After the Chérasco armistice, he did all he could to persuade the *Directoire* to sign a lasting peace with the King of Sardinia, but he did not succeed in this until it was too late.[6] He applied this policy on a large scale, by signing the treaty of Campo-Formio against the wishes of the *Directoire*. Feeling sure of its own strength ever since the 18th of Fructidor, the *Directoire* had wished to continue the war, which increased its own prestige and helped to fill the empty treasury. Napoleon disappointed this Government by pacifying the Continent.[7] In 1797, he had hoped

[1] *Mémoires*, 1822, Vol. VIII, Situation of Europe in 1798, Vol. III.

[2] *Mémoires*, Politique extérieure du Directoire, Correspondance, Vol. XXX, p. 220. See, too, Politique extérieure du Directoire, Vendée (*Mémoires*, 1822, Vol. VIII). Napoleon insists on the fact that England was not upholding the re-establishment of the French Monarchy in Vendée, but solely the perpetuation of civil war in France.

[3] *Campagne d'Italie*, Pavie, Vol. X. Compare *Derniers moments de Napoléon*, November 17th, 1819, for all this period.

[4] *Id.*, Négociations en 1796, Vol. V.

[5] *Id.*, Tolentino, Vol. VII.

[6] *Id.*, Négociations en 1796, Vol. II; Negociations en 1797, Vol. III; Campo-Formio, Vol. V.

[7] *Id.*, Campo-Formio.

to pacify the seas in the same way, by the Lille negotiations.[1]

After this treaty, it was not his fault if European war broke out again. The *Directoire* was responsible for it, thanks to its imprudence. General Bonaparte blamed its encroaching policy,[2] as it was this which caused Austria to begin the struggle once more. Russia, too, took up arms again, and this was not on account of Napoleon's conquests in the East, as it was rumoured, for "when Napoleon started for Egypt the Russian army was beginning to collect its forces in Galicia."[3] After Brumaire, when Napoleon was in power, he had wanted to put an end to warfare at once. "As Consul," he said, "my first idea was to open negotiations for peace."[4] He knew that the conclusion of peace, after the defeats of 1799, would have been disadvantageous to France, and that the First Consul would have lost his prestige by it. He had proposed it nevertheless, and it was only refused thanks to the obstinacy and the mistaken calculations of Pitt.[5] The same ill will was manifested in the negotiations commenced after Marengo, and they were accordingly not carried through.[6] In order to obtain the Peace of Amiens it had been necessary to isolate England, and even then that country tried to draw out up to the last moment. It was the loyalty of Cornwallis which really brought about the peace, almost in spite of the English Ministry.[7] "I honestly thought at Amiens," says Napoleon, "that the fate of France, of Europe, and of myself was settled and that war was ended. It was the English Cabinet

[1] *Mémoires*, 1822, Vol. VIII. *Situation de l'Europe en* 1798, Vol. III.

[2] See for the Swiss question, *Situation de l'Europe en* 1798, Vol. I; and *Politique extérieure du Directoire*, Vol. VIII; for Germany, *Politique extérieure du Directoire*, Vol. I; for Italy, the *Mémoires* (Las Cases's version), *Retour de Rastadt*, Vol. IV.

[3] *Situation de l'Europe en* 1798, Vol. II.

[4] *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. II, p. 251.

[5] See Note I of *Précis des événements militaires* by *Mathieu Dumas: Politique de Pitt.*

[6] *Mémoires*, Diplomatie, Guerre. Note 3 of *Précis des événements militaires, Armistice navale.*

[7] *Napoléon en exil*, April 6th, 1817. About Cornwallis, whom Napoleon liked, see the *Mémorial*, June 10th, 1816; Lady Malcolm's *Diary*, January 31st, 1817.

which rekindled everything."[1] He goes on to say what a misfortune this was for Europe, as France and England together would have been all-powerful for the welfare of the nations and for the cause of liberal ideas. "How much good we might have done!" he exclaims. "We should have brought about the emancipation of all nations, and have maintained this and also the reign of principles. We should have established peace and prosperity everywhere, either by force or by persuasion."[2]

England did not want this though, and Pitt's Ministry was responsible for the recommencement of hostilities[3] by wanting to keep Malta, in spite of the treaty signed a year previously.[4] It also tried in the most perfidious way to lay the blame of the rupture on Napoleon, by saying that he had insulted Lord Whitworth,[5] the English Ambassador in Paris. Napoleon maintained that the real cause of the hostility was the prosperity that Napoleon was giving to France. England had been about to conclude with the *Directoire* at Lille, because the *Directoire* was weak and was weakening France, but England refused all Napoleon's overtures, because his was a strong and hereditary Government.[6] In spite of English hatred, Napoleon felt no animosity himself. He only blamed the Government, and not the English people. If his plan of invasion had succeeded he would have changed the British Constitution and established a popular Government, but he would not have exacted any painful sacrifice. "No sacrifices," he says, "and not even taxation from the English. We should not have introduced conquerors to them, but brothers."[7] The English Ministry found a way out of the difficulty by a fresh coalition. It sacrificed Austria for the sake of its own security. It did the same thing later on in 1809 and had done the same thing for Prussia in 1806.[8]

[1] *Mémorial*, November 11th, 1816.
[2] *Id.*, April 20th, 1816.
[3] *Id.*, April 20th, May 31st, November 6th, 1816.
[4] *Napoléon en exil*, October 27th, 1816; May 6th, 1817.
[5] *Id.*, April 6th, July 11th, 1817. *Mémorial*, June 10th, 1816.
[6] *Situation de l'Europe en 1798*, Vol. III.
[7] *Napoléon en exil*, January 27th, 1817; February 18th, 1818. *Mémorial*, March 3rd, 1816. *Journal de Cockburn*, September 6th–23rd, 1815.
[8] *Mémorial*, June 10th, 1816.

England was constantly stirring up Europe against France, but for a long time the results had disappointed its expectations. In 1802, Napoleon only wanted peace. He had hoped that, supported by an alliance with England, he would have been able to regenerate Europe and, by the contagion of example, and if necessary by force, he would have brought about harmony and regenerated France.[1] He had been driven into universal war, into the Dictatorship of Europe, in order to obtain peace. He had accepted the challenge, but he had "not been carried away by blind passion." Peace with England was what he had wanted to arrive at, but since it was only by victories and by subduing its allies that he could hope to subdue English hatred, he had been led on, in spite of himself, to the conquest of Europe.[2]

In his various struggles he had been constantly provoked, and he had always been generous. England and Russia attacked him in 1805. When he was the conqueror he had spared Austria and had allowed the Czar to escape, although he might have taken him prisoner.[3] He had once more offered peace to England.[4] When Fox came into office he had hoped that the two countries might arrive at an understanding, and if only Fox had lived there would have been peace,[5] as he honestly wished for this. His successors, who were disciples of Pitt, managed to stir up Prussia against France. Napoleon had never provoked Prussia, but that country, thanks to false rumours, fancied that it was threatened by the idea of the Treaty of Oubril between France and

[1] *Mémorial*, March 3rd, 1816: "I should have started from there to work out European regeneration from the South to the North under Republican colours, as, later on, I intended to work this out from North to South under monarchical forms."

[2] *Mémoires, Situation de l'Europe en* 1798, Vol. III. Compare *Mémorial*, March 11th, 1816: "I had never intended to establish this universal monarchy. It had all come about gradually." Compare also May 1st, June 21st, 1816; *Napoléon en exil*, October 27th, 1816. *Instructions à Gourgaud* (*Récits de la captivité*, Vol. II, p. 251, *sqq.*): "I never made war through a spirit of conquest; I accepted the wars that the English Ministry brought about against the French Revolution."

[3] *Mémorial*, April 28th, 1816.

[4] *Instructions à Gourgaud*, passage quoted.

[5] *Instructions à Gourgaud*, *Napoléon en exil*, November 9th, 1816; July 11th, 1817. *Mémorial*, June 10th, 1816. *Lady Malcolm's Diary*, January 31st, 1817.

Russia, in 1806, and prepared to fight the two Powers together. When Prusssia was reassured with regard to Russia it still felt capable of affronting France and so lent itself to the designs of the English. Jena and Friedland had settled that difficulty.[1] Faithful to his system of moderation, when Napoleon was master of all the Prussian territory, he spared Prussia. Imprudent though it was to allow this rival to continue, he restored its finest provinces[2] to it and once more proposed peace to the English.[3]

He was once more rebuffed and, in order to resist attacks from England, another conquest was necessary. This was really the origin of the Spanish affair.

A royal family of Bourbons was not the safest of neighbours. During the crisis of 1806, the conduct of Spain had been more than suspicious, for this country had concluded a secret treaty against France.[4] French intervention was therefore only a defensive act. In spite of Talleyrand's advice,[5] Napoleon was at first against such a policy, but the internal affairs of Spain just then offered him an opportunity too tempting to resist. The Aranjuez revolution and the struggle between the two sovereigns took place independently of him, and even interfered with his scheme of an alliance with Spain against Portugal.[6] The result of the strife was that the two sovereigns, of their own free will, went to Bayonne to submit their case to Napoleon as umpire. The opportunity of getting rid of an ally of whom he was not sure, and of regenerating a badly governed nation, had been irresistible. He declares that he took pity on a great nation and seized this opportunity for the sake of regenerating Spain. "If I

[1] Note XXVIII on the *Manuscrit de Sainte-Hélène*, *Mémoires*, 1822, Vol. IV, p. 251.

[2] *Napoléon en exil*, March 3rd, 1817. *Mémorial*, April 28th, June 16th, 1816.

[3] *Instructions pour Gourgaud*, *Napoléon en exil*, November 9th, 1816.

[4] *Napoléon en exil*, July 11th, 1817. *Mémorial*, May 6th, June 14th, 1816. *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. II, p. 437.

[5] Napoleon always insists on the *rôle* played by Talleyrand in Spanish affairs, and assigns to him a very large share of the responsibility. See *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. II, p. 441 ; *Mémorial*, April 11th–12th, 1816 ; *Napoléon en exil*, November 12th, 1816, December 9th, 1817. Compare, too, the second *Lettre du Cap*.

[6] *Napoléon en exil*, August 25th, 1817. *Mémorial*, June 14th, 1816.

erred," he says, "it was by my daring frankness, by my excess of energy. Bayonne was no trap, but a brilliant *coup d'État*. . . . . I ventured to strike from above. I meant to act as Providence does, that is, to cure the ills of mortals in my own way. The means I took were violent and I did not trouble about anyone's opinion."[1] Napoleon maintains that neither violence nor threats were employed with regard to Ferdinand.

"If, as I believe, he decided through fear, that was his own concern," adds Napoleon. The Spanish rose, and he would have conquered them, if Austria, sacrificed once more to English interests, had not appeared on the scene. This was an unexpected aggression, and there was only just time to ward off the attack. The campaign of Bavaria and of Wagram saved the situation.

Once more Napoleon was a conqueror, and once more he gave proof of his pacific intentions. The Emperor of Austria had just shown his hostility to France. Napoleon ought to have deposed him or dismembered so unfriendly a Power. Instead of this he left him his crown and saved Austria from the partition it deserved.[2] The victory of 1809, like those of 1805 and of 1807, was followed by offers of peace to England.[3]

According to Napoleon, he was compelled to govern Europe, on account of English hostility and the provocations he received from the whole Continent. An objection may be raised here. Napoleon tells us that he always offered peace, but he does not say on what conditions. He may have wanted peace, but, whilst occupying Italy, dismembering Austria, mutilating Prussia, placing his own brothers on the thrones of Spain, Holland and Westphalia, how could he imagine that Prussia, Austria, Russia and England would accept a pacific policy, which meant their own ruin? It is not everything to want peace; it must be offered in such a way that the conquered nation can accept it, or at least be

[1] *Mémorial*, June 14th, 1816.

[2] *Napoléon en exil*, September 7th, 1817. *Mémorial*, April 28th, 1816.

[3] *Instructions à Gourgaud.*

resigned to it. To sum up briefly, Napoleon wanted peace, but on his own terms.

He saw the objection that would be raised, and he says at once that he never wished to keep the universal monarchy which the force of things had put into his hands. He says that he never had any other ambition than "to use the power of his arms for the reorganisation of Europe in the interest of the nations it contained. . . . All his conquests were to serve for making conciliatory arrangements between the various rival nations when the negotiations for general peace took place."[1] "France has natural boundaries which I never wanted to overstep," he says.[2] There was nothing for France, according to Napoleon, beyond the Rhine, the Alps and the Pyrenees. Italy, he said, would have formed an independent and united kingdom; Spain would have remained intact; Germany, once more independent, would have been unified as much as possible. The Illyrian provinces would have compensated Austria for the loss of Galicia, when Poland was reconstituted. What did it matter if French princes were appointed to govern Italy, Spain and certain parts of Germany? In thirty or forty years the ties of relationship would have been forgotten in private interests.[3] What had ties of relationship mattered to Austria in 1814? The choice of dynasties can only, and ought only, to be a secondary question. Family ties have their value certainly, but that value is so fleeting, and has been so much belied by history, that Napoleon declared such considerations never influenced him in the choice he made of his brothers for kings of Holland, Westphalia, etc. "When I crowned them," he says, "I only thought of them as Viceroys, as agents of my policy whom I could call back into the ranks according to the requirements of my final arrangements."[4]

The last obstacle to this reorganisation of Europe was that Russia was keeping back a vast share of Poland, and the reconstitution of Poland was the keystone in the new edifice.

[1] *Instructions pour Gourgaud.*
[2] *Napoléon en exil,* March 25th, 1817.
[3] *Id.,* July 11th, 1817.
[4] *Récits de la captivité,* Vol. II, p. 437, *sqq.* (Dictation on Spain).

Russia had a leaning towards an alliance with England, but England would have to be isolated while the Continent was reorganised. The war of 1812, therefore, was for the sake of taking away from England its last ally and delivering Poland.[1] After this, Russia would have been compensated at the expense of the Turks. England would have been spared, but forced into peace. She would have been allowed to keep Malta and her supremacy on the sea, but she would have been requested to put an end to her "maritime tyranny."[2] Napoleon said that if he returned to France he should pronounce its boundaries unalterable, all future war to be defensive only and all fresh aggrandisements anti-national. The permament armies would thus have been reduced to the guardianship of the sovereigns.[3]

In spite of all that tempted him, Napoleon only made war in 1812 against his own inclinations. The occupation of the Grand Duchy of Oldenburg, which was one of the causes of this conflict, had taken place without his orders. Davout had been responsible for this, and he had counted on the crown of Poland as the result of this war. Napoleon says that he should have evacuated the Grand Duchy if it had not been for the insolent tone of the Russian complaints. French diplomats did not see that a heavy compensation was wanted rather than a rupture. Alexander refused to receive Narbonne and Lauriston when they went to negotiate with him. Napoleon refused to discuss the question of Vilna and to withdraw his army beyond the Niemen, because he no longer believed in the Czar's good faith. The war, therefore, was not his fault.[4] When reverses came and, afterwards, the successes of the first Saxony campaign, Napoleon was not the stubborn conqueror that he has been represented, refusing to give back anything he had taken. He knew well enough, through his Ambassador at Vienna and, also, thanks to the documents signed at Dresden, that Austria had thrown in her

[1] *Instructions pour Gourgaud*, *Napoléon en exil*, May 22nd, 1817.
[2] *Napoléon en exil*, May 22nd, 1817.
[3] *Mémorial*, August 24th, 1816.
[4] See the *Instructions pour Gourgaud*, which are very clear and very concise. *Mémorial*, April 28th, 1816. *Napoléon en exil*, August 22nd, 1817.

lot with Russia and Prussia. The armistice insisted on by Austria was only an expedient for gaining time in order to get her army ready. If Napoleon had adhered to the terms proposed he would not have obtained peace. In exchange for his concessions the truce would only have been a short and deceptive one.[1]

The Frankfort negotiations were just as disappointing. When Napoleon was about to accept the reduction of France to its natural boundaries, the allies interrupted the discussion and violated the neutrality of Switzerland in order to invade French territory more easily.[2]

The Châtillon Congress was absurd. During the whole of the first fortnight of February, 1814, Caulaincourt had full power to sign the peace, but the Allies dragged the affair on for the sake of exacting still more until the day when Napoleon, after conquering at Champaubert, took away all authority from Caulaincourt. At the end of February the Allies would only consent to an armistice, during which they would not only occupy the territory conquered, but places that were still being defended. Finally they stopped all discussions, just as they had done at Dresden and at Frankfort, at the very moment when something definite seemed likely to be arranged.[3]

Napoleon might still have struggled at Fontainebleau, but he preferred to sacrifice himself for the sake of peace, and so he abdicated.[4] His return in 1815 was justified, as he wished to save France from a feudal reaction. Napoleon, too, was provoked, as all the Fontainebleau stipulations were violated by the Bourbons or by Europe, and the Vienna Congress was preparing to interfere with his liberty and to have him transported to a place of captivity.[5] His attack, therefore, was only in legitimate self-defence.

[1] *Napoléon en exil*, March 6th, 1818. *Mémorial*, August 13th, 1816. *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. I, pp. 253, 278 ; Vol. II, p. 497. *Manuscrit de l'île d'Elbe*, chapter vi.

[2] *Manuscrit de l'île d'Elbe*, chapter vi. *Napoléon en exil*, March 6th, 1818.

[3] *Notes sur Fleury de Chaboulon*, *Mémoires*, 1822, Vol. IV, p. 316.

[4] Note XLI on the *Manuscrit de Sainte-Hélène*, *Mémoires*, 1822, Vol. IV, p. 275.

[5] *Napoléon en exil*, March 25th, 1817. *Mémorial*, September 14th, 1816. *L'Ile d'Elbe et les Cent-Jours*, passim. Third *Lettre du Cap.*

When he was once more established on the throne, he had only asked to ratify the Treaty of Paris and to live in peace in the country which was free, although reduced. It would have been impossible to have attempted an aggressive policy. He was dependent on the public, and the public had had enough of war. The Chambers kept a zealous watch on him, and the Chambers bore him malice.[1] Murat's folly in attacking Austria, in spite of the repeated orders of his brother-in-law, was largely responsible for the formation of the fresh coalition, and was the final cause of his ruin.[2] In spite of the unanimity of Europe against him, Napoleon never felt any hatred.

Before crossing the Sambre, he offered peace to England, and if he had conquered at Waterloo he would not have altered the message he had sent to London before crossing the Sambre.[3] Napoleon's love of peace is always to be found underlying his policy. It is to be seen in his repeated offers to treat in spite of all provocation. It is to be seen, too, in the one object he had in view in all his efforts, the reorganisation of Europe in such a way that all interests would be satisfied. There would then have been no reason at all for war. His love of peace is evident, too, in the moderation which always made him hesitate to begin unnecessary warfare. To sum up briefly, and at the same time to show the connection between this chapter and the preceding one, Napoleon's argument was that peace was impossible between revolutionary France and monarchical Europe. In order to establish peace at that time it was necessary to reorganise Europe. Napoleon did not attempt this reorganisation with a preconceived plan and deliberate words. He was urged on and forced into it by the continual attacks of the European kings. His pacific intentions were not understood, but in principle the Empire certainly meant peace.

[1] *Napoléon en exil*, April 4th, 1817. *Mémorial*, March 10th–12th, 1816.

[2] Napoleon often insists on this. See *Napoléon en exil*, November 9th, 1816; June 10th, 1817. *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. II, p. 37. *Mémorial*, February 7th–8th, 1816, July 1st–4th, 1816. *L'Ile d'Elbe et les Cent-Jours*: *Relations extérieures*.

[3] *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. I, p. 254. *Mémorial*, March 10th–12th, 1816.

CHAPTER XVII

NAPOLEON AND RELIGION

A STUDY of Napoleon's ideas and convictions in religious matters is as interesting as it is delicate. His opinions were never final nor yet clearly defined, his state of mind was not stable and fixed. He had no settled belief with regard to religious problems. His opinion varied with the times, and he had no acknowledged system. From one day to another he would give utterance to beliefs that were logically contradictory. This variableness and this uncertainty are keenly interesting in so representative a man. Three influences were at work on him, and each of these varied according to the time. First there was the influence of his childhood, brought up as he had been religiously. Then came the influence of the philosophers of the eighteenth century, in whose writings he had revelled in his youth, and, finally, the influence of the French *bourgeoisie*. He had lived in its atmosphere, and it had transmitted to him its conception of "approved religion," with all difficulties abstracted and with all promises and consolations preserved, that religion which people believe without really considering it much more true than other religions.

To anyone who studies Napoleon's ideas as given by the St. Helena writers (with the exception of Gourgaud), there is one belief apparent in the midst of all his contradictions. Napoleon certainly believed in the existence of God. "Everything proclaims the existence of a God, that is certain," he says.[1] "I have never doubted about God," he says another time. "We believe in God, because everything around us

[1] *Mémorial*, June 7th–8th, 1816.

proclaims Him, and because the greatest minds have believed in Him; not only Bossuet, for it was his profession to believe in Him, but Newton and Leibnitz, whom the question did not concern."[1] This simple belief had not always been enough for him. As a child he had been a fervent Catholic. "A man is hurled into life," says Napoleon, "and he wonders where he has come from, who he is and where he is going? All these are mysterious questions which drive us towards religion. Our natural bent leads us to it and we turn to it of our own free will. Such was the case with me. I felt the need of believing and so I believed."[2]

When he was old enough to reason, and he tells us that this was when he was only thirteen years of age, the favourite arguments and theories of the philosophers of the eighteenth century influenced him. These theories, which set aside positive religions in favour of a natural religion, shook the boy's faith. Napoleon, in 1816, still held to these theories, and he exposes them as his own discoveries.

What struck him most was the mutability of religions and their diverseness. "Why is the religion of Paris not that of London, nor yet that of Berlin?" he asks. "Why is the religion of former times not that of to-day?"[3] "All our religions are evidently the children of men. Why are there so many different ones? Why has ours not always existed? . . . No doubt because men are always men, and the priests have managed to introduce fraud and lies everywhere."[4] "If there were any religion which had existed from the commencement of the world I should believe it to be the true one."[5] Napoleon believed then in a natural religion, but refused to adhere to a positive one. "I am by no means an atheist," he says, "but I could not pretend to believe in all that is taught,[6] without being false and hypocritical. The Pope wanted me to confess, but I always

[1] *Mémorial*, August 17th, 1816. Compare *Napoléon en exil*, March 19th, 1817.
[2] *Id.*, August 17th, 1816.
[3] *Id.*, August 17th, 1876. Compare *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. I, p. 354 (identical).
[4] *Id.*, June 7th–8th, 1816.
[5] *Napoléon en exil*, November 9th, 1816.
[6] *Memorial*, June 7th–8th, 1816.

MARIE LOUISE AND HER SON.

After the picture by Gérard.

escaped this. I used to say to him: 'Santo padre, I am so much occupied just now, it must be later on.'"[1] If Napoleon were a deist the curious chapter on Religious questions, in the *Campagne d'Egypte*, is explained. The three monotheistic religions of the West: Judaism, Christianity, and Islamism, are compared impartially in this chapter and put on an equal footing, as having revealed to men the knowledge of the "true God." To a deist it is the element common to these three religions which is the truth.

Napoleon was a disciple of the philosophers, but he still remembered the charm of the religion of his childhood and all the old associations. "I have always loved the sound of church bells in the country," he says. He would have gone with pleasure to church at St. Helena if he had had the opportunity.[2] He considered that the Catholic religion was attractive because it appeals to our sentiment. "I love the Catholic religion," says Napoleon, "because it appeals to my soul, so that when I pray my whole being is stirred. The Protestant religion only appeals to my reason. Protestants are perhaps right when they say that the Communion is only a symbol, but why curb the flight of my fancy when this induces me to approach God and to believe in the reality of it all?"[3] Napoleon held that religious beliefs and the prospect of another life were all-powerful consolations in the ills of this life and more particularly in one's dying moments. "Religion," says Napoleon, "is the soul's repose; it is hope and the anchor of rescue for unhappy people. What services Christianity has rendered to humanity! What joy it might still give if only its ministers understood their mission!"[4] Thinking of his own situation at St. Helena he continues: "What a resource religious sentiment would be to us here! What power men and things might have over me if I accepted my reverses and my troubles as coming from God and if I expected future happiness as a recompense!"[5]

Napoleon maintained that no one could be sure of resisting

[1] *Napoléon en exil*, November 9th, 1816.
[2] *Mémorial*, August 11th, 1816.
[3] *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. II, p. 174.
[4] *Id.*, Vol. I, p. 298; Vol. II, p. 286.
[5] *Mémorial*, June 7th–8th, 1816.

all these beliefs when the final test came. "Who can tell whether I shall not die in the arms of a confessor?"[1] he used to say. "A man can never be sure of anything with regard to his last moments."[2] Napoleon seemed at times to think that this deism of his, which was in sympathy with the Catholic faith and with its ceremonies, but was free from its special beliefs and from its indispensable practices, was the true Christianity or the "reasonable religion." He tells how Cardinal Fesch used to say to him when he was young: "You will be more devout than I am in the end." "I used to laugh at this prediction," says Napoleon, "but he was right. I will not say that I am more devout than he was, but I do say that my belief is worth more than his, because it is the result of my studies and of my experience, because it is a conviction acquired by hard thought, whilst Cardinal Fesch's belief was just the belief taught him as an ultramontane seminarist."[3]

It is in this sense then, and with these restrictions, that the passages must be read in which Napoleon speaks of "his attachment to the principles of his religion"[4] and of his desire "to remain in the religion in which he was born."[5] He even declared that he believed all that the Church believes.[6]

This affirmation is frequently accompanied by the declaration that, in our uncertainty about religious things, it is our obvious duty to die in the religion in which we were born. After making a profession of orthodox faith to O'Meara by saying: "I believe all that the Church believes," Napoleon immediately adds: "If there were any religion which had existed from the very commencement of the world I should believe it to be the true one, but, as things are, I think everyone should keep to the religion of his fathers." His invariable opinion was that every man ought to die in his own religion.[7]

[1] *Mémorial*, June 1st, 1816.
[2] *Id.*, June 7th–8th, 1816. Compare *Napoléon en exil*, March 19th, 1817.
[3] *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. II, p. 174.
[4] Note I on the *Quatre Concordats*.
[5] Note on the *Manuscrit de Sainte-Hélène*, *Mémoires*, 1822, Vol. IV, p. 218. Compare Note IV on the *Quatre Concordats*.
[6] *Napoléon en exil*, November 9th, 1816.
[7] *Campagne d'Égypte*, Affaires religieuses, Vol. II (1847 edition). Compare third *Lettre du Cap*.

This opinion is the key to his whole belief, for this puts all religions on the same footing, so that the man who professes it is not convinced of the truth of any special one. This is certainly one of the current dogmas of what he styles "reasonable religion."

Such then was Napoleon's attitude of mind until a very late date. He asked for a priest, because he enjoyed talking about religion, and also on account of that love of ceremony which he had had from his childhood. Then, too, as he said, no man can tell whether he would like to die without a confessor. There is nothing to prove, though, that he employed Abbé Buonavita and Abbé Vignali until the very last moments for anything else but to celebrate mass "on Sundays and on the fête days recognised by the Concordat."[1] No importance should be attached to the accounts given by Antommarchi about Napoleon's profane stories.[2] The doctor was not a religious man himself, and he probably exaggerated. In January, 1821, Napoleon seemed to be in the same attitude of mind as in 1818. "Although I feel myself getting weaker and weaker every day, and although I am very ill, I am not yet at the last extremity, not in a state to ask for the succour of religion, ..." he says. "If I were reduced to that, could I ask a man like Abbé Vignali to help me with spiritual succour and knowledge? Who knows!—for even Voltaire asked for spiritual help before he died. Perhaps I should find relief in the society of an ecclesiastic capable of inspiring me with a taste for religious conversations which would make me devout."[3] It is evident that Napoleon would have been glad to believe, but it is equally evident that he did not believe.

He died as a Christian nevertheless. "When the fatal moment was approaching," says his chronicler, "the Emperor told us that Abbé Vignali was to say mass in the usual way and recite the Forty Hours' Prayers, and that, when he asked for the Abbé, we were to send him in and leave him alone

[1] *Derniers moments de Napoléon*, September 25th, 1819.

[2] *Id.*, October 12th, 16th, November 18th, 1819.

[3] Conversation of January 27th, 1821, between Montholon and Sir Hudson Lowe (R.O. 32).

with him. All that the Emperor wished us to do was carried out faithfully."[1] On the 20th of April, he made his confession and received extreme unction. On the 21st, he gave instructions to Vignali about the ceremonies to be observed after his death. He thought he saw an ironical look on Antommarchi's face and he said to him: "You are above such weaknesses, but what am I to do?—I am neither a philosopher nor a doctor! I believe in God, and my father's religion is mine. All people cannot be atheists, and I was born in the Catholic faith. I must accept the duties it imposes, and I wish to receive the succour that it administers."[2]

At the time he said this he was in full possession of his mental faculties, for it was just when he was writing his admirable *Testament*, the St. Helena masterpiece. On the 20th of April, he received the viaticum[3] and again on the 3rd of May, two days before his death.[4] Such then was Napoleon's religious attitude at St. Helena. He was a deist *à la Voltaire*. He looked back to his Catholic childhood with emotion and, when confronted by death, he returned to his early beliefs.

In spite of this fickleness with regard to his own private belief, Napoleon had very decided ideas about the social *rôle* of religion. We find this in his conversations at St. Helena. In the first place he considered religion in the light of a safe-guard against the follies of the human imagination. Men must have something marvellous, their imagination is only satisfied with the supernatural. "It is better for them to go to religion for this," he says, "than to go to Cagliostro, Mademoiselle Lenormand or to fortune-tellers and swindlers."[5] He considered that the threats and promises of religion were

[1] *Campagne d'Égypte* (1847), Preface by Bertrand, p. LIV.
[2] *Derniers moments de Napoléon*, April 21st, 1821.
[3] *Id.*, April 29th, 1821.
[4] All details which are not in Antommarchi are in the *Sentiments de Napoléon sur le christianisme*, by the Chevalier de Beauterne (Bibliography, 103). This work, which is a strange criticism, strangely written, is nevertheless useful in parts, as it is founded on the testimony of Marchand and of Montholon.
[5] *Mémorial*, June 7th–8th, 1816. Compare *Napoléon en exil*, March 19th, 1817.

NAPOLEON AFTER DEATH.

From a picture by Vernet.

so many bridles to the passions. "If men had no religion," he said, "they would kill each other for the sake of the finest pear or the most beautiful woman."[1] All this reminds one of that philosopher who used to send his servants out of the room when his guests began to deny the existence of God.

"Religion," he said, "exercises a profound influence on me. Religious ideas have much more empire than certain narrow-minded philosophers think."[2] Consequently sovereigns could not afford to ignore religion; their first duty was to tolerate it under its various forms. By persecuting its disciples, a sovereign only makes himself unpopular, and men have a right, too, to religious liberty. "I wanted everyone," he says, "to believe and to think in his own way. I wanted all men, Catholics, Protestants, Mahometans, and Deists, to be on an equal footing.[3] A man's conscience cannot be arraigned before any court of justice."[4] But at the same time, the sovereign who does not trespass on the domain of religion must take care that religion does not trespass on his domain. By respecting all religions and by putting them on an equality with each other, a sovereign excludes them all from power. "I did not wish the priests to have any influence or any power as regards civil affairs. I meant them to keep to their spiritual affairs without interfering with other things."[5]

Napoleon felt it to be his duty to see that they did not have too much land nor get too much influence. "What need have these priests of such wealth?" he asked, when speaking of the Anglican Church.[6] Spain, he declared, had suffered from her idle *bestie di frati*."[7] The monasteries had amassed great wealth, and Napoleon speaks of them as useless and of "degrading laziness." He considered that the best *mezzo termine* was to tolerate them, but to compel their members to be useful and only to recognise annual

[1] *Derniers moments de Napoléon*, April 24th, 1821.
[2] *Récits de la captivité*, April 17th, 1821 (Conseils de Napoléon à son fils).
[3] *Napoléon en exil*, November 2nd, 1816. Compare Nov. 9th, 1816.
[4] *Id.*, September 8th, 1817. Compare *Troisième lettre du Cap.*
[5] *Napoléon en exil*, November 2nd, 1816.
[6] *Id.*, January 27th, 1817.
[7] *Id.*, November 9th, 1816.

vows. "An empire like France," he said, "must have a few asylums for those madmen called Trappists."[1] The Jesuits among others were to be feared, and it was wise to keep them aloof, as theirs was an essentially political order.[2]

Finally, if a sovereign is wise he makes use of the powerful lever put into his hands by religious ideas, and he makes these work for his plans. The ideal, he considered, was when the political sovereign was also the religious sovereign, as in Protestant and orthodox countries.[3] The Catholic religion distinguishes between these two powers, but, by the coronation, it accords an almost religious character to the sovereign. "From the moment," says Napoleon, "that you take away the prestige of royalty considered as the Lord's Anointed, and give it merely what the cold calculations of reason deem necessary, there is no longer any royalty, but a magistracy. From that time forth ambition enters the lists and the era of revolutions commences."[4] Napoleon advised that the sovereign of a Catholic country should always go through the coronation ceremony. As he could not be Pope in his own country, he wished to be the friend—or the master—of the Pope. By being on good terms with the Pope," he says, "one can govern the conscience of a hundred million Catholics. . . .[5] What an immense influence that means! What a hold on public opinion!"[6]

Napoleon declares that his policy was always based on ideas of this kind. When he was General of the army in Italy in 1796, he treated the Pope with deference in spite of the instructions he had received from the *Directoire*. He refused to take away from him his temporal power, and he affected the greatest respect for religion.[7]

In 1798, he tried to dissuade the *Directoire* from estab-

[1] *Mémorial*, July 31st, 1816.

[2] *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. II, p. 294; *Napoléon en exil*, November, 1816.

[3] *Mémorial*, August 17th, 1816.

[4] *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. II, p. 174.

[5] *Id.*, April 17th, 1821 (Conseils de Napoléon à son fils).

[6] *Id.*, Vol. II, p. 287.

[7] *Mémorial*, September 1st–6th, 1815, October 31st, 1816; *Derniers Moments*, March 10th and 18th, 1821; *Campagne d'Italie*, Negociations de 1796, Vol. V; Tolentino, etc.

lishing the Roman republic.[1] He was also very considerate to the Catholics in Malta in 1798,[2] and in Italy in 1800.[3] His diplomacy was still a greater success, though, in Egypt. As soon as he arrived there, he instructed his soldiers to respect the beliefs of the Egyptians.[4] He promised his protection for Islamism.[5] This promise was repeated at every conquest, at every step forward.[6] He treated the Mussulman theologians of Cairo with all due honour, discussed passages from the Koran with them, entrusted them with great legal authority, led them to hope for his conversion and, on the strength of this hope, obtained from them considerable support for strengthening his own authority.[7] When he left Egypt he recommended Kleber to follow the same line of conduct,[8] and if he had done so he would not have been killed by a fanatic.[9]

When he was appointed to govern France he applied similar principles there. Almost as soon as he was in power he stopped religious persecution and gave the churches back for service. He also had a sepulchre given to Pius VI.[10] Then came the famous Concordat, which answered several purposes.[11] Napoleon never regretted this policy of his, as, by re-establishing religion in France, he encouraged morality and social peace. "When I seized the helm," he says, "I had my own ideas about all the great elements which unite society. I had weighed the importance of religion, and I had decided to re-establish it."[12] By coming to an under-

[1] *Campagne d'Italie*, Las Cases's version, Retour de Rastadt, Vol. IV.
[2] *Campagne d'Égypte*, Malte, Vol. VIII.
[3] *Derniers moments*, October 23rd, 1819.
[4] *Campagne d'Égypte*, Conquête de la Basse-Égypte, Vol. I.
[5] *Id.*, Vol. II.
[6] *Id.*, *Ibid.*, Vol. VII.
[7] *Id.* Affaires religieuses. Compare Insurrection du Caire, Vol. V, St. Jean d'Acre, Vol. XI; *Troisième lettre du Cap.*; *Napoléon en exil*, March 16th, 1817; *Mémorial*, April 26th, July 21st, 1816; *Derniers moments*, October 22nd, 1819. Napoleon often returned with pleasure to this subject.
[8] *Campagne d'Égypte*, Retour de Napoléon en France, Vol. III.
[9] *Id.*, L'Egypte sous Kléber, Vol. IX.
[10] *Consuls provisoires*, Vols. V, VI.
[11] "I believe to-day, as I believed in 1801, that the Concordat was useful, necessary to religion, to the Republic, to the Government" (*Récits de la captivité*, Vol. II, p. 270).
[12] *Mémorial*, August 17th, 1816.

standing with the Pope, he caused war to cease between the two clerical parties.[1] The influence of the clergy had been excessive under the former *régime*, but it had diminished after being obliged to give up all national property and after the suppression of the religious orders.[2] Finally this understanding with the Pope allowed him to use his influence sooner or later with a hundred million Catholics.[3] All the principles he sets forth were thus satisfied. Religion was respected, watched over, held in check, and made use of.

This Act, wise though it was, met with opposition from the two extreme parties, the refractory clergy and the Jacobins who were hostile to the Church, Madame de Staël and her friends, who all urged Napoleon to establish Protestantism in France.[4] Napoleon took no notice of this opposition and, as usual, he had the masses with him.

The understanding with the Pope did not last long, but Napoleon explains that there was no private hostility between them, as they both respected each other. "He is a good, straightforward man," said Napoleon, "as gentle as a lamb,[5] and I always treated him well."[6] The Pope, in spite of their disagreement, always had sincere affection for him.[7] They were separated, however, by politics. The Pope, like his predecessors, desired above everything else temporal power.[8] He had hoped that, by consenting to officiate at the coronation service for Napoleon at Notre Dame, the Legations would be restored to him. Napoleon had promised nothing,

[1] Note I on the *Quatre Concordats.*

[2] Notes I and II on the *Quatre Concordats.*

[3] *Mémorial,* August 17th, 1816. Compare Note II. on the *Quatre Concordats*: "How can people think that the Court of Rome was asked to institute a patriarch [in Paris]? A patriarch would only have had influence in France; the Pope who was Pope of the great Empire extended his influence over all the universe; there would have been nothing gained by the change."

[4] *Récits de la captivité,* Vol. I, p. 355; Vol. II, pp. 271, 286. Compare *Mémorial,* August 17th, 1816. Compare the dictation to Montholon on religious affairs, *Récits,* Vol. II, p. 271, with the Notes on the *Quatre Concordats.* There is complete agreement.

[5] *Mémorial,* August 17th, 1816.

[6] *Derniers moments,* September 22nd, 1819. Compare *Napoléon en exil,* June 10th, 1817; *Mémorial,* June 7th, 8th, 1816.

[7] *Mémorial,* May 6th, 1816; *Récits de la captivité,* Vol. II, p. 288.

[8] *Id.,* May 6th, 1816; *Récits de la captivité,* Vol. II, p. 288.

and he did not restore anything.[1] From that time forth he was treated with secret hostility at Rome. The Pope did not care to help him against the King of Naples and against the English. Napoleon was patient for some time, but finally decided to confiscate the Papal States. Whilst fighting the Prince, though, he respected the Pontiff, and he did not attempt to encroach on his spiritual prerogatives.[2] Napoleon maintained that General Miollis received no orders from Rome. The Battle of Essling had encouraged all France's enemies, and a revolt in Rome had become probable.

Miollis thought he could ward this off by removing the Pope, and at the same time he desired to protect him from the dangers he would have encountered during an armed fight in Rome.[3] Napoleon approved Miollis, and the Pope remained at Savona, where he was very well treated. It was at this time that the Pope took the initiative of transforming the political conflict into a religious war. He was powerless against Napoleon's armies, and so he armed consciences against the conqueror. He refused to institute the bishops chosen by the Emperor for the vacant sees, and he endeavoured to make the religious administration of their various dioceses impossible. In order to settle this fresh difficulty Napoleon had recourse to a rival authority from that of the Pope. He called together the Council of 1811.

This assembly, like the Concordat, was intended to answer various purposes and to be the last step in Napoleon's religious policy. The Pope was afraid that the power of the Councils would be restored. He was therefore ready to yield, and the quarrel might soon have come to an end. Thanks to the authority thus acquired over the Pope, Napoleon believed that he would soon have persuaded him to reside in Paris, where everything was ready to receive him and where he would have had him under his direct influence. He would have appointed him his almoner and would have made Paris the capital of the Christian world.[4] "This," he considered,

[1] *Mémorial*, August 17th, 1816; Note II on the *Quatre Concordats*.
[2] *Id.*, August 17th, 1816; Note III on the *Quatre Concordats*.
[3] Note III on the *Quatre Concordats*. Compare *Mémorial*, December 6th, 1815.
[4] *Napoléon en exil*, June 10th, 1817.

"would have been one more way of drawing together all the federate parts of the Empire and of keeping all those who remained outside at peace with each other."[1] Finally Napoleon accustomed everyone to the idea of the revival of the Councils, which had fallen into disuse for many years.

The independence of the Council of 1811 delighted him, and we read in the *Mémorial*: "The Emperor liked the energy and the resistance of the Council; the spirit of opposition was the one thing to bring these assemblies into vogue, as they were not at all in accordance with the character of the times.[2] He intended to call other Councils together in Paris. These assemblies would have helped him to weaken the excessive authority of the Pope, and through them he thought it would have been easy to govern the Catholic world. "I should have held my religious sessions, just as I did my legislative sessions," he says. "My Councils would have been there to represent Christianity, and the Popes would only have been Presidents. I should have opened and closed these assemblies, approved and published their decisions, just as Constantine and Charlemagne did."[3]

Napoleon maintains that he loved his religion, that he wished it to prosper and to be honoured, but at the same time he wanted to make use of it as a means of repressing anarchy, for consolidating his government in Europe, and for giving more prestige to France and more influence to Paris. All this was his one object.[4] He intended to carry out his plan at the meeting of the second Council in 1813. He had made use of the obstacles which were put in his way for carrying out his policy. The Pope's struggle against him resulted in the State taking more immediate control of religious affairs and of these being utilised by the State. Just in the same way in politics, the resistance of the European kings had no other result than to make him extend his plans and hasten to carry them out.

[1] *Mémorial*, August 17th, 1816. Compare *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. II, p. 292.
[2] Note IV on the *Quatre Concordats*.
[3] *Mémorial*, August 17th, 1816.
[4] Note IV on the *Quatre Concordats*.

The 1812 campaign somewhat disturbed these plans. Napoleon was not discouraged, and "in a private conversation,"[1] "in a friendly and courteous discussion"[2] he obtained the Pope's assent at Fontainebleau with regard to the Concordat. This at least ended the quarrel. In spite of all that occurred later on, Napoleon maintains that he would certainly have won the day in this matter if it had not been for the reverses which overthrew the Empire.

Napoleon insists that in religion, as in politics, he always wanted to be a conciliator and an umpire between the forces of the past and the needs of the epoch in which he lived. He wanted to save all that was worth saving of the old edifice, all that could be of any use. He wanted to comply with the wishes of the public by doing away with all abuses, by lopping off dead branches and by strengthening all the healthy parts. If he failed in his attempts he knew that the Church and Europe must inevitably suffer more than he would.[3] According to Napoleon then, his religious work was intended to crown his political work.

[1] *Mémorial*, August 17th, 1816.

[2] Note III on the *Quatre Concordats*. Compare *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. II, p. 288.

[3] We should note, in the Constitution for the reign of Napoleon II, the following article (section IV), which is broader as far as the Church is concerned than the preface of the Concordat: "The Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman religion, being the religion of a great majority of the French, *is the State religion.*"

CHAPTER XVIII

NAPOLEON'S FAMILY

When studying the life of Napoleon, his family must also be taken into consideration: his mother who educated him as a child, his brothers and sisters who were the instruments and companions of his greatness, his two wives and his son. It is interesting to note the ideas Napoleon wished to leave to posterity about his family.

He always speaks of his mother with affection and respect. He praises her almost unreservedly. He speaks of her as "an excellent woman, an unequalled mother."[1] He tells how she watched over his childhood with "vigilant affection, never allowing anything to enter his mind that was not great."[2] He attributed the utmost importance to the education he received from her. "I owe my fortune to the way she brought me up when I was young,"[3] he said. Thanks to her "manly character, her pride, her love of honour," her courage and also her physical strength, she was able to act another part in several instances than just that of a careful mother. "She had a man's brain and a woman's body," says her son.[4] When she was expecting the birth of Napoleon she was sharing with her husband the fatigues of the war that Paoli was waging against the French for the liberty of Corsica. Later on, when France was free and she had become French at heart, she fought against this same Paoli, who wanted to deliver Corsica over to the English. She lost her

[1] *Derniers moments de Napoléon*, September 22nd, 1819.
[2] *Id.*, July 31st, 1820.
[3] *Napoléon en exil*, June 10th, 1817.
[4] *Derniers moments*, November 18th, 1819.

LETIZIA RAMOLINI.

The Mother of Napoleon.

estate on account of this patriotism and was obliged to take refuge in France.[1] This rustic Cornelia, who rode through thickets on horseback and dazzled Napoleon in his early years by her picturesque heroism, had her little faults. "Madame was much too parsimonious," we are told, "it was ridiculous."[2] The money she had saved, though, in her far-seeing prudence, she was quite willing to give up to her son at Elba and when he needed it after Waterloo. "Whatever was great," he says, "always won the day with her over all that was little. She was much more proud and ambitious than avaricious."[3]

Her daughters, although occupying a secondary place in the family, had remarkable qualities too. Elisa had "a man's brain and was strong minded."[4] She was very active always, liked ruling her sisters and would sometimes hold out against her brother.[5] Pauline was admired everywhere for her beauty.[6] She was "the best creature living," and her extravagance was due to her kindheartedness.[7] Caroline was a woman with brains, very clever and capable.[8] The exercise of power had helped to form her character.[9] All these members of the family certainly formed a rare union of physical and moral qualities. The brothers were still more noteworthy and Napoleon often speaks of them. He always insists that they were all talented, well-intentioned and fond of him. They did him a great deal of harm, not intentionally, but through well-meaning errors. Joseph was kindhearted and willing, but he was "too kindhearted and too fond of pleasure and books for a king."[10] "His good qualities were those of a private individual,[11] and he was not equal to his

[1] *Derniers moments*, October 25th, 1819 ; *Mémorial*, May 29th, 1816.
[2] *Mémorial*, May 19th, 1816.
[3] *Id.*, May 19th, 1816.
[4] *Id.*, November 4th, 1816.
[5] *Derniers moments*, December 26th, 1820.
[6] *Mémorial*, March 10th–12th, November 4th, 1816.
[7] *Id.*, May 19th, 1816.
[8] *Id.*, November 4th, 1816. Compare September 15th, 1816.
[9] *Id.*, May 19th, 1816. Compare *Napoléon en exil*, September 1st, 1817, and *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. II, p. 468.
[10] *Napoléon en exil*, January 30th, 1817.
[11] *Mémorial*, May 19th, 1816.

task."[1] Lucien was witty and noble-minded, but he had been spoiled by revolutionary ideas.[2] His opposition did Napoleon a great deal of harm as far as European opinion was concerned. Louis was "intelligent and not ill-natured," but he was odd, jealous, suspicious, embittered by illness, and he had been spoiled by reading Rousseau.[3] It was on his account that Napoleon had been obliged to unite Holland to France, and this had the worst possible effect on Europe and helped considerably in bringing about French misfortunes." Jerome had been very foolish as a young man, but he was just beginning to settle down at the time of the Hundred Days, and he gave great promise.[5] All Napoleon's brothers brought difficulties upon him by their independent spirit, and he was frequently forced into things for their sake that were dangerous for him. If he appointed one of them king, "he at once imagined himself king by the grace of God, an expression which was epidemic, and from that time forth, instead of serving as Napoleon's lieutenant, each king was a fresh enemy . . . not troubling in the least to second his brother, but trying to become independent himself."[6] The sentiment which caused these new-made kings to identify themselves with their subjects and to prefer their interests to those of France was a sentiment of honourable origin, although unwisely reasoned out.[7] Then, too, "they were very new to their position and very young. They were surrounded by snares, by flatterers and intrigues of every kind, and what family in the same circumstances would have done better!"

Praise is lavished on Josephine, praise that is mingled with slight criticisms full of affectionate good humour.

In spite of the serious tone of the *Mémoires*, "the extreme grace of the Empress Josephine" is spoken of. Napoleon

[1] *Mémorial, ibid.* Compare *Mémorial*, November 4th, 1816; and *Récits*, Vol. I, p. 224; Vol. II, p. 193.
[2] *Id.*, August 16th–21st, 1815, September 13th, 1816.
[3] *Id.*, May 19th, September 24th, 1816.
[4] *Id.*, September 24th, 1816.
[5] *Id.*, May 19th, November 4th, 1816.
[6] *Id.*, September 24th, 1816.
[7] *Id.*, November 4th, 1816.

ELISA BONAPARTE.

PAULINE BONAPARTE.

also mentions her "sweet, attractive manners,"[1] and over and over again in his conversations the grateful husband refers to "her natural grace, her gentleness, and her obliging disposition."[2] Her only faults appear to have been her extravagance, her love of luxury, and the disorderly way in which she kept her accounts.[3] Napoleon was driven by political reasons to separate from her, but he certainly regretted this quite as much as she did.[4]

As regards Marie-Louise, Napoleon praises her unreservedly. There is no reproach and no suspicion whatever when he speaks of her. He gives a panegyric in which he praises a profusion of moral qualities in the Empress. He speaks of her faithfulness, her gentleness, her candour, and her innocence.[5]

In the *Lettres du Cap*, she had a public testimony of the exile's affection in the words: "It appears that Napoleon is very much attached to Marie-Louise, and that he has the greatest confidence in her."[6] Instead of reproaching her with her forgetfulness and inaction ever since 1814, he tries to defend her when other people are criticising her conduct. When O'Meara expressed his surprise that the Empress took no steps on his behalf, he endeavoured to excuse her. "She is so hemmed in," says Napoleon, "and then, too, she is young and timid."[7] Whenever one of his companions left the island, he always urged upon him to go and see his dear Louise and to talk to her of St. Helena.[8] A week before his death he gave Antommarchi his final instructions: "I wish you to preserve my heart in spirits of wine, and to take it to Parma to my beloved Marie-

[1] *Treize Vendémiaire*, Vol. VI.

[2] *Mémorial*, November 11th–13th, 1815, March 10th–12th, November 9th, 1816; *Napoléon en exil*, October 27th, November 26th, 1816, March 25th, June 10th, 1817.

[3] *Mémorial*, May 19th, 1816; *Récits*, Vol. I, pp. 243, 268.

[4] *Quatrième lettre du Cap*.

[5] *Mémorial*, November 11th–13th, 1816, March 10th, 12th November 9th, 1816; *Récits*, Vol. I, p. 433.

[6] *Quatrième lettre*.

[7] *Napoléon en exil*, August 22nd, 1817.

[8] *Id.*, July 25th, 1818; *Mémorial*, December 16th, 1816.

Louise. Tell her that I have always loved her dearly; that I have never ceased loving her."

Certainly, after that, if any suspicion fell on Cæsar's wife, it was not Cæsar's fault. Napoleon wished the King of Rome to inherit his father's glory, to be considered as the son of an irreproachable mother, and to be looked upon by everyone as belonging to a family worthy of his future destiny. He wished all nations to have faith in the son of Marie-Louise, in the nephew of the Bonapartes.

CHAPTER XIX

NAPOLEON'S WILL

On the 15th of April, 1821, Napoleon had given up all hope. He felt that he was dying and he knew that he should die at St. Helena. Condemned by the kings, he turned now to the people and he endeavoured to say to them briefly, but in a louder and clearer voice, what he had been saying for the last six years to the English who had visited the island, to his French friends—and occasionally to the European public. His Will, that masterpiece written on his death-bed,[1] sums up in a concise way the Memorials and the *Mémoires*. It gives briefly the main lines of the plan that these books were intended to carry out. In the first place the Imperial words were not intended for prejudiced ears or for minds that had been warped by spiteful accounts. Napoleon begins by forgiving his brother Louis in a somewhat disdainful way, for the "libel" he had published against him in 1820.[2] He declares that this was full of "wrong assertions and falsified documents."[3] He disowns the *Manuscrit de Sainte-Hélène* and various other works entitled *Maximes*, *Sentences*, etc., which had been published during the last six years.[4] He affirms that the public could only find out what his intentions had really been from his own *Mémoires* and from his friends. He protests against any apocryphal gospels.[5]

[1] Written between the 15th and 26th of April. Napoleon died on the 5th of May.

[2] *Documents historiques et reflexions sur le gouvernement de la Hollande*, by Comte de Saint-Leu, London, Lackington, 1820.

[3] *Testament*, Vol. I, p. 7.

[4] *Id.*, Vol. I, p. 8.

[5] We must mention among these apocryphal works the following: (1.) The *Manuscrit de Sainte-Hélène* (Bibliography, 49), published first in

He then encourages his faithful friends to unite in the work of defending him and his actions when attacked by slanderers. In the 31st clause he says: "I bequeath to Colonel Marbot a hundred thousand francs. I hope he will continue writing in defence of the glory of our French army, and that he will confound all slanderers and apostates."

In the 32nd clause he says: "I bequeath a hundred thousand francs to Baron Bignon, and I hope that he will, write a history of French diplomacy from 1792 to 1815."[1] He wished the French people to remember, in spite of all that had been said to the contrary, that Napoleon had been their representative, chosen by themselves, and that he had loved them: "I wish my ashes to rest near the banks of the Seine," he wrote, "in the midst of the French people whom I have loved so dearly."[2] In his instructions to the executors of his Will, he insists on his body being taken to Paris.[3] He wished his son, too, to be French in heart and soul. "My son," he writes, "must never forget that he is a French prince by birth . . . . He must never fight against France nor do anything that would be against French interests. He must adopt my device: 'Everything for the French nation.'"[4] His love for France is expressed more clearly still

London, which, during the first year, had five editions. It was also published at Ghent, Warsaw, Paris, etc. It has sometimes been given under other titles, such for instance as: *Mémoires de Napoléon ecrits sous sa dictée à Sainte-Hélène par un de ses valets de chambre*, Paris, Philippe, 1829; the *Confessions de l'Empereur Napoléon*, Metz, Gangel et Didion, 1863; the Metz publisher, like a Lyons publisher in 1857, believed the work to be authentic. (2.) *Napoleon his own historian, extracts from the original manuscript of Napoleon Bonaparte*, by an American, London, Colburn, 1818, appeared in English and in French. (3.) *Les Maximes et Pensées du prisonnier de Sainte-Hélène* (Bibliography 51), the original of which appeared in London, published by Black in 1820. It was reprinted in 1845 by Commercy. After Napoleon's death the publications continued, and we find: (4.) *Fragment politique extrait des papiers de Napoléon* (Bibliography, 52). (5.) *Journal curieux et intéressant trouvé dans la chambre de Napoléon à Sainte-Hélène* (Bibliography, 53). (6.) *Pensées et Souvenirs de Napoléon, écrits de sa main*, etc. (Bibliography, 54). *Histoires amoureuses de Napoléon Bonaparte*, published as early as 1815 in Paris, is not included in this list. Such absurd works must be reserved for special categories of publishers and readers. The most simple-minded persons could not believe in their authenticity.

[1] *Testament*, II.
[2] *Id.*, Vol. I, p. 2.
[3] Paragraph 27.
[4] *Testament*, I, p. 4.

by his desire to alleviate the sufferings endured by those members of the French nation who had suffered with or through him. He bequeathed the two hundred millions of his private estate to the eastern provinces which had been so brave and so patriotic during the two invasions; to the soldiers "who had fought from 1792 to 1815 for the glory and independence of the nation; to the wounded of Waterloo; to those who had been outlawed under the Restoration, and to the devoted men who had gone with him to Elba."[1] The Restoration was scarcely likely to respect his private estate or to allow this sensational distribution of his property. That mattered little. The essential thing was that the brave men who had fought with him, and the patriots who had suffered for his sake, would know that the exile, on his lonely rock, had not forgotten them. They would know, too, that although they had succumbed in the great struggle against kings, neither he nor they had been weak or to blame. The responsibility lay entirely on the traitors of 1814 and of 1815. "The two unfortunate issues of the invasion of France," he says, "at a time when the country had still so many resources, were due to the treachery of Marmont, Augereau, Talleyrand, and Lafayette."[2] Napoleon also maintained that not only had he been the man of the French nation, but he had been the man of all nations. "I am dying prematurely," he continues, "murdered by the English oligarchy and its hired assassins. The English nation will avenge my death before long.[3] I recommend my son never to allow himself to be an instrument in the hands of the Triumvirs who oppress the nations of Europe."[4] Finally, favourable to the ideas of 1789, Napoleon was not hostile to the Church.

"I die in the apostolic and Roman faith," he says, "in which I was born."[5] His son was to continue his *rôle*. This son was surrounded by a family which had never

[1] *Testament*, III. First Codicil 21 and 22; fifth Codicil 14 and 15.
[2] *Id.*, I, p. 6.
[3] *Id.*, I, p. 5. Compare (*Id.*, II, p. 2) the souvenir left to Lady Holland, wife of one of the chiefs of the English Liberal party.
[4] *Id.*, I, p. 4.
[5] *Id.*, I, p. 1.

forgotten the exiled Napoleon.[1] He was the son of a blameless mother who had always been beloved by her husband. "I always had reason to be proud of my very dear wife, Marie-Louise," Napoleon writes. "Up to the last moment I have the greatest affection for her."[2] Napoleon felt, though, that the King of Rome ought to be prepared for the part he would have to play. His mind had perhaps been warped by his Austrian preceptors. It was the duty of the father to counteract all this. He accordingly bequeathed to him his most precious relics, the famous Marengo cloak, the Austerlitz sword and Frederic II's alarum, taken at Potsdam, together with his own arms and his clothes.[3] He felt sure that these objects, which had been in everyday use with him, these arms of such world-wide renown, would gradually exercise a certain fascination over his son. They would appeal to his senses, to his imagination, and he would finally be won over to that cause which had been defended by the Austerlitz sword. Napoleon knew men well enough to be fully aware of the influence which constantly repeated impressions have on the formation of their moral being. His instructions to his executors are very explicit on this point.

"(15) I wish my executors to make a collection of such engravings, pictures, books and medals as will give my son right ideas and destroy all the wrong ideas which a foreign policy may have tried to inculcate in him. I desire this, in order that he may judge things as they really are. . . . . . .

"(16) If a collection of views of my headquarters at Fontainebleau and my palaces in France and Italy can be procured, I should like my son to have this collection.

"(31) Appiani, the Milan painter, has many things which it is important for my son to have. The memory of his father will be the glory of his life. He should be helped to collect and acquire all the objects that he can have to remind him of me.

"(35) I wish my executors to procure the most life-like

[1] *Testament*, I, p. 7.
[2] *Id.*, I, p. 4.
[3] See the inventories added to the Testament.

JEROME BONAPARTE.

LUCIEN BONAPARTE.

sketches of me in various costumes, and to send them to my son."[1]

When once the King of Rome had been prepared in this way, the executors were to see him at any cost. They were to appeal to his intelligence, rather than to his senses, and to instil into him the ideas which the son and heir of Napoleon ought to have. He then gives the following explicit instructions:

"(19) When my executors see my son they must set his ideas right with regard to facts and things, and put him once more on the right road.

"(23) I should like some of my officers and domestics to enter my son's service. I should like Bertrand's children or M. Montholon's children to do so.

"(24) My son should be persuaded to take the name of Napoleon again, as soon as he has attained the age of reason and can do so with propriety."

Even when he had been thoroughly prepared for the *rôle* he was to play, Napoleon knew that the King of Rome would have some serious obstacles to overcome before he could embrace the cause of the people. The Austrian Court would naturally want to restrain him. His mother would be able to help him most, and Napoleon therefore addressed an urgent appeal to the Empress. "I beseech her," he wrote, "to watch over my son and to keep him safe from the snares which may be laid for him in his childhood."[2] The executors were to appeal to her and to set her ideas right.[3] They were to acquaint the Empress Marie-Louise by letter, and again when they saw her, of Napoleon's "esteem and affection for her, and to recommend his son to her, as he had no one else on whom to depend."[4]

On the death of his father the King of Rome would be the head of the family, and it was for him to carry out his father's plans.

Napoleon hoped that all the Bonapartes would then group themselves round their new chief: "I do not wish my mother to give any special advantages to my son in her will," wrote

[1] See, too, the paragraphs, 14, 17, 18, 25.
[2] *Testament*, I, 3. [3] *Instructions*, (20) [4] *Id.*, (33)

Napoleon, "but I should like her to give him some precious legacy, the portrait of my mother and of my father, or some piece of jewellery that he could say he had from his grand-parents. As soon as he attains the age of reason my mother, my brothers and my sisters should all write to him and keep up an intercourse with him."[1] Napoleon wished all the members of his family, as well as his heir, to remember that they belonged to the cause of the people. "I wish my family to know," he writes, "that it is my desire that my nephews and nieces shall either marry amongst each other, or in the Roman States, the Swiss Republic, or in the United States of America. I want as few members of my race as possible to be allied to kings."[2] Napoleon wished the people to know him through this Will. The *Mémoires* and the Memorials were more or less for savants and for the middle class. The people themselves would never buy the eight volumes of the *Mémoires* nor of the *Mémorial.* The Will was concise and cut up into fragments, so that it could be used in newspapers, and in pamphlets. It could be published, too, in inexpensive editions,[3] and in that way would reach the masses. In all the little inns where Béranger's refrains were sung, and Épinal's pictures were to be seen, everyone could then read the words: "I wish my ashes to rest near the banks of the Seine in the midst of the French people I have so dearly loved."

And thus the solemn, simple words from across the ocean would reach the ears of the people.

[1] *Instructions*, (21), (22)

[2] *Id.*, (30) This invitation of which Napoleon gives the ostensible reason, has another one, which is expressed in three conversations between Napoleon and Bertrand, April 22nd, 24th and 25th, 1821 (*Mémoires du roi Joseph* (Bibliography, 104), Vol. X, p. 263). By marrying in Rome, the Bonapartes would be allied to families which supply cardinals, legates, and popes. In America and Switzerland they might become members of the Government, as that was Republican and, there as in Rome, exercise an influence which would serve the King of Rome, either by way of support for reconquering his Empire, or, if the worst came to the worst and France refused itself to him, he might govern the Catholic world or the American Republic, if fate did not allow him to become Emperor.

[3] Without speaking of all the Memorials and Histories of Napoleon. which have published the *Testament* at the end of the volume, there were at least ten editions of the *Testament* in Paris from 1820 to 1823. See the catalogue of the *Bibliothèque nationale*, Lb. 48, 2001, 2004.

CHAPTER XX

GOURGAUD AND HIS DIARY

THE essential characteristics of the Napoleonic legend are set forth very clearly in the works written or inspired by Napoleon at St. Helena. In the preceding chapters it has been easy to prove the agreement of the various testimonies, those contained in the *Mémoires* which were dictated by the master, and those given by the Memorialists from Napoleon's conversations. It now remains to study Napoleon's real ideas, more or less concealed under his political ones. Gourgaud was a privileged witness, and it is in his work that Napoleon's real ideas can be traced. It is for this reason that the following chapter is devoted to him alone. Gaspar Gourgaud was born at Versailles on the 14th November, 1783. His father was a musician in the King's chapel. His mother was cradle-rocker to the Duc de Berry,[1] and Dugazon,[2] the comedian, was her brother. Gourgaud entered the Polytechnical School in 1799, and in 1801 the Artillery School of Châlons. He was Lieutenant in the 7th regiment of Artillery in 1802, and took part in the campaign of Austerlitz, Jena and Friedland. In December, 1807, he fought a duel with a Prussian ex-Colonel, who had slandered Napoleon.[3] He was a Captain in 1808, and served in Spain. He fought in the Wagram campaign and was afterwards told off to Versailles. On the 3rd of July, 1811,

[1] *Gourgaud,* May 28th, 1816. *La captivité de Sainte-Hélène* (Bibliography 42), p. 146.
[2] *Rapport de Montchenu,* March 12th, 1818 (*Affaires étrangères,* 1804, p. 301, document, p. 152). *Rapport de Balmain,* September 8th, 1816.
[3] *Mémoires de D'Espinchal,* Paris, Ollendorf, 1901, Vol. I, p. 160.

he became orderly officer to Napoleon.[1] He received the title of Baron for the great services he had rendered during the Russian campaign, and he was made Major on the 27th of March, 1813. At the same time the function of first orderly officer was specially created for him.[2] After the battle of Dresden he was made Officer of the Legion of Honour. He saved Napoleon's life at Brienne and, after the taking of Rheims, he was made Colonel, and received the title of Commander of the Legion. At Fontainebleau, on the 14th of April, 1814, Napoleon dismissed him, but gave him a letter full of praise.[3] Gourgaud did not really leave him, though, until the 20th of April, the day of Napoleon's departure for Elba.[4]

Thanks to the influence of the Duc de Berry, whom his mother had helped to bring up, Gourgaud was very well treated under the Restoration. When Napoleon returned from Elba, Gourgaud, after some little time, rallied to him. He was made a General at Fleurus. Later on he went with Napoleon to Rochefort and, after a scene with Bertrand, he obtained permission to accompany the exile to St. Helena instead of Planat, who had been chosen first.[5] Gourgaud left the island in March, 1818, and it would be difficult to say for what reason. The most plausible explanation is that the mission to Europe really existed, and that Gourgaud took

[1] About this nomination and the following one, see B.N. *Manuscrits, Papiers relatifs au Premier Empire*, fr. 6578, fol. 105, 135, 141.

[2] See Méneval, *Napoléon et Marie-Louise*, Paris, Amyot, 1843–1845, Vol. I, p. 432.

[3] Letter from Sir W. Scott and General Gourgaud's reply (Bibliography 86), p. 50.

[4] See *Le Genéral Gourgaud* (Bibliography 87), and Vaulabelle, *Histoire des deux Restaurations*, Vol. I, p. 429. We must note, however, that Planat de la Faye (*Vie de Planat de la Faye*, etc., Bibliography, p. 111), orderly officer like Gourgaud, presents things in quite another way. According to him, Gourgaud had promised to accompany Napoleon to the Isle of Elba, but he asked permission to go and visit his mother and then never came back. On Napoleon's return he made up for this by threatening to kill himself in order to get back into his master's favour (p. 198–201). This very plain statement is perplexing, as Gourgaud, in his diary, does not for a moment seem to have a guilty conscience in this respect, and Napoleon never appears to have reproached him with it. We can only leave this an open question.

[5] *Vie de Planat*, p. 245. Perhaps this preference was the cause of Planat's ill-humour toward Gourgaud (see the preceding note).

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advantage of it, just at that time, in order to extricate himself and his companions in exile from a situation which his difficult character rendered unbearable.

Whether he really quarrelled or not with Napoleon, he certainly had the benefit of such a quarrel, as far as the English authorities were concerned. The Governor had had a weakness for him for a long time. Gourgaud caused him less anxiety than the others, as he always refused to make any complaints or protestations. He never cared to hold conversations with the Commissioners either,[1] and he was not so easily influenced by the Emperor as the others.[2] Gourgaud was therefore spared the political quarantine which Las Cases had had to endure at the Cape of Good Hope, and the Governor asked the Marquis de Montchenu to recommend him to the French Ambassador in London.[3] Montchenu consented, but with certain restrictions.[4] On his arrival in London he was fairly well received. He talked with the Ministers, and the Duc d'Osmond, who was then French Ambassador, tried to obtain permission for him to return to France.[5] This good understanding was not of long duration. Gourgaud, probably by way of carrying out the plan

[1] See Sir Hudson Lowe's report to Lord Bathurst, October 30th, 1817 (*Forsyth*, Vol. IV, p. 284); Montchenu's report of March 12th, 1818 (*Affaires étrangères*, 1804, p. 301, Document 152): "*The Governor likes him*," the note of the conversation between Sturmer and Sir Hudson Lowe, September 11th, 1817 (R.O. 11): "General Gourgaud is the only one who seems to be *comme il faut*, he has frank manners and does not interfere in anything." See, too, the *Rapport de Balmain*, February 27th, 1818: "The Governor talks in pompous praise of Gourgaud, he praises him up to the skies as a man of great judgment who has never violated the rules. Why does he not add a man who, having quarrelled with Bonaparte and been at loggerheads with his compatriots, appears to approve my ungenerous conduct towards them, thinks I am right about everything, and is my creature? That is really at bottom what makes him like, esteem, and extol this General."

[2] "General Gourgaud, who is in the habit of expressing his sentiments with more independence than any other of the persons of General Bonaparte's household. . . . "(Sir Hudson Lowe's report to Lord Bathurst, August 5th, 1817; Forsyth, Vol. II, p. 323). Compare the passage from Forsyth, Vol. II, p. 6, in which Sir Hudson Lowe speaks of the "candour and sincerity of Gourgaud."

[3] *Gourgaud*, II, p. 533.

[4] *Gourgaud*, II, p. 534. *Rapport de Montchenu*, March 12th, 1818, already quoted.

[5] We shall mention (Appendix II.) his letter to Lord Bathurst, October 31st, 1818 (R.O. 19).

arranged at St. Helena, or perhaps won over again by Napoleon's partisans in England, began, in August, 1818, to plead his master's cause with Marie Louise and with the European Sovereigns.[1] The publicity which the newspapers gave to his letters was not at all approved of,[2] so that in November, 1818, he was sent away from England. Gourgaud took refuge in Hamburg,[3] and lived there for some time on the annual pension of twelve thousand francs which Prince Eugène paid him [4] at Napoleon's request. In 1821 he was able to return to France. In 1822 he married Comte Roederer's daughter and, until 1830, was one of the active members of the Bonapartist party. He and Montholon published Napoleon's dictations, and he criticised Ségur's *Histoire de la Grande Armée* and Walter Scott's *Life of Napoleon.* The first of these criticisms in 1824 resulted in a duel for him, and the second, in 1827, in a personal attack by the English author. Gourgaud replied to this in his turn.[5] The revolution of 1830 gave him an opportunity of taking part in public affairs once more. He was Commander of the Artillery of Paris and of Vincennes in 1830, *aide de camp* to Louis Philippe in 1832, Lieutenant-General in 1835, a peer in 1841. In 1840 he was one of those entrusted with the mission of fetching back to France Napoleon's ashes. He begged for his former rival, Montholon, to be allowed to take part in this expedition, but his request was not granted.[6] During this mission the question of precedence was raised between himself and Las Cases's son, just as it had been with the father in 1816.[7] He was a deputy of the Legislative

[1] See his letters, *Gourgaud*, II, pp. 3, 535.

[2] The letter to Marie-Louise appeared in the *Morning Chronicle*, October 1st, 1818.

[3] A pamphlet published to protest against this banishment, insinuates that the publication by Gourgaud of the campaign of 1815, a work not very flattering for Wellington, may have had something to do with the banishment. "Perhaps," it says, "his work may have wounded the extravagant pride of those whom success has intoxicated. . . ." (R.O. 20).

[4] *Mémoires du Prince Eugène* (Bibliography, 105), Vol. X, p. 409, *sqq.* Prince Eugène gave a mortgage on his property for this pension. After his death the mortgage was bought back for one hundred and seventy thousand francs.

[5] Bibliography, 86.

[6] *Le Général Gourgaud* (Bibliography, 87).

[7] See his *Souvenirs* (Bibliography, 91).

Assembly in 1849, and he died in 1852. It is interesting to know how his diary was written. One of the publishers gives the following information: "Gourgaud," he says, "wrote every evening while everything was fresh in his memory. He then copied the more important parts, modifying and correcting the style. A few rare specimens of the first rough copy exists, and the style certainly needed modifying."

Gourgaud's diary was therefore written in very much the same way as that of Las Cases. There was the same abundance of material, as the notes were taken down every day. There was also the same accuracy, as so short a time elapsed between the hearing of the conversations and the writing them down.

Gourgaud had a distinct advantage over Las Cases, as he did not trouble much about literary effect or the criticism of the reader. He wrote for himself and not for the public, so that his diary had no useless additions, no attempt at style, no recastings of the conversations for the sake of bringing in other subjects. It never occurred to him to collect several different conversations on the same subject, regardless of dates, and give them together, out of consideration to the reader. He did not trouble, as Las Cases did, as to whether the public would be bored or perhaps only too curious about private matters, so that he spoke of everyone by name when relating the Longwood conversations and events. His diary on this account is more natural, and the dates given are more exact. Not one of the St. Helena writers gives Napoleon's real accent as Gourgaud does, and there is consequently something very real and very picturesque in his accounts.

Valuable as this diary is, it is somewhat disquieting to know[1] that it is supposed to have been altered and arranged for the sake of producing a certain effect on Sir Hudson Lowe, and more particularly in order to persuade the Governor that Gourgaud was leaving Longwood after a quarrel with Napoleon. It seems probable though, (and the publishers of the diary are of this opinion) that no alterations were made "except with reference to Gourgaud's

[1] This question will be treated more fully in Appendix II.

lamentations, quarrels, and all that might convince Sir Hudson Lowe that Gourgaud was not another Las Cases, and that he would not allow his diary to be taken away from him." As to Napoleon's conversations about his own deeds and his intentions, there seems to be no reason for Gourgaud to have altered these. There is another consideration which is distinctly reassuring. It has been suggested that the diary was arranged just before Gourgaud's departure, and that sentences were crossed out, additions made, etc. The publishers only speak of one instance in which changes of this kind were made in the manuscript, which was all in Gourgaud's fine regular hand-writing.[1] The probability is that when Gourgaud knew he was going to leave the island he began to dwell on his quarrels with Napoleon in his diary, in order to justify his departure, but that he did not change anything already written. The date of the change in his tactics could not have been before July, 1817. Several times over, during this month,[2] Gourgaud crossed out the name of an English Captain in his diary, who was to give a letter to his mother for him, without the Governor's knowledge. When Gourgaud wrote the name in his diary he probably never thought of his papers being read, and of the danger of the Captain being compromised by it. When he struck out the name it was because he had thought of this danger, and he did not wish to compromise an obliging friend.

After he had once begun to think about his own departure[3] his first care was to "put his papers in order," and this he proceeded to do on the 30th of July, 1817. The diary, therefore, was evidently not arranged before that date, so that the earlier part of it can still be depended on. It was written in very fine handwriting on parchment paper,[4] and at any critical times was put into bottles which Gourgaud either buried[5] or stowed away in a dark closet.[6]

[1] *Préface du Journal de Gourgaud*, p. 9.
[2] July 14th, 17th and 22nd.
[3] See Appendix II.
[4] *Gourgaud*, March 10th, 1817, October 7, 1817.
[5] *Id.*, March 10th, July 30th, 1817.
[6] *Id.*, October 7th, 1817.

He either hid it very successfully, or Sir Hudson Lowe was tactful in this particular instance, for he does not appear to have read it. When Major Gorrequer examined Gourgaud's papers before his departure, he does not mention the diary in his report.[1] It would be curious if it was really altered, and if all the work of investigation was given to future researchers for the sake of a plan which did not succeed after all.

It now remains to find out why this diary is really so valuable, and why it is worthy of being considered apart from all the other memoirs and memorials. In the first place Gourgaud himself must be understood. He was an active, intelligent, and capable officer. In 1811 the report of his chiefs was that he was well-educated and talented, that he had fought well, was capable of observing and of giving an account of what he observed, that he could draw, and talk Spanish and German.[2]

He seems to have had an important *rôle* several times, particularly at Dresden in 1813. His technical education in everything concerning the artillery, and his mathematical knowledge, made him very useful to Napoleon, who constantly gave him calculations to make at St. Helena. Las Cases was the literary man of the group, Gourgaud was the scientific man, Montholon the man of the world who "did not pretend to be anything," and Bertrand the soldier.

Gourgaud's education had not been solely a military one. He had read a great deal, and had his own ideas on many subjects. He was inclined to simplify all questions, but at the same time he had a great deal of common sense. He had not the subtleness of Las Cases, and he was not tactful like Montholon, but he was clear-headed and intelligent.

His character is very interesting. He was essentially a military man. He knew nothing of court and society life, and had never learnt to sacrifice himself for the sake of social requirements. He was a very natural man, and had developed

[1] Nor the *Notes sur le Manuscrit de Sainte-Hélène* (R.O. 14).

[2] Qualifications of subjects considered capable of undertaking the functions of orderly officers, B.N. *Manuscrits*, papers relating to the First Empire, fr. 6577, fol. 61.

without any restraint. He was morally rich in his own way, and he allowed his qualities and faults to have free play.

He had some excellent qualities. His bravery [1] has never been contested. He was kind-hearted, grateful for any services, by no means spiteful, and the sincerity of his family affections was most touching. He did not care for Las Cases, and yet he begged for his son to be admitted to the Emperor's table.[2] He endeavoured to spare Bertrand Napoleon's reprimands, thereby laying himself open to receiving them himself.[3] When Las Cases left St. Helena Gourgaud forgot all his grievances, tried to comfort him, and kissed him with tears in his eyes.[4] He lectured Bertrand's domestic about leaving his master.[5] He was always thinking about his mother and his sister.[6] His deep affection for them, as expressed in his letters,[7] touched even Lord Bathurst. His yearning for affection bordered at times on sentimentality, and his exile at St. Helena proved so hard, at times, to so tender-hearted a man that the most tragic lamentations are frequently interspersed in this soldier's diary. He was greatly fascinated by Colonel Wilks' daughter, "the adorable Laura." [8]

"Ah, why am I a prisoner! [9] The more I see her, the more I love her!" [10] he exclaimed bitterly. It was rather a general need of love with him, though, than any special affection.

"No one feels this need of loving as I do," he remarked. "I have too affectionate a nature." [11]

In consequence of this all the English girls at St. Helena

[1] O'Meara's ill-natured accounts (Forsyth, Vol. I, p. 96), and Warden's also (fifth letter) about his fear during his illness, appear to have been embellished by inventive imagination, particularly by O'Meara. The bravest man may also have certain weaknesses on a sick-bed.

[2] *Gourgaud*, January 2nd, 1816.

[3] *Id.*, April 6th, 1816.

[4] *Id.*, November 25th, December 30th, 1816.

[5] *Id.*, February 2nd, 1817.

[6] *Id.*, February 15th, August 18th, 1816; March 5th, May 9th, 1817, etc.

[7] *Id.*, II, p. 509.

[8] *Gourgaud*, April 19th, 1816.

[9] *Id.*, November 20th, 1815.

[10] *Id.*, February 11th, 1816. Compare December 17th, 1815: "There is a woman for you!"

[11] *Id.*, January 20th, 1817.

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were honoured in turn by Gourgaud's secret and platonic homage.[1] As a lonely exile he suffered greatly on account of this unsatisfied affection, but he declared that he preferred having a loving heart, even if he had to suffer through it.[2] There was another side to all this though. Gourgaud was expansive, affectionate, and very kindly disposed, but he loved himself too, and he was thoroughly satisfied with himself. In 1807, when Gourgaud was a lieutenant, General Boulart spoke of him as being "young, active, and sprightly, but with a decided air of self-assurance."[3] Gourgaud always had this. "He is very conceited," says Montchenu, "and he never speaks of anyone but of himself and the Emperor."[4] Balmain, too, says that he is "conceited and self-sufficient."[5] His own diary speaks more loudly than any other witness.

From the first chapter to the last it is evident that he is very well satisfied with his own deeds, and that he sets a high value on his moral impeccability. He has nothing with which to reproach himself.[6] He has always sacrificed his own interests to his duty and to his honour.[7] When a confessor is mentioned he says, "I never thought of asking for one, as I have nothing with which to reproach myself."[8] He was just as self-satisfied with regard to his conduct and his services as a soldier. He returns periodically to his thirteen campaigns, his eighteen years of military service, his three wounds, and his brilliant deeds.[9] He was constantly joked about his pride in having saved Napoleon's life at Brienne.[10] Napoleon himself grew tired of hearing of it and

[1] *Gourgaud*, April 3rd, 1817.
[2] *Id.*, April 13th, 1817.
[3] *Mémoires militaires du général baron Boulart*, Paris, Librairie illustrée.
[4] Report already mentioned of March 12th, 1818.
[5] Report of September 8th, 1816.
[6] *Gourgaud*, July 13th, 1815.
[7] *Id.*, October 15th, 1815; March 31st, June 2nd, 1817; January 26th. 1818.
[8] *Id.*, March 17th, 1817.
[9] *Id.*, December 13th, December 21st, 1816; January 26th, 1818.
[10] See Warden, additional note, *La captivité de Sainte-Hélène d'après Montchenu*, chapter iv. The *Souvenirs de Betzy Balcombe*, p. 34. Compare *Gourgaud*, October 3rd, 1815: "I saved his life, and we like those whom we have obliged."

pretended that he did not remember anything about it.[1] Gourgaud's annoyance then reached a climax.

From the height of his own perfection, Gourgaud criticised others very severely. He considered Las Cases vain, self-interested, and given to flattering.[2] He did not spare Madame de Montholon[3] nor even Bertrand. He wished his own merit to be recognised and appreciated, and he began quarrels of precedence with Montholon and Las Cases, worthy of a duke and peer of the eighteenth century. He threatened Montholon with a duel if he did not give him the chief place at table, because he had been "a longer time in the military household."[4] He refused, "as a military man," to yield the precedence to Las Cases, who was "only a chamberlain, which is nothing but a titled valet."[5] He made the most heroic efforts with himself, but it was of no avail. "It is no use my reading the Gospel," he says, "I cannot help it, I simply cannot endure passing after the Montholons."[6] He expected people to give him the same affection that he lavished on others. He expected Napoleon to talk to him and to work and dine with him,[7] and he thought that Bertrand should be ready to lend an attentive ear to his grievances.[8] He was of a jealous nature, and was always accusing people of ingratitude. In material things he required everything that was due to him, and he complained that his room was not furnished as well as the other rooms.[9] He said that the

[1] *Gourgaud*, December 21st, 1816; March 10th, September 3rd, 1817; January 26th, 1818.

[2] *Id.*, July 26th, October 30th, 1815; January 5th and 18th, June 2nd and 3rd, August 11th, August 27th, October 8th and 16th, November 16th, 1816, etc.

[3] *Id.*, August 27th, 1815; January 7th, 1816, etc.

[4] *Id.*, December 13th, 1815.

[5] *Id.*, November 18th, 1815. Compare July 19th and 22nd, August 8th, October 25th, 1815, etc.

[6] *Id.*, January 20th, 1817.

[7] *Id.*, December 5th, 1816: "It is very painful to me that his Majesty should not show us the least mark of interest. For him I abandoned my mother, my country, my profession, and I am well punished for it." Compare December 12th, 1816, February 11th, 1817: "The Emperor does not appreciate real attachment in people." June 30th, 1817, etc.

[8] *Id.*, May 21st, June 10th, 18th, 19th, 1817. From the day when Bertrand became tired of Gourgaud's endless complaints, he was no longer anything but "an indifferent person, an egoist who acted the Minister."

[9] *Id.*, January 23rd, 1816; February 5th, 1817.

Emperor lavished pecuniary gifts on Montholon, whilst he received nothing.[1] He declared that the Montholon family absorbed all the provisions at Longwood.[2] All these fancied grievances caused the sadness which crept, day by day, into the poor exile's diary, and that "sombre, melancholy ill-humour," mentioned by Balmain.[3]

Such things, too, were the pretexts for the scenes of jealousy which were constantly taking place, and which finally led to his departure from the island.[4] Lord Rosebery describes these scenes very wittily.[5] Gourgaud's self-assurance and conceit had a certain consequence which must be taken into consideration in this study. He was terribly frank. He had all the freedom of the soldier who does not know how to colour the truth, and he was absolutely incapable of concealing his thoughts. He gloried in all this even when deploring it, for this frankness frequently did him harm. "I have one very great fault," he said, "and that is, I always speak the truth.[6] My poor father was much too honest. He brought me up with principles of honour and virtue which were far too rigid."[7]

At times this frankness had rendered great service, and he had every reason to be proud of it. Thanks to it he gave the truth about the state of France during the Empire, and what he says does not exactly tally with Las Cases's enthusiastic statements.[8] Thanks, too, to this frankness, he knew his own faults, admired Napoleon's patience with him,[9] made fun of his own complaints,[10] and regretted his own angry

[1] *Gourgaud,* March 20th, May 7th and 13th, 1817, etc.

[2] *Id.*, April 23rd, 1816.

[3] Report of February 27th, 1818.

[4] We must note that if people were mistaken at St. Helena about the *rôle* played by Gourgaud, Las Cases in Europe was no less mistaken, as he believed it was really the "turbulent and unsocial disposition" of his former companion which caused his departure. See the *Mémoires du roi Jérome* (Bibliography, 106), Vol. VII, p. 316.

[5] *Napoleon, The Last Phase,* Chapter III.

[6] *Gourgaud,* May 10th, 1816.

[7] *Id.*, December 12th, 1816.

[8] *Id.*, June 23rd, 1816. The whole of this passage has a great deal that is very just.

[9] *Id.*, October 14th, 1816.

[10] *Id.*, March 28th, 1817. "I see Bertrand and sing him my refrain."

exaggerations.[1] His frankness was not always out of place, either. When, in the early days of exile, Gourgaud ventured to criticise some of Napoleon's historical works,[2] Napoleon praised his courage,[3] and appealed to him as an impartial judge who always spoke the truth.[4] Finally, though the author's feelings were hurt. Napoleon wearied of this merciless Alcestes, objected to his remarks,[5] and would not read his *Mémoires* any more "because of Gourgaud, who criticised everything."[6]

Gourgaud did not limit his criticisms to literary subjects. It was absolutely necessary to him to express his opinions, so that he was led on to make the most disagreeable remarks as far as his companions were concerned. He declared to his master that there had been nothing remarkable about the 1813 campaign.[7] The justice of this observation may be contested, quite as much as its seasonableness. Napoleon was scandalised at the crudeness of Molière's language, whereupon Gourgaud observed that "the more manners and customs became corrupt, the more particular people were about words."[8] Madame de Montholon was proud of her clothes, but he assured her "that they would look like rags by the side of Lady Lowe's dresses."[9] Napoleon attacked the metrical system, and said that Laplace himself had recognised the justice of his criticisms. Gourgaud immediately replied: "Laplace said that to flatter your Majesty."[10] When Napoleon was endeavouring to reassure himself about his failing health, he remarked that he still walked well.

"I would answer for it," observed Gourgaud, "that if his Majesty had to walk ten leagues a day he would soon be unable to continue."

All this annoyed Napoleon,[11] and Gourgaud was somewhat obtuse in not realising the fact. He wounded Napoleon, too,

[1] *Gourgaud*, November 7th, 1817: "I say things about the Grand Marshal that I do not believe."
[2] *Id.*, June 2nd, 1816.
[3] *Id.*, June 3rd, 1816.
[4] *Id.*, August 30th, 1816.
[5] *Id.*, July 5th and 9th, August 16th, 1817.
[6] *Id.*, July 8th, 1817.
[7] *Id.*, June 16th, 1816.
[8] *Id.*, November 17, 1717.
[9] *Id.*, April 9th, 1817.
[10] *Id.*, April 24th, 1817.
[11] *Id.*, June 23rd, 1817.

THE OLD HOUSE AT LONGWOOD, ST. HELENA, IN WHICH NAPOLEON LIVED AND DIED.

THE GRAVE OF NAPOLEON AT ST. HELENA.

on points about which he was more susceptible. In the midst of a dissertation on the state of France, Gourgaud remarked: "Yes, Sire, but may history never say: France was very great before Napoleon, but it was all cut up after him."[1] Finally, Napoleon and all the others had enough of this constant sincerity.

"Don't worry me with your frankness," said Napoleon, "keep it to yourself . . .[2] What does it matter to me that you are an honest man. You ought to try to give me pleasure. You are always so rough and Las Cases has the delicacy of a woman. It is not a good thing to say every thing that you think. Everyone has to dissimulate and to learn the art of living with other people.[3] Look at the Montholons; they never open their mouths except to say agreeable things, but you have nothing but disagreeable things to say.[4] You are too fond of arguing, you always try to oppose me, to contradict me. When I say anything, you quickly employ your logic and your skill in looking at it from another standpoint.[5] You are just like a Corsican, for when a Corsican has an idea about anything he never gives way. You should not be so obstinate."[6]

These words should be weighed. Napoleon says that Las Cases has the delicacy of a woman and that Montholon never opens his mouth except to say agreeable things. It is very evident that in their enthusiasm for Napoleon, they had no opinion of their own when he was present. What Napoleon said was the right thing to say and what he did was always well done. Without discussing the matter, they were always ready to accept the idea he wished to give them of himself. If, in a moment of sudden frankness, Napoleon dropped a few words which belied his usual arguments, they would not, in all sincerity, take any notice of them; or if they did, they would so transform or interpret them that they would resemble the usual sense of his words. There are some curious examples of this, and after all it is quite natural. When we

[1] *Gourgaud*, October 4th, 1817.
[2] *Id.*, January 20th, 1818. Compare November 8th, 1817.
[3] *Id.*, December 25th, 1816
[4] *Id.*, July 15th, 1817.
[5] *Id.*, July 22nd, 1817.
[6] *Id.*, March 20th, 1817.

are fond of anyone, all that person's words and deeds are interpreted by us in the best sense possible. Las Cases and Montholon could not imagine Napoleon contradicting himself. If it seemed as though he had done so, they were convinced that they had misunderstood him. They therefore either interpreted his words differently or forgot them.

With Montholon, the date of his work must be taken into account. With only a poor supply of notes he compiled his book in 1840 from conversations taken down from 1815 to 1821. Then, too, this was after Béranger, after Victor Hugo, and all the eloquence of the Napoleonic press. It was at the time of the *Return of the Emperor.* After an interval of twenty years it was very easy to attribute to one man what another one had said, and he may have given a different turn and character to a discussion from what it originally had. He may unconsciously have interpreted his notes, so long afterwards, in conformity with the Emperor's ideas which had gradually been forced upon everyone. His recollections were no longer his own. The enthusiasm and the belief of a whole nation lent a new colouring to them, made them more poetical in every way. The question is what reliance is to be placed on this tardy testimony, and does it hold good in face of the notes taken down day by day by Gourgaud?

O'Meara was an Englishman. In spite of his devotion, which began somewhat late, he was a foreigner. When with him Napoleon was on his guard. He was constantly reminded of his situation by the difference of ideas, the English prejudices which he detected in this kindly disposed man.

In order to discover what was really in Napoleon's mind his free chats with a fellow soldier were of far more value than all the discussions with O'Meara.

Las Cases, like Gourgaud, wrote out his notes at once, but he was the most enthusiastic of all the exiles, the most easily influenced by Napoleon, and the most prompt in giving up his own private ideas when with his master.

Gourgaud never gave up his own ideas. His merciless frankness, his passion for arguing, made him hold out always. His pen, which was as frank as his tongue, took note of everything he heard, just as he heard it, without any kind of

modification or of softening down. He, too, adored Napoleon, but this did not prevent him from showing his idol just as he saw him, and it seems as though he certainly saw him just as he was.

It is from Gourgaud's accounts that it is possible to see Napoleon sometimes in one of those fits of involuntary frankness which belied his usual diplomacy. Gourgaud shows us the two sides of Napoleon, and it is interesting to study this other side.

Additional Note.—It may seem surprising that Napoleon, probably knowing of Gourgaud's diary, should have let certain affirmations stand in it which are contrary to the idea he wanted to give of himself. But this diary, unlike that of Las Cases, was not intended for publication, and it was only by chance that it ever was published. Considering this, Napoleon probably thought that it did not much matter, and it is also not very probable that Napoleon read in detail this voluminous diary, which would have been a terribly irksome task for him.

CHAPTER XXI

NAPOLEON ACCORDING TO GOURGAUD

THE three chief differences which appear to exist between the Napoleon of Gourgaud and the Napoleon of the other Memorialists are: first, his attitude with regard to Liberal ideas; secondly, his attitude towards religion; and thirdly, his opinion about his own family.

I. Napoleon's Liberal ideas.—Gourgaud never denies the fact that Napoleon always claimed to be a sovereign believing in equality. The historian may consider this as an established fact. The despotic master delighted in the idea of equality. Mirabeau said that the idea of forming only one class of citizens would have delighted Richelieu. Gourgaud has something else to tell though when he treats the question of Liberty.

Napoleon spoke several times about the policy of the Bourbons in 1815 and in the following years. His criticism, as related by all the memorialists, was as follows: In 1814, Louis XVIII had the choice between two systems. He might either have returned as a feudal king, overthrowing all that the Revolution had established and re-establishing the provinces and the Parliaments, or he could have returned as an absolutely modern king and have founded a fifth dynasty, which might have been both Liberal and pacific. He chose neither of these alternatives and consequently he was overthrown in 1815. When he was re-established by foreigners he was disliked by his subjects so that he no longer had the choice. Liberalism would then have ruined him. He

could only govern therefore by terror. By means of this policy he would be safe for a few years, but this could only be a respite. When once the foreigners had left France and the nation was itself again, a national cataclysm would cause the throne of the Bourbons to disappear.

Las Cases, Montholon and Gourgaud all agree on this subject. Las Cases says: "Last year Louis XVIII might have identified himself with the nation; at present he has no choice, he can only try the *régime* of his fathers."[1]

Montholon writes: "Louis XVIII is now trying his St. Bartholomew; it is an experiment and he must beware of explosions.[2] There might be some chance of success if the old provinces and the Parliaments were re-established.[3] The Bourbons are quite right in having provost-courts, for they can only reign now by terror. When they attempt to establish Liberalism they will be overthrown.[4] So much the worse for the King if he cannot keep up the provost-courts."[5]

Gourgaud says the same thing but more brutally: "The Bourbons must have a St. Bartholomew for revolutionists.[6] The provost-courts are the best thing.[7] The King is on the right road, he will have to re-establish everything as it was formerly.[8] So much the worse for him if he cannot keep up the provost-courts, as that is his only chance of holding the people within bounds. The Bourbons are detested by the French, so that they must not hesitate to ill-treat their subjects.[9] If they show any weakness, they are lost. They must hang, exile, drive away, send a hundred thousand old soldiers to San Domingo.[10] They must get rid of all

[1] *Mémorial*, January 12th—14th, 1816.
[2] *Récits de la captivité*, January 12th, 1816.
[3] *Id.*, December 8th, 1815.
[4] *Id.*, December 27th, 1816.
[5] *Id.*, January 4th, 1817. Compare January 30th, 1817, February 15th, 1817.
[6] *Gourgaud*, January 12th, 1816.
[7] *Id.*, February 8th, 1816.
[8] *Id.*, January 14th, 1816.
[9] *Id.*, January 4th, 1817.
[10] *Id.*, December 27th, 1816. Compare January 10th, 1817: "They must reckon on losing a hundred thousand men in three years, but, with their present system, that will be all right."

generals who are not of blue blood.[1] This policy will give them a little respite, but there is no hope of real security for them. At the end of about five years," he continues, "the foreigners will have left and the French nation will then overthrow the Bourbons."[2]

Up to this point the three memorialists agree perfectly, but here and there Gourgaud gives us something more. He sets forth, like the others, that in order to hold their own, in a country which detests them, the Bourbons must govern with vigour and absolutism ; but in addition to this, Napoleon insinuates that the Continental nations, unlike England, are not made for liberty, that they require to be governed monarchically and by absolute sovereigns. Napoleon's own private conviction is introduced surreptitiously by Gourgaud in the midst of the long and eloquent Liberal declarations which Las Cases also gives.

It is interesting to follow up these insinuations stage by stage. Napoleon is still speaking of the policy of the Bourbons when he remarks : "The Bourbons are on the right road ; the provost-courts will not be liked by the rabble, but *time will help everything*."[3] This was not exactly what he had said only a little time back. Did he think then that it was a good thing to hold the people in check. If he thought that *time would help things*, he evidently did not expect the *explosion* to take place. All this seems to prove that he had very little confidence in Liberal ideas. He appears to infer, too, that it was the rabble who supported such ideas.[4]

Napoleon evidently thought then that absolutism and severity might save the Bourbons after the dissolution of the *Chambre introuvable* February 16th, 1817. He says : "The King made a great mistake in dissolving the Chamber of Deputies, for it *might have saved him* by its reactionary exaggeration.[5] According to this he considered it possible

[1] *Gourgaud*, December 27th, 1816. Compare May 24th, 1816, February 15th, 1817.

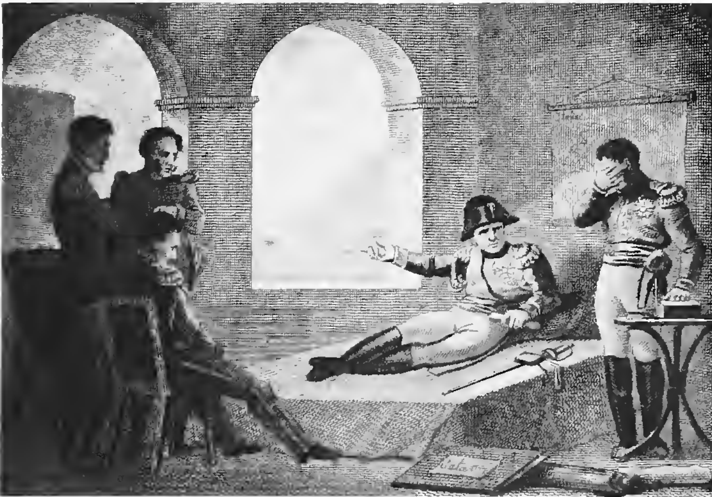
[2] *Id.*, January 4th, 1818. [3] *Id.*, June 13th, 1816.

[4] The expression is repeated on the 27th of December, 1816: "The provost-courts are the best thing for holding in the rabble."

[5] Compare June 21st, 1817 : "The King is slaying his own dynasty ; he is too liberal ; he will lose his crown."

NAPOLEON.

From a drawing made by an English officer two hours after his death.



NAPOLEON AT ST. HELENA.

From a contemporary drawing.

to govern in opposition to public opinion and to hold out in spite of that opinion.

On the 30th of January, 1817, thanks to a false rumour, it was believed that the Bourbons were overthrown. In order to be consistent with his opinions given above, Napoleon ought to have said that things had happened just as he had prophesied. The Bourbons had been able to hold out for a time through governing with severity, but the *explosion* had now taken place. Their policy had had evil results, because it had been impossible for them to have a good policy. This was not what he said, though, at all.

"The policy which the King followed was the right one," he said, "in spite of what has happened. In France a sceptre of iron is necessary, there must be vigour."[1]

He seems to be speaking generally, so that it was not only to Louis XVIII that Liberalism was fatal, but to all French sovereigns. He says this still more clearly several other times.

"The English constitution would not suit France,"[2] he observes, on one occasion. When out with Gourgaud on the 16th of December, 1815, he says: "We do not want deliberating assemblies. The men on whom we think we can count in the assemblies change their minds too easily. Oh, Waterloo, Waterloo, the English constitution is no good for France." It seems, at first, as though this were just an outburst of anger and indignation with those who had rendered the Waterloo disaster irremediable. It was evidently more than this though, for, a year later, when the *Mémorial de Sainte Hélène*, the Gospel of the Liberal Empire, was finished, and Las Cases had left Longwood, Napoleon repeats the same declarations with a clearness that cannot be mistaken.

"It is my opinion," he says, "that a constitution would not do for France, which is an essentially monarchical country.

[1] Montholon does not give the same words; he gives the idea that the King ought to have been either reactionary or quite modern. We have already studied the reasons which make us think Gourgaud the surest authority every time there is a lack of agreement between Montholon and Gourgaud. Napoleon, too, may have repeated his ordinary declarations, through habit or system, after these speeches which Gourgaud reports.

[2] *Gourgaud*, December 8th, 1815.

I mean that we do not want deliberating assemblies, although there always have been the States General, the Provincial States and the Parliaments. There should be no legislative assembly though. If people want to bring about a revolution in a country, they have only to form an assembly there. Two parties are at once created and hatred and passions established."[1] Montholon was present when Napoleon said this. He heard the rest of the conversation and what was said about some of the personages of the Revolution, but he either did not hear, or he took no notice of this passage.[2]

Napoleon had experienced the evil of deliberating assemblies, and he felt sure that Louis XVIII would have the same bitter experience.

"He will see what it is like to have a divided house," said Napoleon, "for orators have great power."[3]

He was convinced that the other European kings would learn the same truths if they became Liberal.

"Deliberating assemblies are terrible for a sovereign," he says; "I see this in Prussia, where the king is foolish enough to play the Liberal and promise Chambers. He will find out what that will cost him."[4] Napoleon felt sure that if once the Jacobins obtained the mastery in Europe, he would be in request.

"I am the only one who could hold them in check," he said, and he appeared to enjoy the prospect of such a task. Las Cases and Montholon seem to have been present, but they do not appear to have heard or taken any notice of this remark.

Gourgaud is not the only one to have heard similar speeches. When Napoleon was on the *Northumberland*, he spoke to Admiral Cockburn, on the 26th of August, about

[1] *Gourgaud*, December 16th, 1816.

[2] In Montholon, the account of the 15th of December is not distinguished from that of the 16th; but on examining it closely we see that the account of the 16th commences from these words: "The Emperor does not leave his room."

[3] *Gourgaud*, February 16th, 1817. Montholon, who was present, it seems, does not say anything in his *Récits*. Compare *Gourgaud*, June 21st, 1817: "He will see what a Chamber of Deputies is, such as he is going to have."

[4] *Id.*, November 5th, 1815.

certain innovations in Prussia, which would cause the King of Prussia the gravest difficulties.

"The Continental nations," he said, "are not adapted for representative government like England."

"But," interrupted the Admiral "you set up for being a Liberal in 1815."

"Yes," replied Napoleon, "but that was not because I thought that policy suitable for the nations (for the Continent), but simply because my situation at that particular moment made it necessary for me to yield to popular feeling on that point." . . . .

There has been much controversy about Napoleon's real intentions with regard to the Liberals in 1815. In Gourgaud's work there are decisive words on this subject.

A hundred times over, in his conversations, Napoleon wondered whether, on account of foreign danger, instead of making the Additional Act, he ought to have proclaimed himself Dictator on landing from Elba. Las Cases mentions these regrets, and certainly if ever a suspension of political liberties had been necessary it was then. Still more often did Napoleon express his regret that he had not taken the Dictatorship after Waterloo, in face of the illegal opposition of the Chambers and of the advance of Wellington. He could regret this without contradicting his Liberal declarations. But what Napoleon could not say, without proving these declarations to have been insincere, was that if he had conquered at Waterloo he would have broken up the Constitution, violated the Chambers and, in a word, played the Dictator. When once the danger had been over there would have been nothing to justify his despotism and, if Napoleon had been Dictator after conquering Wellington, it would not have been from necessity, but at his own desire. In a conversation with O'Meara he at once repudiated any such idea. Gourgaud quotes the following words in one of Napoleon's conversations: "I made a mistake in losing so much precious time troubling about the Constitution, and all the more so as my intention was to get rid of the Chambers when once I had conquered and was out of the difficulty."[1]

[1] *Gourgaud*, November 29th, 1815. Napoleon was alone with him.

A week later he says: "On my return from Elba, I only troubled about the Chambers because they were in favour just then, but if I had been victorious I should have done away with them."[1]

Nearly two years later he says: "Those wretched Liberals made me waste a great deal of time talking about a Constitution. . . . I ought to have sent them about their business. . . . It was not until my speech to the Chambers in 1815 at the end that I spoke plainly. 'As you put obstacles in my way, instead of helping me,' I said, 'I shall join the army. If I beat the enemy, I shall find a way of calming the agitators. As to the Chambers, I shall send them about their business. If I am beaten, it is all over with me. . . . You must then look out for yourselves.'" The sense of this speech to the Chambers (which was certainly not so clearly expressed in 1815) is given by Napoleon in 1817, in a moment of impulsiveness, so distinctly that even Montholon could not help hearing it, and he repeats it almost word for word in his book.[2]

On the 23rd of September, 1817, he again returns to this subject. Gourgaud and Montholon were both present, and it is interesting to compare the way in which the two men retail this conversation. Gourgaud gives it as follows: "I ought not to have created the Chambers. I ought to have declared myself Dictator, but there was always the hope that the Allies, on seeing me call the Chambers, would have confidence in me. If only I had conquered, I should not have troubled at all about the Chambers!"

Montholon's version is not just the same. "I ought not to have spoken of a Constitution. I ought to have spoken quite a different language to France," are the words he gives. "I ought to have talked about the dangers to which the country was exposed and then have seized the Dictator-

[1] *Gourgaud,* December 8th, 1815. Las Cases and Montholon seem to have been present and they do not report this phrase. Compare *Gourgaud,* June 23rd, 1817.

[2] Except for a change which seems a happy one. Instead of "I said to them," which is historically inexact, as Napoleon took care not to speak to the Chambers in so crude a way, he gives: "I said to myself." It is probable that this is the true version.

THE LAST MOMENTS OF NAPOLEON.
From the Statue at Versailles.

ship until there was general peace. I could have done this without any risk by appealing to the masses, and when once I was conqueror I should have taken my time and organised a frankly constitutional Government."

In Gourgaud's account, Napoleon represents the assembling of the Chambers as a diplomatic expedient for gaining time, and he speaks of getting rid of them when the danger was over.

In Montholon's version, Napoleon merely regrets not having waited for peace in order to establish the constitutional Government, which was his one object. It is quite easy to understand how it came about that the two accounts of this conversation vary so much.

Gourgaud wrote his notes that very day, while the impression of his master's words was quite fresh in his mind. He gives the ideas just as they occurred to Napoleon in their three different stages. First he declares that he ought not to have created the Chambers; secondly, he says why he created them; and thirdly, he observes that if only he had conquered he should not have troubled about the Chambers. Montholon wrote his book, after 1840, from notes that were probably very brief. In consequence of this, he does not give the sequence of ideas as faithfully as Gourgaud. He remembers Napoleon's first remark, that he ought not to have created the Chambers, and he interprets all his notes as developing what would have happened if Napoleon had not called a meeting of the Chambers. He forgets that in the second stage of his master's ideas he passes from the hypothesis of the Chambers not being created to the reality of the assembly of the Chambers. The last phrase therefore has quite a different meaning. When Gourgaud writes: "I should not have troubled about the Chambers," he meant real existing Chambers, so that the sense is quite clear. Napoleon would not have troubled about them in 1815 any more than he did in 1799. Montholon found this same phrase in his notes, but he could not explain it so simply, for what precedes this was written with the idea of the Chambers not existing. He had to explain therefore why Napoleon should say that he would not have troubled about these non-

existing Chambers. Montholon accordingly interprets the meaning of this phrase: "I should not have troubled about the Chambers. . . . I should have done as I liked with them. . . . I should not have hurried myself with regard to the Chambers, but should have taken my time in organising the constitutional Government. . . ." His brief enigmatical notes are explained in this way and the difficult passage is made to agree with Montholon's ideas about Napoleon's *rôle*, ideas which Las Cases and a score of other writers had given to the world, ideas which were breathed in with the air in 1840.

Montholon's book was compiled very quickly, and he was no doubt quite unconscious of the transformation he had given to Napoleon's words.

All this seems to be a remarkable example of the changes which were made, quite unintentionally, in the interpretation of his notes after an interval of twenty years, and it also goes to prove the superior value of Gourgaud's writings.

These various texts and these comparisons seem to be conclusive evidence. Gourgaud, with his rough sincerity and his unbending attitude, shows us, under a mask of Liberalism, the stubbornly authoritative man, the incorrigible despot, and the legend is thus laid bare before us.

Scarcely any of Napoleon's conversations, related by Gourgaud, treat of the question of nationalities. There are just two or three exceptions to this rule. Twice over he speaks of his intention to re-establish Poland,[1] and to unite Italy and place it under the sceptre of his second son.[2] There is no reason for the historian to doubt his sincerity on both these points. Poland, as a barrier to Russia, and Italy, Napoleon's second fatherland, would, as vassal States, have offered certain advantages to him with his love of unity. His other ideas with regard to nationalities, as set forth by Las Cases, seem more doubtful.

There is very little information given, too, with regard to Napoleon's pacific diplomacy. He reproaches himself occasionally with having been too moderate when victorious.

[1] *Gourgaud*, June 2nd, September 8th, 1817.
[2] *Id.*, October 4th, 1817.

Prussia was spared, for instance, after Jena,[1] and Austria after Wagram.[2] He considers that these are instances of his excessive clemency. It is impossible in such cases not to admire the self-assurance of a man who can boast of the magnanimity of those draconian treaties. There is a touch of sincerity in his words about the Spanish affair, but they ring strangely when compared with Las Cases's humanitarian declarations on the same subject. "When I saw that the son dethroned the father," says Napoleon, "and that the mother declared that her children were not the children of the King, I said to myself: 'We will drive them away and there will be no more Bourbons on the face of the earth.'"[3]

With regard to the misunderstanding which brought about the war with Russia, all the memorialists agree. On examining all the facts carefully it certainly seems as though Alexander were the aggressor of 1812.[4] Murat's responsibility with regard to the war of 1815 is also finally confirmed.[5]

II.—*Napoleon and Religious Ideas.*

There are contradictions again when religious questions are treated. At the time that Gourgaud was at St. Helena, Las Cases and Montholon speak of Napoleon as without any positive faith, but with a certain respect for religion and particularly for the Catholic religion. He declared himself an adept of natural religion and convinced of the existence of God. Gourgaud occasionally quotes remarks which bear out this testimony. "I should believe in a religion that had existed since the commencement of the world; but when I see Socrates, Plato, Moses, and Mahomet, I no longer believe in religion, for it has all been invented by men."[6] "The remission of sins is a fine idea," he goes on to say, "no man can say that he does not believe in that or that he will not believe in it some day.[7] Only a fool could say that

[1] *Gourgaud,* June 2nd, November 30th, 1817.
[2] *Id.,* June 2nd, 1817.
[3] *Id.,* August 25th, 1817.
[4] *Id.,* June 13th, 1816.
[5] *Id.,* January 4th, 1817.
[6] *Id.,* January 28th, 1817. Compare August 28th, 1817.
[7] *Id.,* February 11th, 1817.

he would die without a confessor.[1] Religion offers us great consolations. We are not so unhappy when we believe in God." [2]

There are other passages, though, in which Gourgaud shows up Napoleon, not once, but ten times over, in quite a different frame of mind. "If I had to have a religion," he says one day,[3] "I would adore the sun, for it is that which fecundates everything, it is the true god of the earth." A few days later he once more returns to the subject. "I believe that man was produced by the clay of the earth, warmed by the sun and combined with electric fluids .... Is there not every reason to believe that man is nothing but better organised matter. The soul is like the physique; it grows with the child and diminishes with the old man. . . . The idea of a God is the simplest idea, but who has invented it? The simplest idea is to worship the sun, which fecundates everything." [4] Gourgaud speaks of the faith of Newton and of Pascal. "Yes," replied Napoleon, "but it is generally thought that they said all that, but did not believe it." Six months later he says: "Everything is only matter, more or less organised. I know this is contrary to religion, but it is my opinion." [5]

Montholon, who does not generally hear these materialistic declarations, or else does not take note of them, hears this time and gives almost the same words as Gourgaud: "People may say what they like, everything is only organised matter. The tree is the first link in the chain, and man the last one."

Napoleon did not stop at these professions of materialistic faith. There were days when he seemed to delight in accumulating all the arguments against Christianity that came into his mind.

"Did Jesus ever exist or not?" he asked, and then he would

[1] *Gourgaud*, April 30th, 1817. [2] *Id.*, December 27th, 1817.

[3] *Id.*, January 25th, 1817.

[4] *Id.*, January 28th, 1817. Compare April 16th–17th: "The soul of a child, where is it?" etc. August 28th, 1817: "Man was formed by the heat of the sun on the mud. . . . The soul is formed with the body." December 27th, 1817: "Matter becomes animated by itself; when we sleep or when we go mad, where is the soul?" January 10th, 1818: "When we are dead, we are quite dead."

[5] *Id.*, September 16th, 1817.

go on to say that no historian had ever mentioned him and that the darkness which came over the earth at the moment of his death is never spoken of either.[1] "I do not believe that Jesus ever existed," he continues. "He would have been hanged like so many of the fanatics who set up for being the prophet, the Messiah. There were such men every year. I found an original copy of Josephus's *History of the Jews.* when I was in Milan. It was very evident that four or five words had been added between the lines for the sake of speaking of Jesus, as Josephus had not mentioned Him." Leaving historical arguments he went on to moral ones:

"Socrates, Plato, the Mahometans, and the English are all to be damned then? The idea is too absurd. Why should we be punished eternally for a few crimes committed here on earth?[2] The most religious countries are the very ones where the most crimes are committed."[3]

He then goes on to scientific arguments: "When science proved that the earth was not the centre of celestial motion, religion had a great blow. Then, too, the idea of Joshua stopping the sun! We shall hear of the stars falling into the sea next. This is the way men are imposed upon."[4]

He finally concludes that Islamism is superior to the other religions. "Mahomet's is the finest religion,"[5] he says, "I like it better as it is less ridiculous than ours."[6]

It is very probable that these continual attacks were often intended for Gourgaud, as, for some unknown reason, Napoleon appears to have fancied he was very devout. The conversation of December 17th, 1817, which was noted both by Gourgaud and Montholon, seems to prove this. Napoleon then declared himself a believer in the doctrines of Spinoza.

"There is no God," he says, "for good people are unfortunate and scoundrels are always fortunate. Man is the same as the animals and everything is just matter."

Gourgaud protests and asks what would become of morality without religion.

[1] *Gourgaud*, January 12th, 1817.
[2] *Id.*, August 28th, 1817.
[3] *Id.*, December 27th, 1817.
[4] *Id*, August 28th, 1817. Compare August 29th, Discussions on the miracles of Moses.
[5] *Id.*, February 4th, 1817.
[6] *Id.*, August 20th, 1817.

"Morality is merely for the upper classes," replies Napoleon, "there is the gibbet for the rabble."

Montholon is then asked to give his opinion.

"I firmly believe that your Majesty does not believe a word of what you have just said," he answers.

"Ah, you rascal, that is your opinion, is it? Well, perhaps you are right. It all helps to kill time though."

In spite of Napoleon's words, it is evident that there was something more than just a desire to kill time in all this. The young man of 1789, the assiduous reader of the eighteenth century philosophers, reappears in this man of fifty. He was perhaps not thoroughly convinced himself by these arguments, which he lays down haphazard, contradicting himself at times from one minute to another.

"Jesus never existed," he says, and then, directly afterwards, "Jesus would have been hanged as a fanatic."

All these probabilities, for and against his own theories, were in his mind, and it would be concealing something of the real Napoleon to pass all this over in silence. It is curious that Gourgaud should generally be the only one to note it.

A few of the examples illustrating these conversations will perhaps be sufficient for the explanation of the mystery.

In the conversation of March 17th, 1817, related by Montholon and Gourgaud, the starting point with the latter is his own profession of faith.

"I must confess," says Gourgaud, "that I believe firmly in God and I cannot understand how people can be atheists. It must be just out of bravado."

"Oh," replies Napoleon, "Laplace was an atheist, Berthollet too; every man was an atheist at the Institute."

Gourgaud falls back on the cosmological argument, and Napoleon replies with his favourite refrain:

"I should believe as firmly in Christ as Pope Pius VII does, if the Christian religion dated back to the commencement of the world, if it were the universal religion; but what am I to believe when I see Mahometans following a more simple religion, a religion more adapted to the manners and customs of the times than ours! And then, too, Socrates and Plato

are supposed to be damned! Do you believe that God troubles about all we do?"

Gourgaud then pleads for the idea of a Providence, and says that "if everything is difficult for us to understand, it is because God has limited our intelligence."

In Montholon's report of this conversation, we find Napoleon observing: "How many people there are who boast of their incredulity and who, when death approaches, demand from religion the hope of another world." He speaks of the unbelief of Laplace, Monge, and Berthollet, and says:

"I cannot understand how men who are so superior as savants should not believe in the existence of God."

It is in their mouth that Montholon places the argument attributed to Napoleon by Gourgaud:

"When I tried to convert one of them, he said to me: 'I would believe if the Catholic religion had existed ever since the world has existed.'"

According to Montholon, Napoleon finishes with the words: "If we are not allowed to see as far as God, it is because he has limited our intelligence."

The explanation of this discrepancy probably is that while Gourgaud on the evening of the 17th of March was alone in his room, he wrote out carefully the account of the day for the simple reason that he had nothing better to do. Montholon, between a conversation with his wife and the preparation of his work for Napoleon's *Mémoires*, took down a few rapid notes, perhaps merely the words: *atheism*, *bravado*, *Laplace*, *Monge*, *Berthollet*, *I should believe if religion had always existed . . . . God has limited our intelligence.*

When, later on, in 1840, he comes across these brief notes he remembers vaguely Napoleon's conversation, sometimes deistic, sometimes Christian, he thinks of his death-bed when he had gone back to religion, and he interprets these notes in a different way from Gourgaud.

There is a similar instance of this on the 30th of August.

"We assured His Majesty," says Gourgaud, "that he would be devout again before he died. He replied that

when the body is weak, the mind is not clear, otherwise men would not become devout. I gave him the case of St. Augustin as an example to the contrary of what he had just advanced, as he was one of the highest minded of men."

According to Montholon, Napoleon declared that men became devout when they began to get old. "People say," he added, "that when the body gets weak, the mind loses its strength, but this is not so."

The difference between the two accounts is probably due to the same reason as in the preceding instance.[1]

According to Gourgaud, Napoleon's religious ideas seem to be more influenced by eighteenth century thought. Las Cases and Montholon show him as more of a deist and more inclined towards Christianity. The difference is distinctly interesting.

Their agreement as to his opinion about the social *rôle* of religion is absolute. This idea seems to be the foundation of the Napoleonic experience.

"There must be a religion," he says, "for consolidating the union of men in society."[2] But he did not approve of any mystic exaggerations. "Men should not be allowed to enter convents until they are at least fifty,"[3] he said, "and sovereigns should keep a tight hand on religion."

"In China," says Gourgaud, "the sovereign is adored like a god."

"That is as it should be!" replies Napoleon immediately.[4]

Everything agrees, too, in the accounts concerning Napoleon's religious policy, his diplomacy in Egypt,[5] the

[1] There is a fact which might make us doubt this. Montholon continues the account of the conversation with considerations on Catholicism and Protestantism, on the religion of Cardinal Fesch compared with that of Napoleon, considerations which are not in Gourgaud, and which he could not have invented. But this part of the conversation may be one of those sudden changes so frequent in Napoleon's ideas; or the conversation may have been held another day. Montholon, whose chronology is not to be depended on, may have put it in in its wrong place. That may be, as there is a similitude in the subjects treated, and, at the end of the conversation, as Gourgaud gives it, there is a question of Cardinal Fesch.

[2] *Gourgaud*, January 12th, 1817.

[3] *Id.*, February 3rd, 1817, &c.

[4] *Id.*, May 9th, 1817.

[5] *Id.*, December 26th, 1816; January 7th, 1818.

JOSEPH BONAPARTE.

LOUIS BONAPARTE.

difficulty he had in establishing the Corcordat,[1] his plan of making the Pope reside in Paris.[2] Gourgaud gives very few details on these subjects.

III.—*Napoleon's Family.*

We get a different idea too of Napoleon with regard to his family from Gourgaud. The other writers give the same criticisms but expressed in another way. Gourgaud notes them down in their harsh and sometimes brutal tone.

Montholon reports the following criticism of Joseph on the 30th January, 1817. The style is somewhat flowery and the criticism flattering.

"With a great deal of intelligence and talent and all the qualities necessary for the welfare of a nation, he is too fond of his own liberty and of the enjoyments of middle-class life."

Gourgaud gives the following brief, cutting remarks:

"Joseph is intelligent, but he does not like work. He knows nothing about the the military profession. He does not know anything at all, but likes enjoying himself."

On the 12th of September there is another criticism of the same individual. Both writers give the account in almost exactly the same way, but Gourgaud adds the following contemptuous phrase:

"Joseph is not a military man. He has no courage. He would remain under fire, but he would have to tighten his belt on account of his fear."

Lucien is not any better treated when his turn comes.[3]

His opinion about Marie-Louise is given in quite a different way by the various writers.

The Longwood conversations show that there was no illusion about this Princess, who was "candour and innocence personified."

When Gourgaud is talking to the Montholons, he says: "The conduct of the Empress is blamed. She is amusing herself with M. de Neipperg whilst the Emperor is here. Is he a decent man, this Neipperg?"[4] he asks.

[1] *Gourgaud*, January 9th, 1817.
[2] *Id.*, May 9th, 1817.
[3] *Id.*, June 23rd, 1817.
[4] *Id.*, July 9th, 1817.

Napoleon, too, remarks that perhaps she has a lover.[1] He does not say this haphazard, but he goes on to explain that she had given him up, "because circumstances had been too difficult for her." He adds : "Her father has let that scamp of a Neipperg be constantly near her ! "[2]

All this did not prevent Napoleon from testifying publicly to the absolute confidence he had in the Empress's virtue.[3]

These quotations seem to be sufficient. There is no intention of attempting to prove that on all points Napoleon attempted to impose on posterity or that he belied his past and his real intentions. In his words at St. Helena, truth and untruth are so skilfully interwoven that what is untrue gets a certain advantage from being with the truth. It does seem though that on certain essential points Napoleon was not frank, and that he endeavoured to make history misleading. Thanks to the docile admiration of those who were with him to the last he succeeded partially in his attempt. All this suffices to justify the use of the word *legend* applied here to describe a general whole, although it must be admitted that there is much truth mixed with it.

[1] *Gourgaud*, June 18th, 1817.
[2] *Id.*, September 26th, 1817.
[3] Compare in the *Mémoires de Lavalette* (Paris, Fournier, 1831), Vol. II, p. 178, a passage tending to prove that Napoleon had known all about this as early as the Hundred Days. Compare, too, Beauterne, *Sentiments de Napoléon sur le christianisme*, p. 120 : "He was heard to exclaim (at the moment he was writing his Will) : 'To be a Corsican and forgive such an outrage !' But he added : 'She is the mother of my son, and she alone will be there to watch over him. . . .'"

CHAPTER XXII

CONCLUSION

Many politicians were surprised on the 10th of December, 1848, to discover the latent Bonapartism in France. As a matter of fact this should not have been a surprise. The progress which the Napoleonic legend had made was obvious. It had been gradually adopted by the various parties, so that the result might easily have been foreseen.

There is probably not one of Napoleon's declarations, when at St. Helena, which has not proved useful in its time and which has not served as a pretext for some political party to consider itself as upholding the principles of Napoleon. All his sayings have at some time or other reached the masses. Napoleon was a god with a hundred faces and each of these has been adored in its turn. He has been worshipped as a conqueror, as the representative of the Revolution, as the ally of the Church, and as the friend of peace. From 1821 to 1870, the most varied hymns were sung in his honour, the ready-made themes of which were to be found in the St. Helena literature.

From 1821 to 1848, the party which fought against the Bourbons, overthrew them in 1830 and which governed with Louis Philippe, was the *bourgeoisie,* intoxicated with Liberal ideas and wanting Liberalism throughout Europe, dreaming of Revolutionary war and an armed propaganda. It was Napoleon the warrior who appealed to this party and fascinated it by his glory. And yet there was the 18th of Brumaire between these lovers of liberty and the Emperor, there was downtrodden Europe and the despotism of the conquest between him and these defenders of the law

of nationalities. Napoleon had prepared the ground, though, for an understanding. The *Mémorial* was there to explain that he had never been an oppressor, either in Europe or in France, from choice or by principle. He had merely been the Dictator when it had been necessary in the struggle against kings. In this way the alliance was made between the various parties and the Bonapartists. As early as 1821 there is a remarkable instance of this. When Las Cases was explaining to General Lamarque the Liberal ideas and intentions of the Emperor, he added that Napoleon had seen in him one of his future Marshals. Lamarque was delighted and could not find praise enough for the memorialist.[1] In the curious *Mémoires* written by Salgues,[2] the gradual reconciliation of the Liberal *bourgeoisie* with Napoleon can be followed from volume to volume between 1814 and 1826. Thibaudeau, in his important work entitled *Le Consulat et l'Empire*,[3] echoes the St. Helena declarations with regard to nationalities. The first volumes by Thiers [4] and Vaulabelle's *Deux Restaurations* [5] are the most striking instances of this alliance of the Liberal party and the Napoleonic legend. It was this party which completed the Arc de l'Etoile, made a Napoleonic Museum of Versailles, and carried out the dying Emperor's wish by bringing back to France the hero's ashes and burying them at the Invalides.[6]

From the year 1840, a new force came on to the scene.

[1] "Every word written by M. de Las Cases is clever, every sentiment is virtuous, every action generosity and heroism ; he does honour to human nature" (*Mémoires du général Lamarque*, Paris, Fournier, 1835. See Vol. I, p. 246 *sqq.*, p. 381 *sqq.* ; Vol. II, p. 401 *sqq.*).

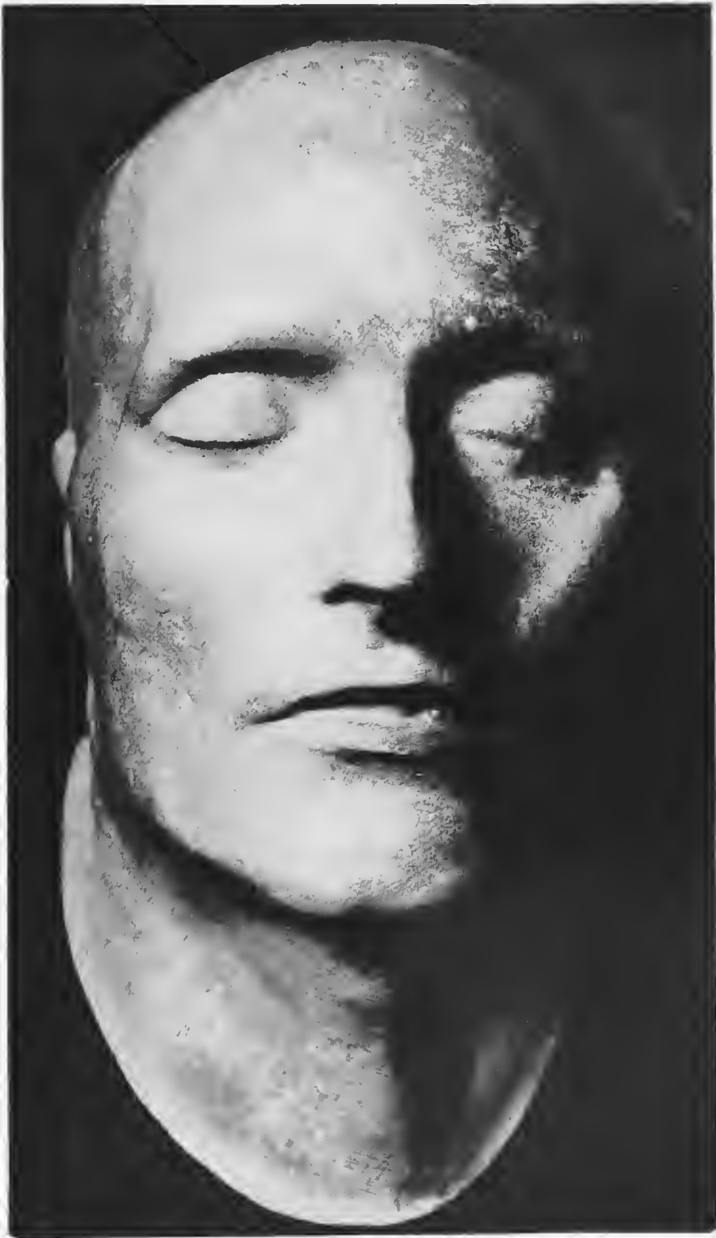
[2] *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de France pendant le gouvernement de Napoléon Bonaparte*, by J. B. Salgues, Paris, Fayolle 1814–1826, 9 volumes.

[3] Paris, Renouard, 1884, 10 volumes.

[4] Published from the year 1845.

[5] Published from 1844.

[6] We would also mention *l'Histoire populaire de Napoléon Ier* by Fadeville (Paris, Giraud, 1853). This is a revision and a refutation of the reproaches made to Napoleon I. Among the chapters we would specially mention : The 18th Brumaire, The Titles of Nobility Re-established, &c. The book is very insignificant in itself, but significant on account of its tendencies. It was a plan that Las Cases would have delighted in carrying out. His idea was to publish "the Emperor's words put together with infinite skill, in a way to reply to all objections" (*Mémoires du roi Jérôme*) (Bibliography, 106, Vol. VII, p. 335).



DEATH MASK OF NAPOLEON.

Carnavalet Museum, Paris.

CONCLUSION

The Catholic party, very strongly organised, was to count from that time forth, and in 1848 it was destined to play one of the chief *rôles*. This party would naturally approve of Napoleon, as he was responsible for the Concordat, and it was he "who had built up the altars once more in France." This was what he had said himself, passing over the fact that the benefactor of the Church had also been its persecutor. Savona and Fontainebleau were memories that could not easily be effaced. To set against these errors, though, there were his respectful declarations about religion which Las Cases had noted and then, too, there was his final conversion, vouched for by Montholon and Marchand. In 1841, the Chevalier de Beauterne gave the signal for a reconciliation by publishing a book which, although strange, has been very much read, and is also very influential. It was entitled *Les Sentiments de Napoléon sur le christianisme.*[1] A number of books and pamphlets were inspired by this work and were published, one after the other, nearly every year until 1848.[2] The opinion of the Catholic party was formed by these works so that Montalembert was able to join hands with Louis Napoleon in 1848.

During the second Empire the Catholic writers helped to make this alliance lasting, and much later on Beauterne's ideas were perpetuated. All this was of great service to the Emperor's nephew.[3]

[1] Paris, Waille. There were at least eight editions. *L'Enfance de Napoléon* (Paris, Fulgence, 1846) was by the same author.

[2] For instance: *La vie religieuse, militaire et politique de Napoléon,* by Doublet, Paris, Ardant, 1844 (10 editions up to 1870). *Napoléon conversant avec le général Bertrand sur la divinité du christianisme,* Lille, Lefort, 1845, in–18. *Histoire de Napoléon Bonaparte,* Amédée Gabourd, Tours, Mame, 1845 (10 editions up to 1870). *Hommages éclatants rendus par Napoléon à la religion,* Lyons, Girard et Guyet, 1847, in–18. *Paroles impériales prononcées à Sainte-Hélène et réunies par un croyant,* Paris, Bonaventure, 1848. *Deux apparitions: La religion protestante et la religion catholique jugées par Napoléon le Grand,* Laon, Fleury et Chevergny, 1848, in–8.

[3] For instance: *Napoléon à Sainte-Hélène, ses sentiments religieux et sa mort,* Toulouse, Douladoure, 1854. *Napoléon à Sainte-Hélène, détails sur sa mort, ses pensées sur la religion et la divinité du Christ,* Troyes, 1855. *Pensées de Napoléon I sur la religion,* Toulouse, 1860, in–32. *Testament religieux de Napoléon I, sa profession de foi sur Dieu, sur J. C., etc.,* Paris, Paulmier, 1861, in–18. *Napoléon I dans sa vie intime,* by Vicomte de Maricourt, Paris, Lethielleux, 1862. *La divinité de J. C., demontrée par Napoléon à Sainte-Hélène,* Toulouse, 1864.

The year 1848 came, the peasant masses were all powerful, and the Prince became the Prince-President. The nephew of the great reorganiser seemed then to be the natural guarantee of order against the *Reds.*

The question was, though, whether the masses would be willing to create the Empire. The people are less fond of war than the *bourgeoisie.* They prefer peace, so that they may earn their living. Napoleon had been constantly forced into war. He had conquered Europe in spite of his own wishes. Las Cases and Montholon were there to testify to that and the Napoleonic press developed their themes.[1] With public opinion prepared in this way the Prince was able to say at Bordeaux: "Empire means peace."

The words that came from St. Helena have, therefore, each one at its appointed time, influenced the fate of France during the last half century. Napoleon, on his lonely rock, had not lost the art of managing men. His work was meted out exactly to suit the French mind, the requirements of the time, the intelligence and sentiments of the people. Not caring at all what means he employed, he used every opportunity of appealing to his century, sure that every word he uttered would be repeated by one mouth or another.

And surely enough those words have been repeated. All the details of his legend have been told everywhere and, as a climax, the account of his agony, of his *Passion,* as Heine would have said, under Sir Hudson Lowe. Historians and poets, Thiers, Norvins, Béranger, and Victor Hugo, struck up the triumphal chant whilst he, the choir-master, beat time for all these singers of his praises and gave the key-note to all these orators of his glory.

The conclusion to which one comes after such a study as this is that the man of St. Helena equalled the man of Austerlitz. He realised there the political mistakes he had made and, as far as it was in his power, he endeavoured to make up for them. The lesson he had learned from certain events was not lost upon him, and he endeavoured to transform the enemies who had overthrown him into the champions of his son.

[1] See, for instance, *L'Histoire du Petit Caporal,* Paris, 1848.

CONCLUSION

His force of character and his keen intelligence were with him to the end. We realise more fully what the man was when we see him at St. Helena. After having fallen from such a height, undermined as he was by useless regrets, tormented by tactless guardians and jealous friends, ill and doomed to a lingering death, he still had the patient courage to struggle during six long years to accomplish a work which, in spite of ever recurring gleams of hope, he knew would never be of any advantage to himself.

Human wisdom always falls short in one way or another and there are strange ironies sometimes in history. Louis Bonaparte's libel, in 1820, was an attack on the Napoleonic legend, and yet Louis Bonaparte's son was one day to wear the crown so patiently prepared for the King of Rome by the St. Helena captive.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

APPENDIX I

MAUBREUIL

At the record office (Colonial Office Records, St. Helena, Colonial Correspondence, Vol. XXVI) a petition is to be found addressed by Maubreuil to the British Government on the 23rd of June, 1819, asking permission to go to Napoleon at St. Helena. The request is an extraordinary one, considering the fact that Maubreuil accepted the mission of killing Napoleon in 1814.

"My object," he says, "in wanting to see him is to let him know all the circumstances in connection with that infernal mission. I want to give all the facts in detail, to put before him things of which I have never hitherto spoken, and to give him the frightful but faithful picture of that *political plot* laid against his life and that of his son by traitors assembled under the presidency of an *unfrocked priest*,[1] supported by the *Emperor of Russia* and the *Prussian Government.* I managed to save the life of Napoleon and of his son, and on landing on the St. Helena rocks I would say to him: 'You see before you the man who was calm enough to feign accepting *an awful mission*—and fortunate enough to preserve you from danger. Your ruin was sworn, and with Alexander's support, there was no hope for you. I was fortunate enough to turn the plans of your enemies aside.'" . . . .

This is the explanation which Maubreuil gives of his conduct in 1814. He asked to be allowed to speak to

[1] Talleyrand can be recognised here.

Napoleon, in order to obtain from him the certificate of innocence that would rehabilitate him in the eyes of posterity. He also promised to give him good advice and to calm his anger with the Governor. After all this, he volunteered his suggestions to the English ministers. "Let England deliver Napoleon," he said; "let her put Napoleon II on the throne and give back to France her natural frontiers. Both the nation and the dynasty in their devotion to England would ensure her peaceable possession of seas and colonies. The understanding between the two nations would then protect Europe from Russian invasion.[1] As to Louis XVIII, England would be doing good service in taking him back to Hartwell. He would then be spared the sad fate awaiting him, either in the Montmartre drains or on the *Place de Grève!*"

[1] (Appendix I.) It is curious to find similar ideas in Napoleon's conversations with O'Meara. See *Napoléon en exil,* February 14th and May 22nd, 1817.

APPENDIX II

GOURGAUD'S DEPARTURE

THE object of this appendix is to discuss a question which has been the subject of much controversy. This question is the reason of Gourgaud's departure from St. Helena, the explanation of which has never been seriously attempted by any historian.

According to Montholon, Gourgaud was sent to Europe by Napoleon in order to attempt negotiations with the Emperor Alexander. Balmain's conversations had made him hope that these would be fruitful.[1] The real cause of Gourgaud's departure, as he explained it to Sir Hudson Lowe,[2] to the European Commissioners,[3] as he presents it in his diary, and as all Europe accepted it in 1818, was quite different. Gourgaud was jealous of Montholon's influence with Napoleon, and he challenged him to a duel. Napoleon objected to this duel, and Gourgaud left Longwood, full of hatred for the one and ill-will towards the other. This version is corroborated by the texts that exist of Gourgaud's challenge, of Montholon's reply, and of Gourgaud's second note.[4]

It is impossible after this to deny that there was a quarrel, or at any rate an apparent one, between Napoleon and Montholon on the one side and Gourgaud on the other.

[1] *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. II, pp. 237, 251, 260. Compare a letter from Montholon, quoted by Beauterne in his *Sentiments de Napoléon sur le christianisme*. "Gourgaud," it says, "left St. Helena with the Emperor's consent, and was intrusted with an important mission."

[2] Forsyth, Vol. II, p. 400.

[3] *Balmain*, Reports of February 18th and 27th, of March 14th and 16th, 1818. *Sturmer*, February 23rd, March 31st, 1818. *La captivité de Sainte-Hélène d'après Montchenu*, Chapter IV.

[4] Forsyth, Vol. IV, pp. 361–363.

APPENDIX

Partisans of the first version declare that this was only a *rôle* played by Gourgaud,[1] an entirely diplomatic *rôle*. They say that Gourgaud was sent to Europe by Napoleon on a secret mission and that he was to approach the Czar Alexander. If the English had known the real cause of this departure, all kinds of obstacles and annoyances would have been in store. Gourgaud would have had to endure a long quarantine at the Cape, like Las Cases. He would either have been watched in England or shut up in some German town, so that he could have done nothing. In order to avoid these inconveniences, a fictitious cause was given for the departure, a cause which would make the English like Gourgaud. Persecuted by Napoleon and hostile to him, he would be better treated than as Napoleon's agent. This certainly was the case, as he was allowed to go direct to England and the Governor lent him money! This, then, was the reason of the feigned quarrel and of the duel invented for the requirements of the cause. The *rôle* was so well played that everyone at St. Helena, the English and the Commissioners included, were taken in by it: in spite of a few suspicions which the very exaggeration of Gourgaud's railings against his master awakened.[2]

A similar reason explains how it is that Gourgaud's diary agrees with this version. When Las Cases left St. Helena, his diary was read and kept back by the Governor. Gourgaud foresaw that his might share a similar fate. At a time when he thought that he was about to be arrested and sent away from St. Helena, he had taken the precaution to burn some of his papers,[3] and to hide others in bottles which he then

[1] See the *Préface du journal de Gourgaud*, by MM. de Grouchy et Guillois.

[2] *Sturmer*, Report of February 23rd, 1818. *Balmain*, Report of March 14th, 1818. In a conversation of March 10th, 1818, Gourgaud assured Sir Hudson Lowe as follows: "I never wanted to enter into any political affairs; it was for this reason and because I would not lend myself to doing what I was wanted to do that I had all my worries and troubles" (*sic*). On the 11th of March he declared "that he was not intrusted with any commission whatever, that he had nothing to do with the Longwood affairs, as he had never consented to mix himself up with any political affair since his arrival there" (B.M. 20121, pp. 295, 304). Later on, when Gourgaud was once more officially a Napoleonite, Sturmer wrote to Sir Hudson Lowe as follows: "What do you think of Gourgaud's conduct in England? . . . I still think that he was quite honest when he was railing against his former master; circumstances of which I am ignorant appear to have made him fall back into his past errors" (B.M. 20151, p. 99).

[3] *Gourgaud*, July 30th, 1817, October 7th, 1817.

buried.[1] He had been careful, too, to efface, in his diary, the name of an English captain whom he might have compromised.[2] If the diary, when read by the Governor, did not agree with the ostensible cause of his departure, everything might have been discovered. It was necessary, therefore, that the same version should be given. The diary, therefore, was systematically altered and arranged on this account. Gourgaud's quarrels with Montholon and disputes with Napoleon were represented with an exaggeration which made the climax and his departure seem quite plausible. The defenders of this supposition acknowledge that it was not all mere invention. Gourgaud's jealousy and his trying character had caused violent quarrels between him and Las Cases at the time when Las Cases was the favourite. Montholon, too, had been at loggerheads with him. As early as 1816, there had been threats of a duel, but no one seems to agree about the date of this.[3] It was only necessary, therefore, to arrange matters a little for everything to appear quite plausible.[4]

But all this would only be supposition if there were not a written proof in favour of this version. This proof is a note addressed by Montholon to Gourgaud, during the period he remained at St. Helena, after his departure from Longwood. The publishers of Gourgaud's diary give it in their preface. The importance of it makes it necessary to give it here in full:

"The Emperor thinks, my dear Gourgaud, that you are exaggerating your *rôle*. He is afraid that Sir Hudson Lowe will guess, for you know how shrewd he is. Be on your guard and hurry away as soon as possible without appearing to wish to go. Your position is a very difficult one. Do not forget

[1] Major Gorrequer's report on the examination of Gourgaud's papers, February 16th, 1818 (R.O. 14).

[2] *Gourgaud*, July 14th, 17th, 1817.

[3] See *Gourgaud*, December 19th, 1816. *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. I, p. 305; *Mémorial*, April 27th, 1816. There had also been a critical period at the end of July, 1817, as we see in Gourgaud's diary and of which the Governor had been informed. Gourgaud had then asked to leave (Forsyth, Vol. II, p. 322), and, in September, 1817, in a letter to his mother he again expressed the wish to go away (Forsyth, Vol. IV, p. 297).

[4] We have already seen (chapter xx) that Las Cases, on hearing of the departure of Gourgaud, put it down to a serious quarrel, caused by the difficult character of his former companion. Last remark: the same reason which caused the diary to be arranged accounts for the writing of Gourgaud's farewell letter to Napoleon, in which there is a question of having lost the Emperor's goodwill (Forsyth, Vol. IV. p. 315). This note is somewhat puzzling. Why should all this have been arranged since it was to remain in Napoleon's hands?

that Sturmer is absolutely devoted to Metternich. Avoid speaking of the King of Rome, and turn the conversation, at every opportunity, to the theme of the Emperor's affection for the Empress. Beware of O'Meara. His Majesty has reason to fear that he keeps up some intercourse with Sir Hudson Lowe. Try to find out whether Cipriani is not playing a double game. Sound Madame as you think you can do so. As to Balmain, he is on our side as much as is necessary. Complain about the affair of the five hundred pounds and write to Bertrand about it. Do not fear anything there, as he has no idea about your mission. Your report, yesterday, reached me safely, and interested His Majesty very much. Montchenu was one of the political emigrants. He is a man of honour, and we must make him talk, but that is all. Every time you go into the town leave a report at 53. That is the safest way of any.—Longwood, February 19th, 1818.—15, 16, 18, Montholon."[1]

[1] M. Guillois, who had this letter in his hands for some time, declared that he had no doubt about its authenticity. "Montholon's writing is one that is not easily imitated, considering its very curious modern character, absolutely abnormal at that epoch. It is a slanting handwriting and very fine, as though he used a steel pen, the down stroke of the letters have a very special form." Personally, I may add, that the tenor of the letter, by its agreement with what we know of St. Helena, is of a nature to inspire confidence. The criticisms about Balmain, Sturmer and Montchenu, the distrust expressed with regard to O'Meara and even with regard to Cipriani agree with other information. The *rôle* attributed to Bertrand also appears very plausible. The following is the explanation of the question of the five hundred pounds. We see in Gourgaud's diary, and in the reports of the Commissioners, that Napoleon offered Gourgaud five hundred pounds for his voyage when he was in England. He refused this, as he did not wish to owe anything to the Emperor, but he asked Bertrand to lend him some money. Bertrand refused this loan, saying that he could not help Gourgaud to offend the Emperor. This little scene, invented for giving the impression of an irremediable quarrel, may very well have been arranged without Bertrand's knowledge, so that he played his part without having any idea of it. It was an excellent idea to keep Bertrand out of the secret on this occasion. In the first place he did not want to compromise himself; then, too, this man of most sensitive honour, "esteemed by all Europe," was a guarantee that Gourgaud had really left in consequence of his quarrel with Montholon. Everything, then, makes us think that the note in question is authentic. The hypothesis that it was forged afterwards leads to suppositions too complicated to be probable. We should have to admit that Gourgaud, when he was in a better humour again, wanted to be spared the shame of having left St. Helena on bad terms with Napoleon and had invented this letter to support the hypothesis of the "diplomatic departure." Then, too, how are we to explain the fact that he did not make use of this uote, which was only published fifty years after his death through the chance discovery of a clever and fortunate investigator?

This note is of capital importance. It seems to explain everything and leaves no room for any doubt. There are still clouds to disperse, though, and explanations to supply if the hypothesis be admitted of which this letter is the basis. The objections which may be urged must also be examined.

In the first place Montholon gives, as the cause of Gourgaud's departure, the hopes that Balmain had held out of being able to dispel Alexander's anger with Napoleon and of winning the Czar over again.

Montholon dwells on these half promises of Balmain more and more emphatically from July, 1817, to January, 1818.[1] On the 11th of January he writes: "Important communication from Comte de Balmain transmitted by General Gourgaud. Hope held out of a return to Europe and of royal hospitality in Russia.[2] Gourgaud does not mention these important communications,[3] but this was quite natural, as his diary might have been read before his departure and the whole intrigue revealed. It is strange though that Balmain never speaks of the communications and this suggests the question whether the whole story were merely an invention of Montholon's.

There seems, nevertheless, to be a very simple explanation to this mystery. The details collected by Balmain in his conversations with Montholon and Gourgaud were very much appreciated at the Russian Court.[4] It is only natural, therefore, that he should have encouraged the French to confide in him by giving them occasionally vague hopes which sounded very fine, but which were quite unfounded. He was awaiting, he said, fresh instructions,[5] which would at least allow him to have more frequent and more direct intercourse with Napoleon. The instructions did not come or were not formal enough for Balmain to risk taking no notice of Sir Hudson Lowe's persistent opposition. It is probable that Balmain continued encouraging the exiles and that he let them hope that Russia would intervene in favour of Napoleon, without owning at St. Petersburg that he was going beyond

[1] *Récits de la captivité,* Vol. II, pp. 160, 182, 222, 230.

[2] *Récits de la captivité,* Vol. II, p. 246.

[3] See *Gourgaud,* July 28th, November 2nd, December 7th, 1817, January, 11th, 1818.

[4] See his reports of November 10th, 1817, and of April 22nd, 1819. *Gourgaud,* July 28th, 1817. *Récits de la captivité,* Vol. II, p. 160.

[5] *Balmain,* reports of the 8th and 23rd July, 1817. *Gourgaud,* April 7th, 1817. *Récits de la captivité,* Vol. II, p. 8.

the instructions he had received. It is quite certain that Napoleon, with his extremely hopeful nature, exaggerated the importance of Balmain's words.[1] In any case Napoleon was inspired with such hope that, on the 7th of December, 1817, he dictated to Montholon several pages on the war of 1812, the text of which was to serve as a basis for his reconciliation with Alexander.[2] In January, 1818, he wanted to send this dictation to the Czar through Balmain.[3] The latter refused to accept this mission—and very probably replied that he was only an agent, with strict instructions, and that he could not take upon himself the responsibility of such a step. He may have advised Napoleon to apply direct to the Emperor who was favourably disposed towards him. Balmain's refusal and the near approach of the Aix-la-Chapelle Congress, at which Napoleon hoped to have his affairs discussed, induced him probably to think of making use of Gourgaud as intermediary. A chance event precipitated things. On the 3rd of February, 1818, news of the death of Princess Charlotte reached Longwood.[4] As all hope was now over in that quarter something else had to be tried. It was therefore decided that Gourgaud should start. On the 4th of February, Gourgaud sent his challenge to Montholon. Napoleon dictated his instructions to Montholon on the 10th of February for Gourgaud's *rôle* in Europe,[5] and on the 13th of February Gourgaud left Longwood.

All that took place before the departure seems to be easily explained, but after the departure there are facts which require explanation. Montholon says that Gourgaud *exaggerated* his *rôle*, but this he did to such a degree and for so long a time, that one wonders whether it really was a *rôle* or the expression of his true sentiments.

Gourgaud played his *rôle* too long. At St. Helena, before his departure, it might have been necessary.[6] He

[1] *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. II, p. 237.

[2] *Id.*, Vol. II, p. 230.

[3] *Balmain*, Report of January 15th, 1818. Compare *Gourgaud*, January 5th, 1818. He made another attempt later on: *Balmain*, Report of April 10th, 1818.

[4] *Récits*, Vol. II, p. 248. *Gourgaud*, February 3rd, 1818.

[5] *Id.*, Vol. II, p. 251. It is probably part of these instructions which we find given in the Appendix to the *Journal de Gourgaud* (Vol. II, p. 531).

[6] In a letter to his mother, January 25th, 1818, we have the following instance: "If I have reason to complain, it is of Longwood and not of St. Helena." He recalls the fact that at Brienne, four years previously, he

played it through, when he arrived in England, with M. Goulburn, Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, with the Duc d'Osmond, the French Ambassador in London,[1] and with Sir Hudson Lowe, who had lent him money before his departure from St. Helena. He returned this money from London, on the 20th of June, 1818, with a letter which is also part of the *rôle*.[2] He played it, too, with a General, who was probably English, to whom he wrote, placing himself at the service of Madame de Montholon when landing in Europe from St. Helena. This letter represents the Montholons as having caused his departure.[3]

Gourgaud certainly seems to have exaggerated his *rôle*. He did not only make out that he had been persecuted by Napoleon, but he gave information that was of a kind to injure him without being specially helpful for his own *rôle*.[4]

had saved Napoleon's life, and he adds: "No doubt anyone else would have done the same in my place: but would anyone else treat me as I am now being treated?" (B.M., 20,204, p. 47.)

[1] See R.O., 19, letter from the Duc d'Osmond to Lord Bathurst, October 31st, 1818. "I am no less astonished than your Excellency at M. Gourgaud's changeableness. I saw that officer several times. He always appeared to me intent on returning to France to acquire the right of oblivion for his mistakes. Convinced of his good faith, I was his advocate with the Duc de Richelieu, and I hoped that we should have success, when the letter to the Archduchess of Parma appeared. At first I thought this had been manufactured by Gourgaud's enemies. . . . Would M. Gourgaud have given the title of Emperor to the man who had formerly provoked from him a noble reply to offers of fresh kindness *when he should be back in France?* 'If fate,' said Gourgaud to Bonaparte, 'should destine my country to the horrible misfortune of ever seeing you again, you would find me in the ranks of your enemies, and I should not approach you except with weapons in my hands.' Every recollection authorises me to deny that M. Gourgaud wrote the letter of August 29th, but since he claims the glory of it we cannot refuse him this. It now remains to discover whether M. Gourgaud has played a *rôle*, or whether we must attribute to the instability of his character this conduct, which we cannot judge without knowing what is due to art and what to nature."

[2] B.M., 20,204, p. 52. The following are a few passages from it: "Ah! if one considers that I owned no other fortune, and that I have lost that, and if one compares my conduct with that of the people who are trying to slander me, it will easily be seen whether I have ever been guided by self-interest. . . . It is certainly not on my side that ingratitude is to be found. . . . I imagine myself that General Gourgaud was killed at Waterloo, and will never be heard of again until the moment when he meets M. de Montholon. My misfortunes are too great, and I do not feel that I can forgive."

[3] *Journal de Gourgaud*, Vol. II, p. 549.

[4] For all this part of the discussion, see *Lettres de Sir W. Scott et réponse du Général Gourgaud* (Bibliography 86). Compare *Forsyth*, Vol. IV, p. 468.

APPENDIX

In his conversations with Goulburn, the Under Secretary of State, Gourgaud said that at the very time when Napoleon was making a display of his poverty by selling his silver, he received from Spain a sum of 250,000 francs. This proved that, in spite of his complaints, he was well provided for. It also proved that he had frequent communications with Europe, and this fact justified a more strict supervision.[1] He told Sturmer and Goulburn that Napoleon had no difficulty in communicating with the outside world, that he could escape when he wished to, and that a strict watchfulness was necessary.[2] He told Goulburn that Napoleon was very well and that he did not suffer at all with liver complaint, as O'Meara said. This made a change of residence seem unnecessary and compromised O'Meara to such a degree that he was recalled at once.[3] A *rôle* kept up for so long a time and played so clumsily makes us wonder whether it really could have been a *rôle*.

There are explanations which seem very plausible, though, to all this. In the first place, if Gourgaud continued playing his *rôle* for so long a time, it was because he was obliged to. He arrived in England on the 1st of May, and it was not until the 25th of August that he revealed himself as Napoleon's agent in Europe by the letter in which he endeavoured to interest Marie-Louise in the fate of her husband. He had waited, because he knew very well that, if he appeared in his true character, he would be odious to the English Government, and that he would be ill-treated and sent out of the country. This is what really happened finally, as he was banished from England on the 14th of November, 1818. If he had allowed himself to be sent away at once, he would not have been able to communicate with Napoleon's partisans in England, with O'Meara's friends, or with Holmes, neither would he have been able to learn anything about the situation, nor to make himself useful in any way. Then, too, the Aix-la-Chapelle Congress, at which he was to act, was not to open until the 30th of December. It would have been useless, therefore, to reveal his true character so long in advance, as he would only have exposed himself to unnecessary persecutions. When the right moment arrived, Gourgaud declared himself very plainly. His letter to Marie-

[1] *Lettres de Sir W. Scott*, etc., pp. 14, 22, 38.
[2] *Id.*, p. 20, *sqq.* 39. *Forsyth*, Vol. IV, pp. 367, 373.
[3] *Lettres*, etc., pp. 24, 37. *Forsyth*, Vol. IV, pp. 375, 377.

Louise was followed by one to the Czar on the 2nd of October and by another to the Empress of Austria on the 25th.[1] It does not seem probable that all this was because he despaired of being forgiven by the Bourbons, as the Duc d'Osmond declared that at the very moment of his change of tactics, his apparent repentance had every chance of being accepted. We know that Gourgaud did not succeed in his attempt as far as the sovereigns were concerned; but his letter to the English General mentioned above proves that in 1819 he was still endeavouring to win over the Czar. He was unsuccessful in this, but he kept up an intercourse with the partisans of Napoleon in Europe. The hostility to Madame de Montholon in his letter of 1819, is only a matter of form, as he evidently did not want to belie himself too brusquely.

Prince Eugène, the trustee of the money belonging to Napoleon, paid him the pension, settled on him by the Emperor, regularly. After the death of the Prince this money was capitalised at a profitable rate of interest. Napoleon evidently wished to recompense him for his services without compromising him in his equivocal situation. He did not mention him in his will, but put him on the list of his conscience legatees.[2]

All this agrees fairly well, but there are now Gourgaud's statements to be explained when, with no apparent reason, he slandered the Emperor in his conversations with Sturmer and Goulburn. Gourgaud undertook to explain all this in his letter to Sir Walter Scott in 1827. On certain points his explanation is clumsy and not very frank. He simply denies Sir Walter Scott's affirmations which were only a distortion of the real facts,[3] or of facts that were absolutely exact.[4] He denied wholesale his quarrels with Montholon and his

[1] See these letters, *Gourgaud*, Vol. II, pp. 535, *sqq*.

[2] *Journal de Gourgaud*, Preface, Vol. I, p. 19.

[3] See the question of the pension of 12,000 francs attributed by Napoleon to Gourgaud, *Lettre et réponse*, pp. 13 and 14. *Gourgaud*, May 28th, 1816, July 2nd, 11th, 16th, 21st, 22nd, 1817; the question of the quarrels with Montholon and of the insults uttered against Napoleon, *Lettre et réponse*, pp. 14, 15.

[4] Madame de Montholon's words, for instance, paying her court to Napoleon at the expense of France, *Lettre et réponse*, pp. 14, 15. *Gourgaud*, December 27th, 1816; January 9th, 1817. Gourgaud's statement that he had only talked with Sir Hudson Lowe just as he was leaving: see *Gourgaud*, June 24th, July 4th and 7th, October 12th, 1817.

declamations against Napoleon, thus making his declaration on the other points seem suspicious.

It would have been difficult for him, in 1827, to have acted differently. When he had gone back absolutely into the Bonapartist world, he could not, without giving great displeasure there and shocking public opinion violently, have confessed his blasphemies towards the divinity of that party, even though those blasphemies had been well intentioned. And the explanations which he gives on the principal points are plausible. He never said, he explains, that a sum of money was received at St. Helena at the time of the sale of the silver; he could only have said that, at the time of changing from the *Bellerophon* to the *Northumberland*, Napoleon saved from the superficial perquisitions of the English authorities a sum of Spanish quadruples, a portion of which each of his companions hid.[1] This explanation is admissible. None of the Memorialists speaks of money arriving at Longwood at the time of the sale of the silver. They do speak, on the contrary, of the money saved from the perquisitions at the time of embarking on the *Northumberland*.[2] The Duc d'Osmond, too, in his letter mentioned above, recalling what Gourgaud had said to him on this question, merely attributes to him the declaration that "at the time Napoleon was selling his silver, he had at his service ten thousand louis of Spanish money." This agrees very well with Gourgaud's explanation; and we can imagine the English interlocutor, not very well up perhaps in the French language, and haunted by the idea of secret intercourse between Napoleon and Europe, unconsciously transforming Gourgaud's words and giving them an utterly different meaning.

Gourgaud certainly said, as he explains, that Napoleon could have escaped if he had wished to. He added that no precautions could have prevented him, and he therefore argued that all precautions should be done away with, as they could have no other result than to hurt the feelings of the captive.[3] Gourgaud may have spoken in this way, and M. Goulburn, judging differently, may have only remembered the first part of the phrase and added his own conclusions.

[1] *Lettre et réponse*, pp. 14, 22, 38.

[2] *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. I, p. 114. *Gourgaud*, August 6th, October 28th, 1815.

[3] *Lettre et réponse*, p. 20 *sqq.*, 39.

Gourgaud did not say that Napoleon was very well. He replied negatively when asked whether he were not suffering from a scirrhus in the stomach, like his father. The question was asked in the hope of being able to attribute Napoleon's disease to heredity and not to the St. Helena climate. This explanation is fairly plausible. All those who approved of Napoleon's imprisonment at St. Helena have upheld the theory of hereditary disease with as much energy as the Bonapartists upheld that of liver complaint. The clearness of the letter in which Lord Bathurst informs Sir Hudson Lowe of Gourgaud's statement [1] leaves us undecided between the two affirmations.

Such are the arguments in favour of this version, which certainly seems to be the more plausible one. They are decidedly complex but the other hypothesis appears to be still more improbable.

[1] *Forsyth*, Vol. IV, p. 375.

APPENDIX III

COMPARATIVE TABLES OF THE TWO VERSIONS OF THE ITALIAN AND EGYPTIAN CAMPAIGNS

The object of these tables is to show clearly the portions lacking in the first version and to compare the length of the two versions approximately.

(A).—ITALIAN CAMPAIGN.

TITLES OF CHAPTERS.	FIRST VERSION.	SECOND VERSION.
Siège de Toulon	*Mémoires*, 1822, I, pp. 1–49.	*Mémoires*, 1822, V, pp. 1–55
Armée d'Italie (1792–1795)		*Mémoires*, 1822, V, pp. 56–100
Treize Vendémiaire	*Mémorial*, I, pp. 445–462; II, pp. 507–513	*Mémoires*, 1822, V, pp. 101–127
Description de l'Italie	*Mémorial*, III, pp. 482–494	*Mémoires*, 1822, V, pp. 128–171.
Montenotte	*Mémorial*, I, pp. 462–490	*Mémoires*, 1822, V, pp. 171–203
Lodi		*Mémoires*, 1822, V, pp. 204–270
Pavie		
Marche sur la rive droite du Pô		
Castiglione	*Mémorial*, II, pp. 183–203	*Mémoires*, 1822, II, pp. 271–295
Combats entre le Mincio et la Brenta		*Mémoires*, 1822, V, pp. 296–316
Arcole	*Mémorial*, II, pp. 203–224	*Mémoires*, 1822, VI, pp. 384–413
Campagne de 1796 en Allemagne		*Mémoires*, 1822, V, pp. 317–383
Négociations de 1796		*Mémoires*, 1822, V, pp. 414–443
Rivoli	*Mémorial*, II, pp. 225–244	*Mémoires*, 1822, V, pp. 444–467 (varying Vol. VI, pp. 358–390)

APPENDIX

(A).—ITALIAN CAMPAIGN—*Continued.*

TITLES OF CHAPTERS.	FIRST VERSION.	SECOND VERSION.
Tolentino		*Mémoires*, 1822, VI, pp. 1–67
Corse		
Tagliamento	*Mémorial*, II, pp. 381–402	*Mémoires*, 1822, VI, pp. 68–93
Léoben	*Mémorial*, II, pp. 436–446	*Mémoires*, 1822, VI, pp. 94–117
Venise	*Mémorial*, II, pp. 403–436	*Mémoires*, 1822, VI, pp. 118–155
Négociations en 1797		*Mémoires*, 1822, VI, pp. 156–205
18 Fructidor	*Mémorial*, II, pp. 513–523	*Mémoires*, 1822, VI, pp. 206–243
Campo-Formio		*Mémoires*, 1822, VI, pp. 244–280
Paris	*Mémorial*, II, pp. 446–462	*Mémoires*, 1822, VI, pp. 281–305
Observations sur la campagne d'Italie		*Mémoires*, 1822, VI, pp. 306–357

APPENDIX

(B).—EGYPTIAN CAMPAIGN.

Titles of Chapters.	First Version.	Second Version.
Malte	*Mémoires*, 1822, II, pp. 195–198	Edition 1847, I, pp. 1–31
Description de l'Égypte	*Mémoires*, 1822, II, pp. 201–228	Edition 1847, I, pp. 32–123
Conquête de la Basse-Egypte	*Mémoires*, 1822, II, pp. 229–249	Edition 1847, I, pp. 124–177
Aboukir	*Mémoires*, 1822, II, pp. 163–200	Edition 1847, I, pp. 178–204
Affaires religieuses	*Mémoires*, 1822, II, pp. 251–291	Edition 1847, I, pp. 205–238
Insurrection du Caire, Conquête de la Haute-Egypte		Edition 1847, I, pp. 239–320
Syrie	*Mémoires*, 1822, II, pp. 291–297	Edition 1847, II, pp. 1–18
Palestine	*Mémoires*, 1822, II, pp. 297–303	Edition 1847, II, pp. 19–58
Saint-Jean-d'Acre	*Mémoires*, 1822, II, pp. 304–313	Edition 1847, II, pp. 59–116
Aboukir	*Mémoires*, 1822, II, pp. 315–338	Edition 1847, II, pp. 116–144
Retour en France		Edition 1847, II, pp. 145–247
Événements de 1798		
Événements de 1799		
l'Égypte sous Kléber		
l'Égypte sous Menou		

APPENDIX IV

THE DEPARTURE OF LAS CASES

Two questions have been asked with regard to the departure of Las Cases. Did he endeavour to be sent away from Longwood, and, when once away, did he refuse to return there in spite of Napoleon's request? The first of these two accusations is to be found in Sir Hudson Lowe's notes on *L'Exposé des Griefs*,[1] in a report by Balmain,[2] in a report by Gors, Montchenu's secretary,[3] and in a letter from O'Meara.[4] Tired of his devotion and longing for an honourable way of leaving, Las Cases is said to have committed an infraction of the rules, feeling perfectly sure that the consequence would be his banishment from the island. Considering the ill-will of his accusers,[5] such an accusation would carry no weight, if it were not for certain declarations made by Napoleon and reported by O'Meara, Montholon, and Gourgaud.

According to Las Cases, Napoleon had first approved of the idea of letting his grievances be known in Europe by means of Las Cases's servant man, James Scott. Later on he appeared to have lost interest in this scheme and he would not reply when Las Cases spoke to him about it. Las Cases interpreted this silence as a refusal to arrange the details for the carrying out of a plan, the idea of which he approved. It was on this account that Las Cases decided to act alone.

[1] *Forsyth*, Vol. IV, pp. 92, 94.

[2] Report of December 29th, 1816 (*Revue Bleue* of May 15th, 1897).

[3] Report of September 11th, 1819 (*Affaires étrangères*, 1804, *bis* fol. 119, document 130).

[4] *Forsyth*, Vol. II, p. 74. See, too, the *Relation de Herbert John Clifford* (Bibliography, p. 45).

[5] At first, as we have seen, O'Meara was far from being kindly disposed towards Napoleon's companions.

According to Gourgaud,[1] Napoleon told Las Cases that his idea was absurd, and he replied as he might have done to "a child's proposal." Montholon says that he distinctly told Las Cases not to carry out the plan.[2] Finally, when talking to O'Meara, Napoleon denied that Las Cases had ever spoken to him of this idea.[3]

These declarations contradict those of Las Cases, but they are also contradictory to each other. If Napoleon had known nothing about it, he could not have forbidden Las Cases to carry out his plan. This contradiction inclines us to the belief that Napoleon's version was not the truthful one.

O'Meara's version was for Sir Hudson Lowe and for the public. Napoleon did not care to be ridiculed for taking part in any plan that failed. The other version was for Napoleon's companions, and does not sound quite true. It appears probable that Napoleon first agreed to the proposal willingly, that he then began to see its drawbacks, and so refused to discuss it any more. He thus left Las Cases free to run the risks himself. There were chances of success, and, in case of failure, he could blame Las Cases for it. As two versions of the affair are given, we have every right to doubt them both, and to prefer the one set forth by Las Cases.

On the 25th of November, Las Cases left Longwood, but he did not leave St. Helena until the 30th of December. He was detained at Balcombe's cottage during this time, and, on the 17th of December, he received permission from Sir Hudson Lowe to await the Minister's decision with regard to him, either at Longwood or at the Cape. Las Cases gives the reasons which made him prefer the Cape. He had received a letter from Napoleon, written on the 13th, before Sir Hudson Lowe's offer, advising him, and, if necessary, ordering him, to leave. He therefore supposed that he could serve Napoleon better in Europe than at St. Helena. Finally, his public and brutal arrest, before all Longwood, had hurt his feelings. He felt himself disgraced in the eyes of Napoleon, and he feared that by returning to Longwood it might appear as though he accepted and authorised similar treatment. If, however, he had received notice, either by letter or through a person on whom he could depend, of the slightest wish on

[1] November 25th, 26th, 1816.

[2] *Récits de la captivité,* Vol. I, p. 444.

[3] *Napoléon en exil,* November 25th, 1816. Compare *Forsyth,* Vol. IV, p. 480.

the part of Napoleon, he declares that he should have stayed.

The question is whether any request for him to remain had ever been communicated to him. Las Cases only saw Bertrand and Gourgaud on the 29th and 30th of December. According to the account of these interviews,[1] the two Generals did not bring any message to this effect from Napoleon. They only insisted in their own name. Montholon says that this was by Napoleon's own order.[2]

O'Meara declares[3] that he was commissioned by Napoleon to ask Las Cases to remain, and that Las Cases refused. He says this distinctly, and repeats it twice over. Las Cases does not mention this message. According to him, it would seem as though O'Meara only saw him, during this period, professionally.

In any case, could Las Cases have considered O'Meara as an absolutely safe messenger? He was English and under English authority. The whole island believed him to be the Governor's spy placed with Napoleon, and there was some suspicion of this at Longwood. Las Cases might, therefore, have distrusted him. He might have given his reasons later on in the *Mémorial*, but at that time O'Meara was esteemed by all the Bonapartes unreservedly, and probably Las Cases did not wish to appear then to have doubted his devotion. It is, therefore, easy to understand why Las Cases took no notice of O'Meara's message, and why he does not mention it in the *Mémorial*.

[1] *Gourgaud*, December 29th and 30th, 1816. Memorandum of Major Gorrequer (B.M. 20,117, p. 368 *sqq.*, 388 *sqq.*). December 29th: "But if the Emperor wished you to stay, though?" "I should stay, then, because that would be law to me." And, on the 30th, Bertrand only speaks in his own name, and does not bring any wish or order from Napoleon.

[2] *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. I, p. 465.

[3] *Journal de Gourgaud*, April 5th, 1817. *Forsyth*, Vol. II, pp. 140–141. *Napoléon en éxil*, December 20th, 1816.

APPENDIX V

THE LEGEND OF THE "PETIT CAPORAL"

THE Napoleonic legend means, to most people, the martial legend. They see, at once, the conqueror of the Pyramids and of Moscow, the vanquisher of all the countries of the world, simple and familiar with the old soldiers of the First Empire who adored their *petit caporal.* He had been invincible and had only succumbed to a crowd of fatalities and to treachery. This is the Napoleon of Victor Hugo, of Beranger, and of Charlet.

This conception is profound and stirring in the highest degree. Napoleon as the head of all warfare is a conception which poets and artists have worked upon. It was the conception which Napoleon at St. Helena was least anxious to force on the European mind. He scarcely ever speaks of himself thus in the St. Helena writings.

Undoubtedly he sometimes insisted on the value of his troops, on the military superiority of the French,[1] even in times of reverses,[2] and he liked the term "the great nation" which he had been the first to apply to France.[3] If he refrained from insisting on all this, he was the only one to do so, and he was certainly remarkably wise. He knew the worth of his military genius, and he spoke of it without any false modesty, but without any flights of imagination, giving himself no praise except that of facts and figures. It is certainly not in the *Mémoires* that we find the poetic elation of the *Ode à la Colonne.* He defended his operations, several times over, whether successful or unsuccessful. He defended the

[1] *Mémorial,* June 9th, 1816.
[2] *Id.*, September 2nd, 1816. *Campagne de* 1815, fourth observation.
[3] *Id.*, October 31st, 1816.

Jena manœuvre,[1] the Battle of Essling[2] and the Campaign of 1812.[3] He was indignant that French victories should have been depreciated by French writers. "The French," he says, "have a wonderful mania for dishonouring and discrediting their own glory.[4] There is nothing in all this, though, but the enthusiasm of the artist defending his own work and there is nothing political in this. His defeats, especially that of Waterloo, and his own ruin could only be accounted for by fatality,[5] treachery[6] or the laxness of his Lieutenants.[7] It was only natural to throw the responsibility of his failures on to others or on to fate. He liked talking of the confidence and the enthusiastic affection with which he inspired his soldiers,[8] of his custom of sharing all their fatigues and privations,[9] of his familiarity with them and of their free and easy manner with him.[10] He always spoke of this as a very natural and simple thing, without seeking to take any credit to himself for it. He even refuted, in a simple, ironical way, the anecdote, dear to artists, which represents him taking the place of the sentinel who had fallen asleep.

"That idea," he says, "was no doubt that of a *bourgeois*, or of an advocate but certainly not of a military man. The originator of it, no doubt, means well to me, but he forgets the fact that I should have been incapable of such an act, I was always too tired myself for that.

[1] *Dixième note sur l'Art de la guerre.*

[2] *Onzième note sur l'Art de la guerre:* "We did not lose the battle of Essling, we won it; we slept on the battlefield. . . ."

[3] *Troizième note sur l'Art de la guerre.*

[4] *Ibid.* Compare *Mémorial*, June 19th, 1816. By a very human sentiment, Napoleon felt great tenderness for his unfortunate campaigns. The campaign of 1812, he wrote, "was the finest, the cleverest, and the best that Napoleon commanded." There are the same praises for the campaign of 1815. It is the same in Corneille:

Othon et Suréna
Ne sont pase des cadets indignes de Cinna.

[5] *Mémorial*, June 18th, 1816.

[6] *Napoléon en exil*, March 6th, 1818. *Derniers Moments*, p. 171. *L'île d'Elbe et les Cent-Jours*, passim.

[7] *Mémorial*, September 2nd, 1816.

[8] *L'île d'Elbe et les Cent-Jours*, passim. *Campagne d'Egypte*, L'Égypte sous Kléber, Vol. I. *Napoléon en exil*, October 10th, 1816. *Huitième lettre du Cap*, Sub fine, &c.

[9] *Campagne d'Italie.* Combats entre le Mincio et la Brenta. *Campagne d'Égypte:* Basse-Égypte, Vol. V.; Palestine, Vol. VI; St. Jean d'Acre, Vol. IX. *Mémorial*, September 26th, 1815.

[10] *Napoléon en exil*, April 2nd, September 29th, 1817. *Mémorial*, September 1st–6th, 1815, September 11th, 1816.

"It is most likely that I should have fallen asleep before the soldier of whom he tells."[1]

If Napoleon, as a general rule, did not write on themes such as *The Two Grenadiers* and *The Grandmother*, it was not because he was not aware of the effect that the development of these themes might produce on the public.

"A soldier," we are told, "can only fight against the languor and dulness in the barracks by talking of the dangers he has run, or of the battle stories he heard at home. How could a Frenchman talk of war without pronouncing the name of Napoleon, without filling all martial minds with memories of his glory?"[2]

But why go to the trouble of developing these martial themes? Were not all these impressions and even the facts engraved on the minds of the French people? Was there not a whole generation of the soldiers of 1796 to 1815 to talk of the *petit caporal* to future generations? It might be wise for Napoleon to enlighten the public about his intentions, either Liberal or pacific ones, as long as these had never been carried out, but when facts existed and spoke for themselves, it was useless to begin to talk of them. It might be wise to persuade the nations that the Empire had meant peace. History had already told them that the Empire had meant glory.

[1] *Mémorial*, August 28th, 1816.
[2] *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. II, 378–379.

APPENDIX VI

NAPOLEON AND TALLEYRAND

Beside the main ideas of the legend, which show up Napoleon's diplomacy with regard to the various nations, his criticisms of Talleyrand give an interesting example of his private diplomacy.

At the commencement of Napoleon's sojourn at St. Helena, his criticisms were extremely severe. "Talleyrand," he declared, "was always ready for treason of some kind."[1] He was "immorality personified."[2] When Napoleon was talking to his companions, he acknowledged his talents. "I do not deny," he says "that Talleyrand has remarkable talent and that he can put great weight in the scales."[3] "He is a model Minister of Foreign Affairs .... I made a mistake in putting anyone in his place: he would have been useful to me and I should still be on the throne."[4] But when he was talking to O'Meara, Napoleon pleaded more, and when speaking for the public, he was severe in his judgment. Talleyrand then was "the most contemptible of stock-jobbers .... a low flatterer .... a traitor always .... mercenary in everything[5] .... capable of every crime."[6] The second *Letter from the Cape* begins by a regular accusation. In Napoleon's conversations and stories he seems to be especially bent on compromising him with the Bourbons. He tells how Talleyrand, when Minister of the *Directoire* upheld the

[1] *Mémorial*, April 12th, 1816.
[2] *Récits de la captivité*, February 18th, 1817.
[3] *Mémorial*, April 12th, 1816.
[4] *Récits*, February 18th, 1817. Compare *Gourgaud, Id.*
[5] *Napoléon en exil*, November 12th, 1816.
[6] *Id.*, January 23rd, 1817. Compare March 10th and 16th, August 25th, September 20th, 1817.

legitimacy of the fête of January 21st.[1] Napoleon insisted, too, on his *rôle* in the affair of the Duc d'Enghien. Several times over he hurled a terrible accusation at him, declaring that he had intercepted a letter sent by the Duc d'Enghien to the First Consul, a letter which would have induced Napoleon to forgive, if only he had received it in time. This accusation is to be found in Las Cases's book.[2] He transmits it to Warden,[3] to Napoleon's great satisfaction.[4] It appears again three times in O'Meara's book,[5] either spontaneously or in answer to the Doctor's questions. The *Letters from the Cape* give it again.[6] A little later on Napoleon felt it his duty to clear Talleyrand from this accusation which had been repeated so many times. On the 25th of July, 1818, O'Meara was recalled to England. While he was bidding Napoleon farewell, Montholon hurried to the pharmacy[7] "to fetch his diary which he had hidden there, in case of any surprise . . . . I arranged for him to take this diary to England," he says, "after reading it first to the Emperor, who pointed out several mistakes in it." One of these mistakes was the story of the intercepted letter.

This flagrant contradiction shows the change that had taken place in Napoleon's mind. This change must have been sufficiently marked for Gourgaud to have noticed it and to have made the following observation on the 24th of September, 1817. "The Emperor," he writes, "seems to me very angry with Fouché and very much changed with regard to Talleyrand." The context shows that the change consisted in a much greater indulgence. When writing the *Letters from the Cape*, Napoleon had talked a great deal and thought a great deal about Talleyrand. He quite understood that, in 1814, Talleyrand had not really betrayed him. He had merely "let things go and taken advantage of circumstances."[8] He was the courtier for times of success and he had wheeled round with fortune. His cleverness made him a valuable ally. He knew how to steer clear of things even through

[1] *Deuxième Lettre du Cap—Napoléon en exil*, October 10th, 1817.
[2] *Mémorial*, November 20th, 1816.
[3] *Septième Lettre.*
[4] "Las Cases did him a great deal of harm by his conversation with Warden" (*Récits*, February 18th, 1817).
[5] *Napoléon en exil*, January 23rd, March 5th, May 22nd, 1817.
[6] *Septième Lettre.*
[7] *Récits*, Vol, II, p. 315.
[8] *Id.*, February 18th, 1817.

revolutions and consequently "he would die in his bed," whilst ordinary traitors like Fouché "would probably die on the scaffold."[1] A man like Talleyrand should be made the most of. Napoleon, therefore, who has nothing but contempt for traitors and deserters of the ordinary calibre, lashes them with his strongest epithets.[2] He decides to spare Talleyrand, though. He feels sure that if fortune should smile on him once more, or if the King of Rome should appear likely to succeed, the Prince de Bénévent would be the first to adore the rising sun, all the more so as Louis XVIII held him aloof in disgrace. It was of no use, after all, to alienate completely a possible ally. To use Napoleon's own words: "A man who is worthy of the name never hates. His anger and his ill-humour never go beyond the moment, the electric flash. . . . The man intended for managing important affairs and for having authority does not see persons: he only sees things, their weight, and their consequence." Napoleon was therefore attempting a reconciliation, when he tried to obliterate from O'Meara's book his own accusations against Talleyrand.[3]

Napoleon seems to have made a choice among his enemies, just as he did among those who had been faithless to him. There were certain persons whom he always treated with contempt and ridicule. Among these were Barras, whom he despised as incapable, Madame de Staël, whom he disdained as a woman, and La Fayette, whom he considered a simpleton.[4]

[1] *Récits*, September 23rd, 1817. Compare *Gourgaud*, the 24th: "He has everything which I lack . . . . he is the diplomat *par excellence*."

[2] For Fouché, see: *Gourgaud*, February 16th and September 24th, 1817; *Napoléon en exil*, August 25th, 1817; *Mémorial*, April 12th, 1816; *Mémoires*, 18th of Brumaire, Vol. V; *Consuls provisoires*, Vol. III; *Ile d'Elbe*, Intérieur, Vol. I. For Pasquier, *Ile d'Elbe*, Intérieur, Vol. II. For the Abbé de Pradt, *Napoléon en exil*, September 7th, 1817; *Mémorial*, December 15th–16th, 1815, April 28th, 1816; *Ile d'Elbe*, Intérieur, Vol. II; *Neuvième Lettre du Cap*. For Fontanes, *Ile d'Elbe*, Intérieur, Vol. II. For Marmont, *Napoléon en exil*, August 22nd, 1817, March 6th, 1818; *Récits*, February 1st, 1817. For Bernadotte, *Mémorial*, August 7th, September 2nd, November 11th, 1816; *Napoléon en exil*, May 14th, 1817, and January 28th, 1818; *Mémoires*, Brumaire 18th, Vol. XI, and *Note sur les Mémoires de Charles XIV Jean*.

[3] A vain attempt, for O'Meara omitted nothing.

[4] For Barras, see *Mémoires*, 13th of Vendémiaire, Vol. VII; 18th of Brumaire, Vol. V; *Napoléon en exil*, November 2nd, 1816, August 25th, 1817; *Gourgaud*, February 10th, 1817. For Madame de Staël, *Récits*, January 2nd, 1817; *Gourgaud*, June 13th, 1817; *Napoléon en exil*, May

Chateaubriand, on the other hand, whose many talents he appreciated, and who proved himself an influential statesman from the very beginning of the Restoration, is treated quite differently. Remembering the libel of 1814, Napoleon gave way at first to his anger and indignation, and ill-treated the poor man terribly, both in his conversations[1] and writings. The ninth *Letter from the Cape* is a furious diatribe against him. But Napoleon thinks matters over, his anger subsides, and he decides on a wiser policy. Chateaubriand is a man of great talent, why make an irreconcilable enemy of him? Would it not be better to adopt the policy of 1800, to group around the throne of the King of Rome devoted men, wherever they could be found, and talent of all kinds, no matter how it had hitherto been applied? Napoleon therefore forgives Chateaubriand. In the *Campagne d'Italie*, he devotes a whole page to praises of him.[2] Chateaubriand refers to this later on, and not without a certain amount of pride. In Napoleon's *Conseils à son fils*,[3] he dictated the following passage: "My son must forget the antecedents of all men, with the exception of those who have betrayed their country. He must reward talent, merit, and services wherever he finds them. Chateaubriand, in spite of the libel, is a good Frenchman."

"With the exception of those who have betrayed their country." This shows us the last phase of Napoleon's private diplomacy. He advises the King of Rome to rally all good Frenchmen. He tells him to include former enemies, even Chateaubriand and even Richelieu, whom he praises together with Chateaubriand.[4] He excepts traitors, though, so that, after a moment's indulgence, Talleyrand is condemned absolutely. Napoleon may have felt that more disinterested support would be necessary for the fortunes of his son, or it

24th, 1817; *Mémorial*, January 18th–20th, August 13th, October 21st, 1816. For La Fayette, *Napoléon en exil*, June 13th, 1817; *Mémorial*, June 12th, 1816.

[1] *Napoléon en exil*, April 30th, 1817, and January 28th, 1818; *Mémorial*, June 1st, 1816.

[2] *Campo-Formio*, Vol. I: "Châteaubriand has received from nature the divine fire, his works attest it. His style is not that of Racine, it is that of a prophet . . . . All that is great and national must suit his genius."

[3] *Récits de la captivité*, Vol. II, p. 520.

[4] *Campagne d'Italie*, Campo-Formio, Vol. I. *Récits*, December 30th, 1815.

may have been that scapegoats were necessary for the mistakes and defeats of the Empire.

Under the form of pardon, he inflicts disgrace on the traitors in his will. "The two disastrous results of the invasions of France," he says, "when the country still had so many resources, were due to the treason of Augereau, Marmot, Talleyrand, and La Fayette. I forgive them. May French posterity forgive them as I do!"

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these conversations are concerned. A proof of this is that there are several versions of his reports which can be compared and which are found alike, or very similar. Added to this he had an advantage over Montholon and Las Cases, for, as he was a foreigner and knew very little about French history, Napoleon spoke more clearly to him and did not employ as many *sous-entendus* as he did with his Generals and with his ex-State Councillor. The confidences that he made to O'Meara were always of a very explicit nature, and this increases the value of them.

CHAPTER X

MONTHOLON

Montholon represented the old nobility at St. Helena still more than Las Cases. The latter certainly belonged to the nobility, but to the nobility of the provinces, whilst Montholon belonged to the nobility of the Court. His father, Mathieu, Marquis de Montholon and Comte de Lee, commanded the regiment of the Royal Penthièvre Dragoons and was Master of the Hounds to the Comte de Provence, a function which was filled by Charles Tristan de Montholon on the death of his father in 1788. He was not quite five years old when he inherited this honour, as he was born in Paris on the 21st of July, 1783. Thanks to the Revolution there was no hope for him of making his way at Court, but his mother's second marriage gave him a protector who was extremely useful to him under the new *régime.* She married M. de Sémonville, former Councillor to the Parliament, who adapted himself in the most admirable way to all the political changes. He served the Government, under the Revolution, Napoleon, the Restoration and Louis Philippe, in various functions, and was *Grand Référendaire* to the Chamber of Peers at the time of his death in 1839. He had no children, but was greatly attached to those of his wife and acted as a father to them.[1]

In 1792, Sémonville was appointed Ambassador to Constantinople. He decided to go there by sea, and his adopted son accompanied him on board the *Junon.*

During a prolonged stay which the Ambassador was

[1] Montholon wrote to his wife on the 22nd of June, 1820: "I cannot forget that for twenty years he was a father to me." (B.N. 14, p. 34.)