

# **Memoirs of the Court of St. Cloud (Being secret letters from a gentleman at Paris to a nobleman in London) — Volume 1 eBook**

## **Memoirs of the Court of St. Cloud (Being secret letters from a gentleman at Paris to a nobleman in London) — Volume 1**

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# Page 1

## Being Secret Letters from a Gentleman at Paris to a Nobleman in London

### PUBLISHERS' NOTE.

The present work contains particulars of the great Napoleon not to be found in any other publication, and forms an interesting addition to the information generally known about him.

The writer of the Letters (whose name is said to have been Stewarton, and who had been a friend of the Empress Josephine in her happier, if less brilliant days) gives full accounts of the lives of nearly all Napoleon's Ministers and Generals, in addition to those of a great number of other characters, and an insight into the inner life of those who formed Napoleon's Court.

All sorts and conditions of men are dealt with—adherents who have come over from the Royalist camp, as well as those who have won their way upwards as soldiers, as did Napoleon himself. In fact, the work abounds with anecdotes of Napoleon, Talleyrand, Fouché, and a host of others, and astounding particulars are given of the mysterious disappearance of those persons who were unfortunate enough to incur the displeasure of Napoleon.

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

At Cardinal Caprara's

Cardinal Fesch

Episode at *Mme.* Miot's

Napoleon's Guard

A Grand Dinner

Chaptal

Turreaux

Carrier

Barrere

Cambaceres

Pauline Bonaparte

## **SECRET COURT MEMOIRS.**

*The Court of st. Cloud.*

*Introductory letter.*

*Paris, November 10th, 1805.*

*My Lord,*—The Letters I have written to you were intended for the private entertainment of a liberal friend, and not for the general perusal of a severe public. Had I imagined that their contents would have penetrated beyond your closet or the circle of your intimate acquaintance, several of the narratives would have been extended, while others would have been compressed; the anecdotes would have been more numerous, and my own remarks fewer; some portraits would have been left out, others drawn, and all better finished. I should then have attempted more frequently to expose meanness to contempt, and treachery to abhorrence; should have lashed more severely incorrigible vice, and oftener held out to ridicule puerile vanity and outrageous ambition. In short, I should then have studied more to please than to instruct, by addressing myself seldomer to the reason than to the passions.

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I subscribe, nevertheless, to your observation, “that the late long war and short peace, with the enslaved state of the Press on the Continent, would occasion a chasm in the most interesting period of modern history, did not independent and judicious travellers or visitors abroad collect and forward to Great Britain (the last refuge of freedom) some materials which, though scanty and insufficient upon the whole, may, in part, rend the veil of destructive politics, and enable future ages to penetrate into mysteries which crime in power has interest to render impenetrable to the just reprobation of honour and of virtue.” If, therefore, my humble labours can preserve loyal subjects from the seduction of traitors, or warn lawful sovereigns and civilized society of the alarming conspiracy against them, I shall not think either my time thrown away, or fear the dangers to which publicity might expose me were I only suspected here of being an Anglican author. Before the Letters are sent to the press I trust, however, to your discretion the removal of everything that might produce a discovery, or indicate the source from which you have derived your information.

Although it is not usual in private correspondence to quote authorities, I have sometimes done so; but satisfied, as I hope you are, with my veracity, I should have thought the frequent productions of any better pledge than the word of a man of honour an insult to your feelings. I have, besides, not related a fact that is not recent and well known in our fashionable and political societies; and of *all* the portraits I have delineated, the originals not only exist, but are yet occupied in the present busy scene of the Continent, and figuring either at Courts, in camps, or in Cabinets.

### LETTER I.

*Paris, August, 1805.*

*My Lord:*—I promised you not to pronounce in haste on persons and events passing under my eyes; thirty-one months have quickly passed away since I became an attentive spectator of the extraordinary transactions, and of the extraordinary characters of the extraordinary Court and Cabinet of St. Cloud. If my talents to delineate equal my zeal to inquire and my industry to examine; if I am as able a painter as I have been an indefatigable observer, you will be satisfied, and with your approbation at once sanction and reward my labours.

With most Princes, the supple courtier and the fawning favourite have greater influence than the profound statesman and subtle Minister; and the determinations of Cabinets are, therefore, frequently prepared in drawing-rooms, and discussed in the closet. The politician and the counsellor are frequently applauded or censured for transactions which the intrigues of antechambers conceived, and which cupidity and favour gave power to promulgate.

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It is very generally imagined, but falsely, that Napoleon Bonaparte governs, or rather tyrannizes, by himself, according to his own capacity, caprices, or interest; that all his acts, all his changes, are the sole consequence of his own exclusive, unprejudiced will, as well as unlimited authority; that both his greatness and his littleness, his successes and his crimes, originate entirely with himself; that the fortunate hero who marched triumphant over the Alps, and the dastardly murderer that disgraced human nature at Jaffa, because the same person, owed victory to himself alone, and by himself alone commanded massacre; that the same genius, unbiased and unsupported, crushed factions, erected a throne, and reconstructed racks; that the same mind restored and protected Christianity, and proscribed and assassinated a D'Enghien.

All these contradictions, all these virtues and vices, may be found in the same person; but Bonaparte, individually or isolated, has no claim to them. Except on some sudden occasions that call for immediate decision, no Sovereign rules less by himself than Bonaparte; because no Sovereign is more surrounded by favourites and counsellors, by needy adventurers and crafty intriguers.

What Sovereign has more relatives to enrich, or services to recompense; more evils to repair, more jealousies to dread, more dangers to fear, more clamours to silence; or stands more in need of information and advice? Let it be remembered that he, who now governs empires and nations, ten years ago commanded only a battery; and five years ago was only a military chieftain. The difference is as immense, indeed, between the sceptre of a Monarch and the sword of a general, as between the wise legislator who protects the lives and property of his contemporaries, and the hireling robber who wades through rivers of blood to obtain plunder at the expense and misery of generations. The lower classes of all countries have produced persons who have distinguished themselves as warriors; but what subject has yet usurped a throne, and by his eminence and achievements, without infringing on the laws and liberties of his country, proved himself worthy to reign? Besides, the education which Bonaparte received was entirely military; and a man (let his innate abilities be ever so surprising or excellent) who, during the first thirty years of his life, has made either military or political tactics or exploits his only study, certainly cannot excel equally in the Cabinet and in the camp. It would be as foolish to believe, as absurd to expect, a perfection almost beyond the reach of any man; and of Bonaparte more than of any one else. A man who, like him, is the continual slave of his own passions, can neither be a good nor a just, an independent nor immaculate master.

Among the courtiers who, ever since Bonaparte was made First Consul, have maintained a great ascendancy over him, is the present Grand Marshal of his Court, the general of division, Duroc. With some parts, but greater presumption, this young man is destined by his master to occupy the most confidential places near his person; and to his care are entrusted the most difficult and secret missions at foreign Courts. When he is absent from France, the liberty of the Continent is in danger; and when in the Tuileries, or at St. Cloud, Bonaparte thinks himself always safe.



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Gerard Christophe Michel Duroc was born at Ponta-Mousson, in the department of Meurthe, on the 25th of October, 1772, of poor but honest parents. His father kept a petty chandler's shop; but by the interest and generosity of Abbe Duroc, a distant relation, he was so well educated that, in March, 1792, he became a sub-lieutenant of the artillery. In 1796 he served in Italy, as a captain, under General Andreossi, by whom he was recommended to General l'Espinasse, then commander of the artillery of the army of Italy, who made him an aide-de-camp. In that situation Bonaparte remarked his activity, and was pleased with his manners, and therefore attached him as an aide-de-camp to himself. Duroc soon became a favourite with his chief, and, notwithstanding the intrigues of his rivals, he has continued to be so to this day.

It has been asserted, by his enemies no doubt, that by implicit obedience to his general's orders, by an unresisting complacency, and by executing, without hesitation, the most cruel mandates of his superior, he has fixed himself so firmly in his good opinion that he is irremovable. It has also been stated that it was Duroc who commanded the drowning and burying alive of the wounded French soldiers in Italy, in 1797; and that it was he who inspected their poisoning in Syria, in 1799, where he was wounded during the siege of St. Jean d'Acre. He was among the few officers whom Bonaparte selected for his companions when he quitted the army of Egypt, and landed with him in France in October, 1799.

Hitherto Duroc had only shown himself as a brave soldier and obedient officer; but after the revolution which made Bonaparte a First Consul, he entered upon another career. He was then, for the first time, employed in a diplomatic mission to Berlin, where he so far insinuated himself into the good graces of their Prussian Majesties that the King admitted him to the royal table, and on the parade at Potsdam presented him to his generals and officers as an aide-de-camp 'du plus grand homme que je connais; whilst the Queen gave him a scarf knitted by her own fair hands.

The fortunate result of Duroc's intrigues in Prussia, in 1799, encouraged Bonaparte to despatch him, in 1801, to Russia; where Alexander I. received him with that noble condescension so natural, to this great and good Prince. He succeeded at St. Petersburg in arranging the political and commercial difficulties and disagreements between France and Russia; but his proposal for a defensive alliance was declined.

An anecdote is related of his political campaign in the North, upon the barren banks of the Neva, which, in causing much entertainment to the inhabitants of the fertile banks of the Seine, has not a little displeased the military diplomatist.

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Among Talleyrand's female agents sent to cajole Paul I. during the latter part of his reign, was a Madame Bonoeil, whose real name is De F-----. When this unfortunate Prince was no more, most of the French male and female intriguers in Russia thought it necessary to shift their quarters, and to expect, on the territory of neutral Prussia, farther instructions from Paris, where and how to proceed. Madame Bonoeil had removed to Konigsberg. In the second week of May, 1801, when Duroc passed through that town for St. Petersburg, he visited this lady, according to the orders of Bonaparte, and obtained from her a list of the names of the principal persons who were inclined to be serviceable to France, and might be trusted by him upon the present occasion. By inattention or mistake she had misspelled the name of one of the most trusty and active adherents of Bonaparte; and Duroc, therefore, instead of addressing himself to the Polish Count de S-----lz, went to the Polish Count de S-----tz. This latter was as much flattered as surprised, upon seeing an aide-de-camp and envoy of the First Consul of France enter his apartments, seldom visited before but by usurers, gamesters, and creditors; and, on hearing the object of this visit, began to think either the envoy mad or himself dreaming. Understanding, however, that money would be of little consideration, if the point desired by the First Consul could be carried, he determined to take advantage of this fortunate hit, and invited Duroc to sup with him the same evening; when he promised him he should meet with persons who could do his business, provided his pecuniary resources were as ample as he had stated.

This Count de S-----tz was one of the most extravagant and profligate subjects that Russia had acquired by the partition of Poland. After squandering away his own patrimony, he had ruined his mother and two sisters, and subsisted now entirely by gambling and borrowing. Among his associates, in similar circumstances with himself, was a Chevalier de Gausac, a French adventurer, pretending to be an emigrant from the vicinity of Toulouse. To him was communicated what had happened in the morning, and his advice was asked how to act in the evening. It was soon settled that De Gausac should be transformed into a Russian Count de W-----, a nephew and confidential secretary of the Chancellor of the same name; and that one Caumartin, another French adventurer, who taught fencing at St. Petersburg, should act the part of Prince de M-----, an aide-de-camp of the Emperor; and that all three together should strip Duroc, and share the spoil. At the appointed hour Bonaparte's agent arrived, and was completely the dupe of these adventurers, who plundered him of twelve hundred thousand livres. Though not many days passed before he discovered the imposition, prudence prevented him from

denouncing the impostors; and this blunder would have remained a secret between himself, Bonaparte, and Talleyrand, had not the unusual expenses

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of Caumartin excited the suspicion of the Russian Police Minister, who soon discovered the source from which they had flowed. De Gausac had the imprudence to return to this capital last spring, and is now shut up in the Temple, where he probably will be forgotten.

As this loss was more ascribed to the negligence of Madame Bonoeil than to the mismanagement of Duroc, or his want of penetration, his reception at the Tuileries, though not so gracious as on his return from Berlin, nineteen months before, was, however, such as convinced him that if he had not increased, he had at the same time not lessened, the confidence of his master; and, indeed, shortly afterwards, Bonaparte created him first prefect of his palace, and procured him for a wife the only daughter of a rich Spanish banker. Rumour, however, says that Bonaparte was not quite disinterested when he commanded and concluded this match, and that the fortune of Madame Duroc has paid for the expensive supper of her husband with Count de S-----tz at St. Petersburg.

## LETTER II.

*Paris, August, 1805.*

*My Lord:*—Though the Treaty of Luneville will probably soon be buried in the rubbish of the Treaty of Amiens, the influence of their parents in the Cabinet of St. Cloud is as great as ever: I say their parents, because the crafty ex-Bishop, Talleyrand, foreseeing the short existence of these bastard diplomatic acts, took care to compliment the innocent Joseph Bonaparte with a share in the parentage, although they were his own exclusive offspring.

Joseph Bonaparte, who in 1797, from an attorney's clerk at Ajaccio, in Corsica, was at once transformed into an Ambassador to the Court of Rome, had hardly read a treaty, or seen a despatch written, before he was himself to conclude the one, and to dictate the other. Had he not been supported by able secretaries, Government would soon have been convinced that it is as impossible to confer talents as it is easy to give places to men to whom Nature has refused parts, and on whom a scanty or neglected education has bestowed no improvements. Deep and reserved, like a true Italian, but vain and ambitious, like his brothers, under the character of a statesman, he has only been the political puppet of Talleyrand. If he has sometimes been applauded upon the stages where he has been placed, he is also exposed to the hooting and hisses of the suffering multitude; while the Minister pockets undisturbed all the entrance-money, and conceals his wickedness and art under the cloak of Joseph; which protects him besides against

the anger and fury of Napoleon. No negotiation of any consequence is undertaken, no diplomatic arrangements are under consideration, but Joseph is always consulted, and Napoleon informed of the consultation. Hence none of Bonaparte's Ministers have suffered less from his violence and resentment than Talleyrand, who, in the political department, governs him who governs France and Italy.

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As early as 1800, Talleyrand determined to throw the odium of his own outrages against the law of nations upon the brother of his master. Lucien Bonaparte was that year sent Ambassador to Spain, but not sharing with the Minister the large profits of his appointment, his diplomatic career was but short. Joseph is as greedy and as ravenous as Lucien, but not so frank or indiscreet. Whether he knew or not of Talleyrand's immense gain by the pacification at Luneville in February, 1801, he did not neglect his own individual interest. The day previous to the signature of this treaty, he despatched a courier to the rich army contractor, Collot, acquainting him in secret of the issue of the negotiation, and ordering him at the same time to purchase six millions of livres—L 250,000—in the stocks on his account. On Joseph's arrival at Paris, Collot sent him the State bonds for the sum ordered, together with a very polite letter; but though he waited on the grand pacificator several times afterwards, all admittance was refused, until a *douceur* of one million of livres—nearly L 42,000—of Collot's private profit opened the door. In return, during the discussions between France and England in the summer of 1801, and in the spring of 1802, Collot was continued Joseph's private agent, and shared with his patron, within twelve months, a clear gain of thirty-two millions of livres.

Some of the secret articles of the Treaty of Luneville gave Austria, during the insurrection in Switzerland, in the autumn of 1802, an opportunity and a right to make representations against the interference of France; a circumstance which greatly displeased Bonaparte, who reproached Talleyrand for his want of foresight, and of having been outwitted by the Cabinet of Vienna. The Minister, on the very next day, laid before his master the correspondence that had passed between him and Joseph Bonaparte, during the negotiation concerning these secret articles, which were found to have been entirely proposed and settled by Joseph; who had been induced by his secretary and factotum (a creature of Talleyrand) to adopt sentiments for which that Minister had been paid, according to report, six hundred thousand livres—L25,000. Several other tricks have in the same manner been played upon Joseph, who, notwithstanding, has the modesty to consider himself (much to the advantage and satisfaction of Talleyrand) the first statesman in Europe, and the good fortune to be thought so by his brother Napoleon.

When a rupture with England was apprehended, in the spring of 1803, Talleyrand never signed a despatch that was not previously communicated to, and approved by Joseph, before its contents were sanctioned by Napoleon. This precaution chiefly continued him in place when Lord Whitworth left this capital,—a departure that incensed Napoleon to such a degree that he entirely forgot the dignity of his rank amidst his generals, a becoming deportment to the members of the diplomatic corps, and his duty to his mother and brothers, who all more or less experienced the effects of his violent passions. He thus accosted Talleyrand, who purposely arrived late at his circle:

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“Well! the English Ambassador is gone; and we must again go to war. Were my generals as great fools as some of my Ministers, I should despair indeed of the issue of my contest with these insolent islanders. Many believe that had I been more ably supported in my Cabinet, I should not have been under the necessity of taking the field, as a rupture might have been prevented.”

“Such, Citizen First Consul!” answered the trembling and bowing Minister, “is not the opinion of the Counsellor of State, Citizen Joseph Bonaparte.”

“Well, then,” said Napoleon, as recollecting himself, “England wishes for war, and she shall suffer for it. This shall be a war of extermination, depend upon it.”

The name of Joseph alone moderated Napoleon's fury, and changed its object. It is with him what the harp of David was with Saul. Talleyrand knows it, and is no loser by that knowledge. I must, however, in justice, say that, had Bonaparte followed his Minister's advice, and suffered himself to be entirely guided by his counsel, all hostilities with England at that time might have been avoided; her Government would have been lulled into security by the cession of Malta, and some commercial regulations, and her future conquest, during a time of peace, have been attempted upon plans duly organized, that might have ensured success. He never ceased to repeat, “Citizen First Consul! some few years longer peace with Great Britain, and the ‘Te Deums’ of modern Britons for the conquest and possession of Malta, will be considered by their children as the funeral hymns of their liberty and independence.”

It was upon this memorable occasion of Lord Whitworth's departure, that Bonaparte is known to have betrayed the most outrageous acts of passion; he rudely forced his mother from his closet, and forbade his own sisters to approach his person; he confined Madame Bonaparte for several hours to her chamber; he dismissed favourite generals; treated with ignominy members of his Council of State; and towards his physician, secretaries, and principal attendants, he committed unbecoming and disgraceful marks of personal outrage. I have heard it affirmed that, though her husband, when shutting her up in her dressing-room, put the key in his pocket, Madame Napoleon found means to resent the ungallant behaviour of her spouse, with the assistance of Madame Remusat.

### LETTER III.

*Paris, August, 1805.*

*My Lord:*—No act of Bonaparte's government has occasioned so many, so opposite, and so violent debates, among the remnants of revolutionary factions comprising his Senate and Council of State, as the introduction and execution of the religious concordat signed with the Pope. Joseph was here again the ostensible negotiator,

though he, on this as well as on former occasions, concluded nothing that had not been prepared and digested by Talleyrand.



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Bonaparte does not in general pay much attention to the opinions of others when they do not agree with his own views and interests, or coincide with his plans of reform or innovation; but having in his public career professed himself by turns an atheist and an infidel, the worshipper of Christ and of Mahomet, he could not decently silence those who, after deserting or denying the God of their forefathers and of their youth, continued constant and firm in their apostasy. Of those who deliberated concerning the restoration or exclusion of Christianity, and the acceptance or rejection of the concordat, Fouché, François de Nantz, Roederer, and Siegès were for the religion of Nature; Volney, Real, Chaptal, Bourrienne, and Lucien Bonaparte for atheism; and Portalis, Gregoire, Cambacères, Lebrun, Talleyrand, Joseph and Napoleon Bonaparte for Christianity. Besides the sentiments of these confidential counsellors, upwards of two hundred memoirs, for or against the Christian religion, were presented to the First Consul by uninvited and volunteer counsellors,—all differing as much from one another as the members of his own Privy Council.

Many persons do Madame Bonaparte, the mother, the honour of supposing that to her assiduous representations is principally owing the recall of the priests, and the restoration of the altars of Christ. She certainly is the most devout, or rather the most superstitious of her family, and of her name; but had not Talleyrand and Portalis previously convinced Napoleon of the policy of reestablishing a religion which, for fourteen centuries, had preserved the throne of the Bourbons from the machinations of republicans and other conspirators against monarchy, it is very probable that her representations would have been as ineffective as her piety or her prayers. So long ago as 1796 she implored the mercy of Napoleon for the Roman Catholics in Italy; and entreated him to spare the Pope and the papal territory, at the very time that his soldiers were laying waste and ravaging the legacy of Bologna and of Ravenna, both incorporated with his new-formed Cisalpine Republic; where one of his first acts of sovereignty, in the name of the then sovereign people, was the confiscation of Church lands and the sale of the estates of the clergy.

Of the prelates who with Joseph Bonaparte signed the concordat, the Cardinal Gonsalvi and the Bishop Bernier have, by their labours and intrigues, not a little contributed to the present Church establishment, in this country; and to them Napoleon is much indebted for the intrusion of the Bonaparte, dynasty, among the houses of sovereign Princes. The former, intended from his youth for the Church, sees neither honour in this world, nor hopes for any blessing in the next, but exclusively from its bosom and its doctrine. With capacity to figure as a country curate, he occupies the post of the chief Secretary of State to the Pope; and though nearly of the same age, but of a much weaker

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constitution than his Sovereign, he was ambitious enough to demand Bonaparte's promise of succeeding to the Papal See, and weak and wicked enough to wish and expect to survive a benefactor of a calmer mind and better health than himself. It was he who encouraged Bonaparte to require the presence of Pius VII. in France, and who persuaded this weak pontiff to undertake a journey that has caused so much scandal among the truly faithful; and which, should ever Austria regain its former supremacy in Italy, will send the present Pope to end his days in a convent, and make the successors of St. Peter what this Apostle was himself, a Bishop of Rome, and nothing more.

Bernier was a curate in La Vendee before the Revolution, and one of those priests who lighted the torch of civil war in that unfortunate country, under pretence of defending the throne of his King and the altars of his God. He not only possessed great popularity among the lower classes, but acquired so far the confidence of the Vendean chiefs that he was appointed one of the supreme and directing Council of the Royalists and Chouans. Even so late as the summer of 1799 he continued not only unsuspected, but trusted by the insurgents in the Western departments. In the winter, however, of the same year he had been gained over by Bonaparte's emissaries, and was seen at his levies in the Tuileries. It is stated that General Brune made him renounce his former principles, desert his former companions, and betray to the then First Consul of the French Republic the secrets of the friends of lawful monarchy, of the faithful subjects of Louis XVIII. His perfidy has been rewarded with one hundred and fifty thousand livres in ready money, with the see of Orleans, and with a promise of a cardinal's hat. He has also, with the Cardinals Gonsalvi, Caprara, Fesch, Cambaceres, and Mauri, Bonaparte's promise, and, of course, the expectation of the Roman tiara. He was one of the prelates who officiated at the late coronation, and is now confided in as a person who has too far committed himself with his legitimate Prince, and whose past treachery, therefore, answers for his future fidelity.

This religious concordat of the 10th September, 1801, as well as all other constitutional codes emating from revolutionary authorities, proscribes even in protecting. The professors and protectors of the religion of universal peace, benevolence, and forgiveness banish in this concordat from France forever the Cardinals Rohan and Montmorency, and the Bishop of Arras, whose dutiful attachment to their unfortunate Prince would, in better times and in a more just and generous nation, have been recompensed with distinctions, and honoured even by magnanimous foes.

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When Madame Napoleon was informed by her husband of the necessity of choosing her almoner and chaplain, and of attending regularly the Mass, she first fell a-laughing, taking it merely for a joke; the serious and severe looks, and the harsh and threatening expressions of the First Consul soon, however, convinced her how much she was mistaken. To evince her repentance, she on the very next day attended her mother-in-law to church, who was highly edified by the sudden and religious turn of her daughter, and did not fail to ascribe to the efficacious interference of one of her favourite saints this conversion of a profane sinner. But Napoleon was not the dupe of this church-going mummerly of his wife, whom he ordered his spies to watch; these were unfortunate enough to discover that she went to the Mass more to fill her appointments with her lovers than to pray to her Saviour; and that even by the side of her mother she read billets-doux and love-letters when that pious lady supposed that she read her prayers, because her eyes were fixed upon her breviary. Without relating to any one this discovery of his Josephine's frailties, Napoleon, after a violent connubial fracas and reprimand, and after a solitary confinement of her for six days, gave immediate orders to have the chapels of the Tuileries and of St. Cloud repaired; and until these were ready, Cardinal Cambaceres and Bernier, by turns, said the Mass, in her private apartments; where none but selected favourites or favoured courtiers were admitted. Madame Napoleon now never neglects the Mass, but if not accompanied by her husband is escorted by a guard of honour, among whom she knows that he has several agents watching her motions and her very looks.

In the month of June, 1803; I dined with Viscomte de Segur, and Joseph and Lucien Bonaparte were among the guests. The latter jocosely remarked with what facility the French Christians had suffered themselves to be hunted in and out of their temples, according to the fanaticism or policy of their rulers; which he adduced as a proof of the great progress of philosophy and toleration in France. A young officer of the party, Jacquemont, a relation of the former husband of the present Madame Lucien, observed that he thought it rather an evidence of the indifference of the French people to all religion; the consequence of the great havoc the tenets of infidelity and of atheism had made among the flocks of the faithful. This was again denied by Bonaparte's aide-de-camp, Savary, who observed that, had this been the case, the First Consul (who certainly was as well acquainted with the religious spirit of Frenchmen as anybody else) would not have taken the trouble to conclude a religious concordat, nor have been at the expense of providing for the clergy. To this assertion Joseph nodded an assent.

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When the dinner was over, De Segur took me to a window, expressing his uneasiness at what he called the imprudence of Jacquemont, who, he apprehended, from Joseph's silence and manner, would not escape punishment for having indirectly blamed both the restorer of religion and his plenipotentiary. These apprehensions were justified. On the next day Jacquemont received orders to join the colonial depot at Havre; but refusing to obey, by giving in his resignation as a captain, he was arrested, shut up in the Temple, and afterwards transported to Cayenne or Madagascar. His relatives and friends are still ignorant whether he is dead or alive, and what is or has been his place of exile. To a petition presented by Jacquemont's sister, Madame de Veaux, Joseph answered that "he never interfered with the acts of the haute police of his brother Napoleon's Government, being well convinced both of its justice and moderation."

### LETTER IV.

*Paris, August, 1805.*

*My Lord:*—That Bonaparte had, as far back as February, 1803 (when the King of Prussia proposed to Louis XVIII. the formal renunciation of his hereditary rights in favour of the First Consul), determined to assume the rank and title, with the power of a Sovereign, nobody can doubt. Had it not been for the war with England, he would, in the spring of that year, or twelve months earlier, have proclaimed himself Emperor of the French, and probably would have been acknowledged as such by all other Princes. To a man so vain and so impatient, so accustomed to command and to intimidate, this suspension of his favourite plan was a considerable disappointment, and not a little increased his bitter and irreconcilable hatred of Great Britain.

Here, as well as in foreign countries, the multitude pay homage only to Napoleon's uninterrupted prosperity; without penetrating or considering whether it be the consequence of chance or of well-digested plans; whether he owes his successes to his own merit or to a blind fortune. He asserted in his speech to the constitutional authorities, immediately after hostilities had commenced with England, that the war would be of short duration, and he firmly believed what he said. Had he by his gunboats, or by his intrigues or threats, been enabled to extort a second edition of the Peace of Amiens, after a warfare of some few months, all mouths would have been ready to exclaim, "Oh, the illustrious warrior! Oh, the profound politician!" Now, after three ineffectual campaigns on the coast, when the extravagance and ambition of our Government have extended the contagion of war over the Continent; when both our direct offers of peace, and the negotiations and mediations of our allies, have been declined by, or proved unavailing with, the Cabinet of St. James, the inconsistency, the ignorance, and the littleness of the fortunate great man seem to be not more remembered than the outrages

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and encroachments that have provoked Austria and Russia to take the field. Should he continue victorious, and be in a position to dictate another Peace of Luneville, which probably would be followed by another pacific overture to or from England, mankind will again be ready to call out, "Oh, the illustrious warrior! Oh, the profound politician! He foresaw, in his wisdom, that a Continental war was necessary to terrify or to subdue his maritime foe; that a peace with England could be obtained only in Germany; and that this war must be excited by extending the power of France on the other side of the Alps. Hence his coronation as a King of Italy; hence his incorporation of Parma and Genoa with France; and hence his donation of Piombino and Lucca to his brother-in-law, Bacchiochi!" Nowhere in history have I read of men of sense being so easily led astray as in our times, by confounding fortuitous events with consequences resulting from preconcerted plans and well-organized designs.

Only rogues can disseminate and fools believe that the disgrace of Moreau, and the execution of the Duc d'Enghien, of Pichegru, and Georges, were necessary as footsteps to Bonaparte's Imperial throne; and that without the treachery of Mehee de la Touche, and the conspiracy he pretended to have discovered, France would still have been ruled by a First Consul. It is indeed true, that this plot is to be counted (as the imbecility of Melas, which lost the battle of Marengo) among those accidents presenting themselves apropos to serve the favourite of fortune in his ambitious views; but without it, he would equally have been hailed an Emperor of the French in May, 1804. When he came from the coast, in the preceding winter, and was convinced of the impossibility of making any impression on the British Islands with his flotilla, he convoked his confidential Senators, who then, with Talleyrand, settled the Senatus Consultum which appeared five months afterwards. Mehee's correspondence with Mr. Drake was then known to him; but he and the Minister of Police were both unacquainted with the residence and arrival of Pichegru and Georges in France, and of their connection with Moreau; the particulars of which were first disclosed to them in the February following, when Bonaparte had been absent from his army of England six weeks. The assumption of the Imperial dignity procured him another decent opportunity of offering his olive-branch to those who had caused his laurels to wither, and by whom, notwithstanding his abuse, calumnies, and menaces, he would have been more proud to be saluted Emperor than by all the nations upon the Continent. His vanity, interest, and policy, all required this last degree of supremacy and elevation at that period.

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Bonaparte had so well penetrated the weak side of Moreau's character that, although he could not avoid doing justice to this general's military talents and exploits, he neither esteemed him as a citizen nor dreaded him as a rival. Moreau possessed great popularity; but so did Dumourier and Pichegru before him: and yet neither of them had found adherents enough to shake those republican governments with which they avowed themselves openly discontented, and against which they secretly plotted. I heard Talleyrand say, at Madame de Montlausier's, in the presence of fifty persons, "Napoleon Bonaparte had never anything to apprehend from General Moreau, and from his popularity, even at the head of an army. Dumourier, too, was at the head of an army when he revolted against the National Convention; but had he not saved himself by flight his own troops would have delivered him up to be punished as a traitor. Moreau, and his popularity, could only be dangerous to the Bonaparte dynasty were he to survive Napoleon, had not this Emperor wisely averted this danger." From this official declaration of Napoleon's confidential Minister, in a society of known anti-imperialists, I draw the conclusion that Moreau will never more, during the present reign, return to France. How very feeble, and how badly advised must this general have been, when, after his condemnation to two years' imprisonment, he accepted a perpetual exile, and renounced all hopes of ever again entering his own country. In the Temple, or in any other prison, if he had submitted to the sentence pronounced against him, he would have caused Bonaparte more uneasiness than when at liberty, and been more a point of rally to his adherents and friends than when at his palace of Grosbois, because compassion and pity must have invigorated and sharpened their feelings.

If report be true, however, he did not voluntarily exchange imprisonment for exile; racks were shown him; and by the act of banishment was placed a poisonous draught. This report gains considerable credit when it is remembered that, immediately after his condemnation, Moreau furnished his apartments in the Temple in a handsome manner, so as to be lodged well, if not comfortably, with his wife and child, whom, it is said, he was not permitted to see before he had accepted Bonaparte's proposal of transportation.

It may be objected to this supposition that the man in power, who did not care about the barefaced murder of the Duc d'Enghien, and the secret destruction of Pichegru, could neither much hesitate, nor be very conscientious about adding Moreau to the number of his victims. True, but the assassin in authority is also generally a politician. The untimely end of the Duc d'Enghien and of Pichegru was certainly lamented and deplored by the great majority of the French people; but though they had many who pitied their fate, but few had any relative interest to avenge it; whilst in the assassination of Moreau,



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every general, every officer, and every soldier of his former army, might have read the destiny reserved for himself by that chieftain, who did not conceal his preference of those who had fought under him in Italy and Egypt, and his mistrust and jealousy of those who had vanquished under Moreau in Germany; numbers of whom had already perished at St. Domingo, or in the other colonies, or were dispersed in separate and distant garrisons of the mother country. It has been calculated that of eighty-four generals who made, under Moreau, the campaign of 1800, and who survived the Peace of Lundville, sixteen had been killed or died at St. Domingo, four at Guadeloupe, ten in Cayenne, nine at Ile de France, and eleven at l'Ile Reunion and in Madagascar. The mortality among the officers and men has been in proportion.

An anecdote is related of Pichegru, which does honour to the memory of that unfortunate general. Fouche paid him a visit in prison the day before his death, and offered him "Bonaparte's commission as a Field-marshal, and a diploma as a grand officer of the Legion of Honour, provided he would turn informer against Moreau, of whose treachery against himself in 1797 he was reminded. On the other hand, he was informed that, in consequence of his former denials, if he persisted in his refractory conduct, he should never more appear before any judge, but that the affairs of State and the safety of the country required that he should be privately despatched in his gaol."

"So," answered this virtuous and indignant warrior, "you will spare my life only upon condition that I prove myself unworthy to live. As this is the case, my choice is made without hesitation; I am prepared to become your victim, but I will never be numbered among your accomplices. Call in your executioners; I am ready to die as I have lived, a man of honour, and an irreproachable citizen."

Within twenty-four hours after this answer, Pichegru was no more.

That the Duc d'Enghien was shot on the night of the 21st of March, 1804, in the wood or in the ditch of the castle at Vincennes, is admitted even by Government; but who really were his assassins is still unknown. Some assert that he was shot by the grenadiers of Bonaparte's Italian guard; others say, by a detachment of the Gendarmes d'Elite; and others again, that the men of both these corps refused to fire, and that General Murat, hearing the troops murmur, and fearing their mutiny, was himself the executioner of this young and innocent Prince of the House of Bourbon, by riding up to him and blowing out his brains with a pistol. Certain it is that Murat was the first, and Louis Bonaparte the second in command, on this dreadful occasion.

## LETTER V.

*Paris, August, 1805.*

*My Lord:*—Thanks to Talleyrand's political emigration, our Government has never been in ignorance of the characters and foibles of the leading members among the emigrants in England. Otto, however, finished their picture, but added, some new groups to those delineated by his predecessor. It was according to his plan that the expedition of Mehee de la Touche was undertaken, and it was in following his instructions that the campaign of this traitor succeeded so well in Great Britain.



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Under the Ministry of Vergennes, of Montmorin, and of Delessart, Mehee had been employed as a spy in Russia, Sweden, and Poland, and acquitted himself perfectly to the satisfaction of his masters. By some accident or other, Delessart discovered, however, in December, 1791, that he had, while pocketing the money of the Cabinet of Versailles, sold its secrets to the Cabinet of St. Petersburg. He, of course, was no longer trusted as a spy, and therefore turned a Jacobin, and announced himself to Brissot as a persecuted patriot. All the calumnies against this Minister in Brissot's daily paper, *Le Patriote Francois*, during January, February, and March, 1792, were the productions of Mehee's malicious heart and able pen. Even after they had sent Delessart a State prisoner to Orleans, his inveteracy continued, and in September the same year he went to Versailles to enjoy the sight of the murder of his former master. Some go so far as to say that the assassins were headed by this monster, who aggravated cruelty by insult, and informed the dying Minister of the hands that stabbed him, and to whom he was indebted for a premature death.

To these and other infamous and barbarous deeds, Talleyrand was not a stranger when he made Mehee his secret agent, and entrusted him with the mission to England. He took, therefore, such steps that neither his confidence could be betrayed, nor his money squandered. Mehee had instructions how to proceed in Great Britain, but he was ignorant of the object Government had in view by his mission; and though large sums were promised if successful, and if he gave satisfaction by his zeal and discretion, the money advanced him was a mere trifle, and barely sufficient to keep him from want. He was, therefore, really distressed, when he fixed upon some necessitous and greedy emigrants for his instruments to play on the credulity of the English Ministers in some of their unguarded moments. Their generosity in forbearing to avenge upon the deluded French exiles the slur attempted to be thrown upon their official capacity, and the ridicule intended to be cast on their private characters, has been much approved and admired here by all liberal-minded persons; but it has also much disappointed Bonaparte and Talleyrand, who expected to see these emigrants driven from the only asylum which hospitality has not refused to their misfortunes and misery.

Mehee had been promised by Talleyrand double the amount of the sums which he could swindle from your Government; but though he did more mischief to your country than was expected in this, and though he proved that he had pocketed upwards of ten thousand English guineas, the wages of his infamy, when he hinted about the recompense he expected here, Durant, Talleyrand's chef du bureau, advised him, as a friend, not to remind the Minister of his presence in France, as Bonaparte never pardoned a Septembrizer, and the English guineas he possessed might be claimed and seized as national

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property, to compensate some of the sufferers by the unprovoked war with England. In vain did he address himself to his fellow labourer in revolutionary plots, the Counsellor of State, Real, who had been the intermedium between him and Talleyrand, when he was first enlisted among the secret agents; instead of receiving money he heard threats; and, therefore, with as good grace as he could, he made the best of his disappointment; he sported a carriage, kept a mistress, went to gambling-houses, and is now in a fair way to be reduced to the status quo before his brilliant exploits in Great Britain.

Real, besides the place of a Counsellor of State, occupies also the office of a director of the internal police. Having some difference with my landlord, I was summoned to appear before him at the prefecture of the police. My friend, M. de Sab-----r, formerly a counsellor of the Parliament at Rouen, happened to be with me when the summons was delivered, and offered to accompany me, being acquainted with Real. Though thirty persons were waiting in the antechamber at our arrival, no sooner was my friend's name announced than we were admitted, and I obtained not only more justice than I expected, or dared to claim, but an invitation to Madame Real's tea-party the same evening. This justice and this politeness surprised me, until my friend showed me an act of forgery in his possession, committed by Real in 1788, when an advocate of the Parliament, and for which the humanity of my friend alone prevented him from being struck off the rolls, and otherwise punished.

As I conceived my usual societies and coteries could not approve my attendance at the house of such a personage, I was intent upon sending an apology to Madame Real. My friend, however, assured me that I should meet in her salon persons of all classes and of all ranks, and many I little expected to see associating together. I went late, and found the assembly very numerous; at the upper part of the hall were seated Princesses Joseph and Louis Bonaparte, with Madame Fouche, Madame Roederer, the *ci-devant* Duchesse de Fleury, and Marquise de Clermont. They were conversing with M. Mathew de Montmorency, the contractor (a *ci-devant* lackey) Collot, the *ci-devant* Duc de Fitz-James, and the legislator Martin, a *ci-devant* porter: several groups in the several apartments were composed of a similar heterogeneous mixture of *ci-devant* nobles and *ci-devant* valets, of *ci-devant* Princesses, Marchionesses, Countesses and Baronesses, and of *ci-devant* chambermaids, mistresses and *poissardes*. Round a gambling-table, by the side of the *ci-devant* Bishop of Autun, Talleyrand, sat Madame Hounguenin, whose husband, a *ci-devant* shoeblack, has, by the purchase of national property, made a fortune of nine millions of livres—£375,000. Opposite them were seated the *ci-devant* Prince de Chalais, and the present Prince Cambaceres with the *ci-devant* Comtesse de Beauvais, and Madame Fauve, the

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daughter of a fishwoman, and the wife of a tribune, a ci-devant barber. In another room, the Bavarian Minister Cetto was conferring with the spy Mehee de la Touche; but observed at a distance by Fouche's secretary, Desmarets, the son of a tailor at Fontainebleau, and for years a known spy. When I was just going to retire, the handsome Madame Gillot, and her sister, Madame de Soubray, joined me. You have perhaps known them in England, where, before their marriage, they resided for five years with their parents, the Marquis and Marquise de Courtin; and were often admired by the loungers in Bond Street. The one married for money, Gillot, a ci-devant drummer in the French Guard, but who, since the Revolution, has, as a general; made a large fortune; and the other united herself to a ci-devant Abbe, from love; but both are now divorced from their husbands, who passed them without any notice while they were chatting with me. I was handing Madame Gillot to her carriage, when, from the staircase, Madame de Soubray called to us not to quit her, as she was pursued by a man whom she detested, and wished to avoid. We had hardly turned round, when Mehee offered her his arm, and she exclaimed with indignation, "How dare you, infamous wretch, approach me, when I have forbidden you ever to speak to me? Had you been reduced to become a highwayman, or a housebreaker, I might have pitied your infamy; but a spy is a villain who aggravates guilt by cowardice and baseness, and can inspire no noble soul with any other sentiment but abhorrence, and the most sovereign contempt." Without being disconcerted, Mehee silently returned to the company, amidst bursts of laughter from fifty servants, and as many masters, waiting for their carriages. M. de Cetto was among the latter, but, though we all fixed our eyes steadfastly upon him, no alteration could be seen on his diplomatic countenance: his face must surely be made of brass or his heart of marble.

## LETTER VI.

*Paris, August, 1805.*

*My Lord:*—The day on which Madame Napoleon Bonaparte was elected an Empress of the French, by the constitutional authorities of her husband's Empire, was, contradictory as it may seem, one of the most uncomfortable in her life. After the show and ceremony of the audience and of the drawing-room were over, she passed it entirely in tears, in her library, where her husband shut her up and confined her.

The discipline of the Court of St. Cloud is as singular as its composition is unique. It is, by the regulation of Napoleon, entirely military. From the Empress to her lowest chambermaid, from the Emperor's first aide-de-camp down to his youngest page, any slight offence or negligence is punished with confinement, either public or private. In the former case the culprits are shut up in their own apartments, but in the latter they are ordered into one of the small rooms, constructed in the dark galleries at the Tuileries

and St. Cloud, near the kitchens, where they are guarded day and night by sentries, who answer for their persons, and that nobody visits them.

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When, on the 28th of March, 1804, the Senate had determined on offering Bonaparte the Imperial dignity, he immediately gave his wife full powers, with order to form her household of persons who, from birth and from their principles, might be worthy, and could be trusted to encompass the Imperial couple. She consulted Madame Remusat, who, in her turn, consulted her friend De Segur, who also consulted his *bonne amie*, Madame de Montbrune. This lady determined that if Bonaparte and his wife were desirous to be served, or waited on, by persons above them by ancestry and honour, they should pay liberally for such sacrifices. She was not therefore idle, but wishing to profit herself by the pride of upstart vanity, she had at first merely reconnoitred the ground, or made distant overtures to those families of the ancient French nobility who had been ruined by the Revolution, and whose minds she expected to have found on a level with their circumstances. These, however, either suspecting her intent and her views, or preferring honest poverty to degrading and disgraceful splendour, had started objections which she was not prepared to encounter. Thus the time passed away; and when, on the 18th of the following May, the Senate proclaimed Napoleon Bonaparte Emperor of the French, not a Chamberlain was ready to attend him, nor a Maid of Honour to wait on his wife.

On the morning of the 20th May, the day fixed for the constitutional republican authorities to present their homage as subjects, Napoleon asked his Josephine who were the persons, of both sexes, she had engaged, according to his *carte blanche* given her, as necessary and as unavoidable decorations of the drawing-room of an Emperor and Empress, as thrones and as canopies of State. She referred him to Madame Remusat, who, though but half-dressed, was instantly ordered to appear before him. This lady avowed that his grand master of the ceremonies, De Segur, had been entrusted by her with the whole arrangement, but that she feared that he had not yet been able to complete the full establishment of the Imperial Court. The aide-de-camp Rapp was then despatched after De Segur, who, as usual, presented himself smiling and cringing.

"Give me the list," said Napoleon, "of the ladies and gentlemen you have no doubt engaged for our household."

"May it please Your Majesty," answered De Segur, trembling with fear, "I humbly supposed that they were not requisite before the day of Your Majesty's coronation."

"You supposed!" retorted Napoleon. "How dare you suppose differently from our commands? Is the Emperor of the Great Nation not to be encompassed with a more numerous retinue, or with more lustre, than a First Consul? Do you not see the immense difference between the Sovereign Monarch of an Empire, and the citizen chief magistrate of a commonwealth? Are there not starving nobles in my empire enough to furnish all the Courts in Europe with attendants, courtiers, and valets? Do you not believe that with a nod, with a single nod, I might have them all prostrated before my throne? What can, then, have occasioned this impertinent delay?"

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“Sire!” answered De Segur, “it is not the want of numbers, but the difficulty of the choice among them. I will never recommend a single individual upon whom I cannot depend; or who, on some future day, may expose me to the greatest of all evils, the displeasure of my Prince.”

“But,” continued Napoleon, “what is to be done to-day that I may augment the number of my suite, and by it impose upon the gaping multitude and the attending deputations?”—“Command,” said De Segur, “all the officers of Your Majesty’s staff, and of the staff of the Governor of Paris, General Murat, to surround Your Majesty’s sacred person, and order them to accoutre themselves in the most shining and splendid manner possible. The presence of so many military men will also, in a political point of view, be useful. It will lessen the pretensions of the constituted authorities, by telling them indirectly, ‘It is not to your Senatus Consultum, to your decrees, or to your votes, that I am indebted for my present Sovereignty; I owe it exclusively to my own merit and valour, and to the valour of my brave officers and men, to whose arms I trust more than to your counsels.’”

This advice obtained Napoleon’s entire approbation, and was followed. De Segur was permitted to retire, but when Madame Remusat made a curtsey also to leave the room, she was stopped with his terrible ‘aux arrets’ and left under the care and responsibility of his aide-de-camp, Lebrun, who saw her safe into her room, at the door of which he placed two grenadiers. Napoleon then went out, ordering his wife, at her peril, to be in time, ready and brilliantly dressed, for the drawing-room.

Dreading the consequences of her husband’s wrath, Madame Napoleon was not only punctual, but so elegantly and tastefully decorated with jewels and ornaments that even those of her enemies or rivals who refused her beauty, honour, and virtue, allowed her taste and dignity. She thought that even in the regards of Napoleon she read a tacit approbation. When all the troublesome bustle of the morning was gone through, and when Senators, legislators, tribunes, and prefects had complimented her as a model of female perfection, on a signal from her husband she accompanied him in silence through six different apartments before he came to her library, where he surlily ordered her to enter and to remain until further orders.

“What have I done, Sire! to deserve such treatment?” exclaimed Josephine, trembling.

“If,” answered Napoleon, “Madame Remusat, your favourite, has made a fool of you, this is only to teach you that you shall not make a fool of me: Had not De Segur fortunately for him—had the ingenuity to extricate us from the dilemma into which my confidence and dependence on you had brought me, I should have made a fine figure indeed on the first day of my emperorship. Have patience, Madame; you have plenty of books to divert you, but you must remain where you are until I am inclined to release you.” So saying, Napoleon locked the door and put the key in his pocket.

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It was near two o'clock in the afternoon when she was thus shut up. Remembering the recent flattery of her courtiers, and comparing it with the unfeeling treatment of her husband, she found herself so much the more unfortunate, as the expressions of the former were regarded by her as praise due to her merit, while the unkindness of the latter was unavailingly resented as the undeserved oppression of a capricious despot.

Business, or perhaps malice, made Napoleon forget to send her any dinner; and when, at eight o'clock, his brothers and sisters came, according to invitation, to take tea, he said coldly:

"Apropos, I forgot it. My wife has not dined yet; she is busy, I suppose, in her philosophical meditations in her study."

Madame Louis Bonaparte, her daughter, flew directly towards the study, and her mother could scarcely, for her tears, inform her that—she was a prisoner, and that her husband was her gaoler.

"Oh, Sire!" said Madame Louis, returning, "even this remarkable day is a day of mourning for my poor mother!"

"She deserves worse," answered Napoleon, "but, for your sake, she shall be released; here is the key, let her out."

Madame Napoleon was, however, not in a situation to wish to appear before her envious brothers and sisters-in-law. Her eyes were so swollen with crying that she could hardly see; and her tears had stained those Imperial robes which the unthinking and inconsiderate no doubt believed a certain preservative against sorrow and affliction. At nine o'clock, however, another aide-de-camp of her husband presented himself, and gave her the choice either to accompany him back to the study or to join the family party of the Bonapartes.

In deploring her mother's situation, Madame Louis Bonaparte informed her former governess, Madame Cam——n, of these particulars, which I heard her relate at Madame de M——r's, almost verbatim as I report them to you. Such, and other scenes, nearly of the same description, are neither rare nor singular, in the most singular Court that ever existed in civilized Europe.

## LETTER VII.

*Paris*, August, 1805.

*My Lord*:—Though Government suffer a religious, or, rather, anti-religious liberty of the Press, the authors who libel or ridicule the Christian, particularly the Roman Catholic, religion, are excluded from all prospect of advancement, or if in place, are not trusted or

liked. Cardinal Caprara, the nuncio of the Pope, proposed last year, in a long memorial, the same severe restrictions on the discussions or publications in religious matters as were already ordered in those concerning politics. But both Bonaparte and his Minister in the affairs of the Church, Portalis, refused the introduction of what they called a tyranny on the conscience. Caprara then addressed himself to the ex-Bishop Talleyrand, who, on this occasion, was more explicit than he generally is.



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“Bonaparte,” said he, “rules not only over a fickle, but a gossiping (bavard) people, whom he has prudently forbidden all conversation and writing concerning government of the State. They would soon (accustomed as they are, since the Revolution, to verbal and written debates) be tired of talking about fine weather or about the opera. To occupy them and their attention, some ample subject of diversion was necessary, and religion was surrendered to them at discretion; because, enlightened as the world now is, even athiests or Christian fanatics can do but little harm to society. They may spend rivers of ink, but they will be unable to shed a drop of blood.”

“True,” answered the Cardinal, “but only to a certain degree. The licentiousness of the Press, with regard to religious matters, does it not also furnish infidelity with new arms to injure the faith? And have not the horrors from which France has just escaped proved the danger and evil consequences of irreligion, and the necessity of encouraging and protecting Christianity? By the recall of the clergy, and by the religious concordat, Bonaparte has shown himself convinced of this truth.”

“So he is,” interrupted Talleyrand; “but he abhors intoleration and persecution” (not in politics). “I shall, however, to please Your Eminence, lay the particulars of your conversation before him.”

Some time afterwards, when Talleyrand and Bonaparte must have agreed about some new measure to indirectly chastise impious writers, the Senators Garat, Jaucourt, Roederer, and Demeunier, four of the members of the senatorial commission of the liberty of the Press, were sent for, and remained closeted with Napoleon, his Minister Portalis, and Cardinal Caprara for two hours. What was determined on this occasion has not transpired, as even the Cardinal, who is not the most discreet person when provoked, and his religious zeal gets the better of his political prudence, has remained silent, though seemingly contented.

Two rather insignificant authors, of the name of Varennes and Beaujou, who published some scandalous libels on Christianity, have since been taken up, and after some months’ imprisonment in the Temple been condemned to transportation to Cayenne for life,—not as infidels or atheists, but as conspirators against the State, in consequence of some unguarded expressions which prejudice or ill-will alone would judge connected with politics. Nothing is now permitted to be printed against religion but with the author’s name; but on affixing his name, he may abuse the worship and Gospel as much as he pleases. Since the example of severity alluded to above, however, this practice is on the decline. Even Pigault-Lebrun, a popular but immoral novel writer, narrowly escaped lately a trip to Cayenne for one of his blasphemous publications, and owes to the protection of Madame Murat exclusively that he was not sent to keep Varennes and Beaujou company. Some years ago, when Madame Murat was neither so great nor so rich as at present, he presented her with a copy of his works, and she had been unfashionable enough not only to remember the compliment, but wished to

return it by nominating him her private secretary; which, however, the veto of Napoleon prevented.

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Of Napoleon Bonaparte's religious sentiments, opinions are not divided in France. The influence over him of the petty, superstitious Cardinal Caprara is, therefore, inexplicable. This prelate has forced from him assent to transactions which had been refused both to his mother and his brother Joseph, who now often employ the Cardinal with success, where they either dare not or will not show themselves. It is true His Eminence is not easily rebuked, but returns to the charge unabashed by new repulses; and he obtains by teasing more than by persuasion; but a man by whom Bonaparte suffers, himself to be teased with impunity is no insignificant favourite, particularly when, like this Cardinal, he unites cunning with devotion, craft with superstition; and is as accessible to corruption as tormented by ambition.

As most ecclesiastical promotions passed through his pure and disinterested hands, Madame Napoleon, Talleyrand, and Portalis, who also wanted some douceurs for their extraordinary expenses, united together last spring to remove him from France. Napoleon was cajoled to nominate him a grand almoner of the Kingdom of Italy, and the Cardinal set out for Milan. He was, however, artful enough to convince his Sovereign of the propriety of having his grand almoner by his side; and he is, therefore, obliged to this intrigue of his enemies that he now disposes of the benefices in the Kingdom of Italy, as well as those of the French Empire.

During the Pope's residence in this capital, His Holiness often made use of Cardinal Caprara in his secret negotiations with Bonaparte; and whatever advantages were obtained by the Roman Pontiff for the Gallican Church His Eminence almost extorted; for he never desisted, where his interest or pride were concerned, till he had succeeded. It is said that one day last January, after having been for hours exceedingly teasing and troublesome, Bonaparte lost his patience, and was going to treat His Eminence as he frequently does his relatives, his Ministers, and counsellors,—that is to say, to kick him from his presence; but suddenly recollecting himself, he said: "Cardinal, remain here in my closet until my return, when I shall have more time to listen to what you have to relate." It was at ten o'clock in the morning, and a day of great military audience and grand review. In going out he put the key in his pocket, and told the guards in his antechamber to pay no attention if they should hear any noise in his closet.

It was dark before the review was over, and Bonaparte had a large party to dinner. When his guests retired, he went into his wife's drawing-room, where one of the Pope's chamberlains waited on him with the information that His Holiness was much alarmed about the safety of Cardinal Caprara, of whom no account could be obtained, even with the assistance of the police, to whom application had been made, since His Eminence had so suddenly disappeared.

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"Oh! how absent I am," answered Napoleon, as with surprise; "I entirely forgot that I left the Cardinal in my closet this morning. I will go myself and make an apology for my blunder."

His Eminence, quite exhausted, was found fast asleep; but no sooner was he a little recovered than he interrupted Bonaparte's affected apology with the repetition of the demand he had made in the morning; and so well was Napoleon pleased with him, for neglecting his personal inconvenience only to occupy himself with the affairs of his Sovereign, that he consented to what was asked, and in laying his hand upon the shoulders of the prelate, said:

"Faithful Minister! were every Prince as well served as your Sovereign is by you, many evils might be prevented, and much good effected."

The same evening Duroc brought him, as a present, a snuffbox with Bonaparte's portrait, set round with diamonds, worth one thousand louis d'or. The adventures of this day certainly did not lessen His Eminence in the favour of Napoleon or of Pius VII.

Last November, some not entirely unknown persons intended to amuse themselves at the Cardinal's expense. At seven o'clock one evening, a young Abbe presented himself at the Cardinal's house, Hotel de Montmorin, Rue Plumet, as by appointment of His Eminence, and was, by his secretary, ushered into the study and asked to wait there. Hardly half an hour afterwards, two persons, pretending to be agents of the police, arrived just as the Cardinal's carriage had stopped. They informed him that the woman introduced into his house in the dress of an Abby was connected with a gang of thieves and housebreakers, and demanded his permission to arrest her. He protested that, except the wife of his porter, no woman in any dress whatever could be in his house, and that, to convince themselves, they were very welcome to accompany his valet-de-chambre into every room they wished to see. To the great surprise of his servant, a very pretty girl was found in the bed of His Eminence's bed-chamber, which joined his study, who, though the pretended police agents insisted on her getting up, refused, under pretence that she was there waiting for her 'bon ami', the Cardinal.

His Eminence was no sooner told of this than he shut the gate of his house, after sending his secretary to the commissary of police of the section. In the meantime, both the police agents and the girl entreated him to let them out, as the whole was merely a badinage; but he remained inflexible, and they were all three carried by the real police commissary to prison.

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Upon a complaint made by His Eminence to Bonaparte, the Police Minister, Fouche, received orders to have those who had dared thus to violate the sacred character of the representative of the Holy Pontiff immediately, and without further ceremony, transported to Cayenne. The Cardinal demanded, and obtained, a process verbal of what had occurred, and of the sentence on the culprits, to be laid before his Sovereign. As Eugene de Beauharnais interested himself so much for the individuals involved in this affair as both to implore Bonaparte's pardon and the Cardinal's interference for them, many were inclined to believe that he was in the secret, if not the contriver of this unfortunate joke. This supposition gained credit when, after all his endeavours to save them proved vain, he sent them seventy-two livres L 3,000—to Rochefort, that they might, on their arrival at Cayenne, be able to buy a plantation. He procured them also letters to the Governor, Victor Hughes, recommending that they should be treated differently from other transported persons.

### LETTER VIII.

*Paris, August, 1805.*

*My Lord:*—I was particularly attentive in observing the countenances and demeanour of the company at the last levee which Madame Napoleon Bonaparte held, previous to her departure with her husband to meet the Pope at Fontainebleau. I had heard from good authority that “to those whose propensities were known, Duroc’s information that the Empress was visible was accompanied with a kind of admonitory or courtly hint, that the strictest decency in dress and manners, and a conversation chaste, and rather of an unusually modest turn, would be highly agreeable to their Sovereigns, in consideration of the solemn occasion of a Sovereign Pontiff’s arrival in France,—an occurrence that had not happened for centuries, and probably would not happen for centuries to come.” I went early, and was well rewarded for my punctuality.

There came the Senator Fouche, handing his amiable and chaste spouse, walking with as much gravity as formerly, when a friar, he marched in a procession. Then presented themselves the Senators Sieyes and Roederer, with an air as composed as if the former had still been an Abbe and the confessor of the latter. Next came Madame Murat, whom three hours before I had seen in the Bois de Boulogne in all the disgusting display of fashionable nakedness, now clothed and covered to her chin. She was followed by the pious Madame Le Clerc, now Princesse Borghese, who was sighing deeply and loudly. After her came limping the godly Talleyrand, dragging his pure moiety by his side, both with downcast and edifying looks. The Christian patriots, Gravina and Lima, Dreyer and Beust, Dalberg and Cetto, Malsburgh and Pappenheim, with the Catholic Schimmelpenninck and Mohammed Said Haleb Effendi,—all presented themselves as penitent sinners imploring absolutions, after undergoing mortifications.

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But it would become tedious and merely a repetition, were I to depict separately the figures and characters of all the personages at this politico-comical masquerade. Their conversation was, however, more uniform, more contemptible, and more laughable, than their accoutrements and grimaces were ridiculous. To judge from what they said, they belonged no longer to this world; all their thoughts were in heaven, and they considered themselves either on the borders of eternity or on the eve of the day of the Last Judgment. The truly devout Madame Napoleon spoke with rapture of martyrs and miracles, of the Mass and of the vespers, of Agnuses and relics of Christ her Saviour, and of Pius VII., His vicar. Had not her enthusiasm been interrupted by the enthusiastic commentaries of her mother-in-law, I saw every mouth open ready to cry out, as soon as she had finished, "Amen! Amen! Amen!"

Napoleon had placed himself between the old Cardinal de Bellois and the not young Cardinal Bernier, so as to prevent the approach of any profane sinner or unrepentant infidel. Round him and their clerical chiefs, all the curates and grand vicars, almoners and chaplains of the Court, and the capitals of the Princess, Princesses, and grand officers of State, had formed a kind of cordon. "Had," said the young General Kellerman to me, "Bonaparte always been encompassed by troops of this description, he might now have sung hymns as a saint in heaven, but he would never have reigned as an Emperor upon earth." This indiscreet remark was heard by Louis Bonaparte, and on the next morning Kellerman received orders to join the army in Hanover, where he was put under the command of a general younger than himself. He would have been still more severely punished, had not his father, the Senator (General Kellerman), been in so great favour at the Court of St. Cloud, and so much protected by Duroc, who had made, in 1792, his first campaign under this officer, then commander-in-chief of the army of the Ardennes.

When this devout assembly separated, which was by courtesy an hour earlier than usual, I expected every moment to hear a chorus of horse-laughs, because I clearly perceived that all of them were tired of their assumed parts, and, with me, inclined to be gay at the expense of their neighbours. But they all remembered also that they were watched by spies, and that an imprudent look or an indiscreet word, gaiety instead of gravity, noise when silence was commanded, might be followed by an airing in the wilderness of Cayenne. They, therefore, all called out, "Coachman, to our hotel!" as if to say, "We will to-day, in compliment to the new-born Christian zeal of our Sovereigns, finish our evening as piously as we have begun it." But no sooner were they out of sight of the palace than they hurried to the scenes of dissipation, all endeavouring, in the debauchery and excesses so natural to them, to forget their unnatural affectation and hypocrisy.

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Well you know the standard of the faith even of the members of the Bonaparte family. Two days before this Christian circle at Madame Napoleon's, Madame de Chateaufort, with three other ladies, visited the Princesse Borghese. Not seeing a favourite parrot they had often previously admired, they inquired what was become of it.

"Oh, the poor creature!" answered the Princess; "I have disposed of it, as well as of two of my monkeys. The Emperor has obliged me to engage an almoner and two chaplains, and it would be too extravagant in me to keep six useless animals in my hotel. I must now submit to hearing the disgusting howlings of my almoner instead of the entertaining chat of my parrot, and to see the awkward bows and kneelings of my chaplains instead of the amusing capering of my monkeys. Add to this, that I am forced to transform into a chapel my elegant and tasty boudoir, on the ground-floor, where I have passed so many delicious tete-a-tetes. Alas! what a change! what a shocking fashion, that we are now all again to be Christians!"

### LETTER IX.

*Paris, August, 1805.*

*My Lord:*—Notwithstanding what was inserted in our public prints to the contrary, the reception Bonaparte experienced from his army of England in June last year, the first time he presented himself to them as an Emperor, was far from such as flattered either his vanity or views. For the first days, some few solitary voices alone accompanied the "Vive l'Empereur!" of his generals, and of his aides-de-camp. This indifference, or, as he called it, mutinous spirit, was so much the more provoking as it was unexpected. He did not, as usual, ascribe it to the emissaries or gold of England, but to the secret adherents of Pichegru and Moreau amongst the brigades or divisions that had served under these unfortunate generals. He ordered, in consequence, his Minister Berthier to make out a list of all these corps. Having obtained this, he separated them by ordering some to Italy, others to Holland, and the rest to the frontiers of Spain and Germany. This act of revenge or jealousy was regarded, both by the officers and men, as a disgrace and as a doubt thrown out against their fidelity, and the murmur was loud and general. In consequence of this, some men were shot, and many more arrested.

Observing, however, that severity had not the desired effect, Bonaparte suddenly changed his conduct, released the imprisoned, and rewarded with the crosses of his Legion of Honour every member of the so lately suspected troops who had ever performed any brilliant or valorous exploits under the proscribed generals. He even incorporated among his own bodyguards and guides men who had served in the same capacity under these rival commanders, and numbers of their children were received in the Prytanées and military free schools. The enthusiastic exclamation that soon greeted his ears convinced him that he had struck upon the right string of his soldiers' hearts. Men who, some few days before, wanted only the signal of a leader to cut an

Emperor they hated to pieces, would now have contended who should be foremost to shed their last drop of blood for a chief they adored.



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This affected liberality towards the troops who had served under his rivals roused some slight discontent among those to whom he was chiefly indebted for his own laurels. But if he knew the danger of reducing to despair slighted men with arms in their hands, he also was well aware of the equal danger of enduring licentiousness or audacity among troops who had, on all occasions, experienced his preference and partiality; and he gave a sanguinary proof of his opinion on this subject at the grand parade of the 12th of July, 1804, preparatory to the grand fete of the 14th.

A grenadier of the 21st Regiment (which was known in Italy under the name of the Terrible), in presetting arms to him, said: "Sire! I have served under you four campaigns, fought under you in ten battles or engagements; have received in your service seven wounds, and am not a member of your Legion of Honour; whilst many who served under Moreau, and are not able to show a scratch from an enemy, have that distinction."

Bonaparte instantly ordered this man to be shot by his own comrades in the front of the regiment. The six grenadiers selected to fire, seeming to hesitate, he commanded the whole corps to lay down their arms, and after being disbanded, to be sent to the different colonial depots. To humiliate them still more, the mutinous grenadier was shot by the gendarmes. When the review was over, "Vive l'Empereur!" resounded from all parts, and his popularity among the troops has since rather increased than diminished. Nobody can deny that Bonaparte possesses a great presence of mind, an undaunted firmness, and a perfect knowledge of the character of the people over whom he reigns. Could but justice and humanity be added to his other qualities, but, unfortunately for my nation, I fear that the answer of General Mortier to a remark of a friend of mine on this subject is not problematical: "Had," said this Imperial favourite, "Napoleon Bonaparte been just and humane, he would neither have vanquished nor reigned."

All these scenes occurred before Bonaparte, seated on a throne, received the homage, as a Sovereign, of one hundred and fifty thousand warriors, who now bowed as subjects, after having for years fought for liberty and equality, and sworn hatred to all monarchical institutions; and who hitherto had saluted and obeyed him only as the first among equals. What an inconsistency! The splendour and show that accompanied him everywhere, the pageantry and courtly pomp that surrounded him, and the decorations of the stars and ribands of the Legion of Honour, which he distributed with bombastic speeches among troops—to whom those political impositions and social cajoleries were novelties—made such an impression upon them, that had a bridge been then fixed between Calais and Dover, brave as your countrymen are, I should have trembled for the liberty and independence of your country. The heads and imagination of the soldiers, I know from the best authority, were then so exalted that, though they might have been cut to pieces, they could never have been defeated or routed. I pity our children when I reflect that their tranquillity and happiness will, perhaps, depend upon such a corrupt and unprincipled people of soldiers,—easy tools in the hands of every impostor or mountebank.

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The lively satisfaction which Bonaparte must have felt at the pinnacle of grandeur where fortune had placed him was not, however, entirely unmixed with uneasiness and vexation. Except at Berlin, in all the other great Courts the Emperor of the French was still Monsieur Bonaparte; and your country, of the subjugation of which he had spoken with such lightness and such inconsideration, instead of dreading, despised his boasts and defied his threats. Indeed, never before did the Cabinet of St. James more opportunely expose the reality of his impotency, the impertinence of his menaces, and the folly of his parade for the invasion of your country, than by declaring all the ports containing his invincible armada in a state of blockade. I have heard from an officer who witnessed his fury when in May, 1799, he was compelled to retreat from before St. Jean d'Acre, and who was by his side in the camp at Boulogne when a despatch informed him of this circumstance, that it was nothing compared to the violent rage into which he flew upon reading it. For an hour afterwards not even his brother Joseph dared approach him; and his passion got so far the better of his policy, that what might still have long been concealed from the troops was known within the evening to the whole camp. He dictated to his secretary orders for his Ministers at Vienna, Berlin, Lisbon, and Madrid, and couriers were sent away with them; but half an hour afterwards other couriers were despatched after them with other orders, which were revoked in their turn, when at last Joseph had succeeded in calming him a little. He passed, however, the whole following night full dressed and agitated; lying down only for an instant, but having always in his room Joseph and Duroc, and deliberating on a thousand methods of destroying the insolent islanders; all equally violent, but all equally impracticable.

The next morning, when, as usual, he went to see the manoeuvres of his flotilla, and the embarkation and landing of his troops, he looked so pale that he almost excited pity. Your cruisers, however, as if they had been informed of the situation of our hero, approached unusually near, to evince, as it were, their contempt and, derision. He ordered instantly all the batteries to fire, and went himself to that which carried its shot farthest; but that moment six of your vessels, after taking down their sails, cast anchors, with the greatest sang-froid, just without the reach of our shot. In an unavailing anger he broke upon the spot six officers of artillery, and pushed one, Captain d'Ablincourt, down the precipice under the battery, where he narrowly escaped breaking his neck as well as his legs; for which injury he was compensated by being made an officer of the Legion of Honour. Bonaparte then convoked upon the spot a council of his generals of artillery and of the engineers, and, within an hour's time, some guns and mortars of still heavier metal and greater calibre were carried up to replace the others; but, fortunately for the generals, before a trial could be made of them the tide changed, and your cruisers sailed.

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In returning to breakfast at General Soult's, he observed the countenances of his soldiers rather inclined to laughter than to wrath; and he heard some jests, significant enough in the vocabulary of encampments, and which informed him that contempt was not the sentiment with which your navy had inspired his troops. The occurrences of these two days hastened his departure from the coast for Aix-la-Chapelle, where the cringing of his courtiers consoled him, in part, for the want of respect or gallantry in your English tars.

### LETTER X.

*Paris, August, 1805.*

*My Lord:*—According to a general belief in our diplomatic circles, it was the Austrian Ambassador in France, Count von Cobenzl, who principally influenced the determination of Francis II. to assume the hereditary title of Emperor of Austria, and to acknowledge Napoleon Emperor of the French.

Johann Philipp, Count von Cobenzl, enjoys, not only in his own country, but through all Europe, a great reputation as a statesman, and has for a number of years been employed by his Court in the most intricate and delicate political transactions. In 1790 he was sent to Brabant to treat with the Belgian insurgents; but the States of Brabant refusing to receive him, he retired to Luxembourg, where he published a proclamation, in which Leopold II. revoked all those edicts of his predecessor, Joseph II., which had been the principal cause of the troubles; and reestablished everything upon the same footing as during the reign of Maria Theresa. In 1791 he was appointed Ambassador to the Court of St. Petersburg, where his conduct obtained the approbation of his own Prince and of the Empress of Russia.

In 1793 the Committee of Public Safety nominated the intriguer, De Semonville, Ambassador to the Ottoman Porte. His mission was to excite the Turks against Austria and Russia, and it became of great consequence to the two Imperial Courts to seize this incendiary of regicides. He was therefore stopped, on the 25th of July, in the village of Novate, near the lake of Chiavenna. A rumour was very prevalent at this time that some papers were found in De Semonville's portfolio implicating Count von Cobenzl as a correspondent with the revolutionary French generals. The continued confidence of his Sovereign contradicts, however, this inculpation, which seems to have been merely the invention of rivalry or jealousy.

In October, 1795, Count von Cobenzl signed, in the name of the Emperor, a treaty with England and Russia; and in 1797 he was one of the Imperial plenipotentiaries sent to Udine to negotiate with Bonaparte, with whom, on the 17th of October, he signed the Treaty of Campo Formio. In the same capacity he went afterwards to Rastadt, and when this congress broke up, he returned again as an Ambassador to St. Petersburg.

After the Peace of Lunwille, when it required to have a man of experience and talents to oppose to our so deeply able Minister, Talleyrand, the Cabinet of Vienna removed him from Russia to France, where, with all other representatives of Princes, he has experienced more of the frowns and rebukes, than of the dignity and good grace, of our present Sovereign.

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Count von Cobenzl's foible is said to be a passion for women; and it is reported that our worthy Minister, Talleyrand, has been kind enough to assist him frequently in his amours. Some adventures of this sort, which occurred at Rastadt, afforded much amusement at the Count's expense. Talleyrand, from envy, no doubt, does not allow him the same political merit as his other political contemporaries, having frequently repeated that "the official dinners of Count von Cobenzl were greatly preferable to his official notes."

So well pleased was Bonaparte with this Ambassador when at Aix-la-Chapelle last year, that, as a singular favour, he permitted him, with the Marquis de Gallo (the Neapolitan Minister and another plenipotentiary at Udine), to visit the camps of his army of England on the coast. It is true that this condescension was, perhaps, as much a boast, or a threat, as a compliment.

The famous diplomatic note of Talleyrand, which, at Aix-la-Chapelle proscribed en masse all your diplomatic agents, was only a slight revenge of Bonaparte's for your mandate of blockade. Rumour states that this measure was not approved of by Talleyrand, as it would not exclude any of your Ambassadors from those Courts not immediately under the whip of our Napoleon. For fear, however, of some more extravagant determination, Joseph Bonaparte dissuaded him from laying before his brother any objections or representations. "But what absurdities do I not sign!" exclaimed the pliant Minister.

Bonaparte, on his arrival at Aix-la-Chapelle, found there, according to command, most of the members of the foreign diplomatic corps in France, waiting to present their new credentials to him as Emperor. Charlemagne had been saluted as such, in the same place, about one thousand years before,—an inducement for the modern Charlemagne to set all these Ambassadors travelling some hundred miles, without any other object but to gratify his impertinent vanity. Every spot where Charlemagne had walked, sat, slept, talked, eaten or prayed, was visited by him with great ostentation; always dragging behind him the foreign representatives, and by his side his wife. To a peasant who presented him a stone upon which Charlemagne was said to have once kneeled, he gave nearly half its weight in gold; on a priest who offered him a small crucifix, before which that Prince was reported to have prayed, he bestowed an episcopal see; to a manufacturer he ordered one thousand louis for a portrait of Charlemagne, said to be drawn by his daughter, but which, in fact, was from the pencil of the daughter of the manufacturer; a German savant was made a member of the National Institute for an old diploma, supposed to have been signed by Charlemagne, who many believed was not able to write; and a German Baron, Krigge, was registered in the Legion of Honour for a ring presented by this Emperor to one of his ancestors, though his nobility is well known not to be of sixty years' standing.

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But woe to him who dared to suggest any doubt about what Napoleon believed, or seemed to believe! A German professor, Richter, more a pedant than a courtier, and more sincere than wise, addressed a short memorial to Bonaparte, in which he proved, from his intimacy with antiquity, that most of the pretended relics of Charlemagne were impositions on the credulous; that the portrait was a drawing of this century, the diploma written in the last; the crucifix manufactured within fifty, and the ring, perhaps, within ten years. The night after Bonaparte had perused this memorial, a police commissary, accompanied by four gendarmes, entered the professor's bedroom, forced him to dress, and ushered him into a covered cart, which carried him under escort to the left bank of the Rhine; where he was left with orders, under pain of death, never more to enter the territory of the French Empire. This expeditious and summary justice silenced all other connoisseurs and antiquarians; and relics of Charlemagne have since poured in in such numbers from all parts of France, Italy, Germany, and even Denmark, that we are here in hope to see one day established a Museum Charlemagne, by the side of the museums Napoleon and Josephine. A ballad, written in monkish Latin, said to be sung by the daughters and maids of Charlemagne at his Court on great festivities, was addressed to Duroc, by a Danish professor, Cranener, who in return was presented, on the part of Bonaparte, with a diamond ring worth twelve thousand livres—L 500. This ballad may, perhaps, be the foundation of future Bibliotheque or Lyceum Charlemagne.

### LETTER XI.

*Paris, August, 1805.*

*My Lord:*—On the arrival of her husband at Aix-la-Chapelle, Madame Napoleon had lost her money by gambling, without recovering her health by using the baths and drinking the waters; she was, therefore, as poor as low-spirited, and as ill-tempered as dissatisfied. Napoleon himself was neither much in humour to supply her present wants, provide for her extravagances, or to forgive her ill-nature; he ascribed the inefficacy of the waters to her excesses, and reproached her for her too great condescension to many persons who presented themselves at her drawing-room and in her circle, but who, from their rank in life, were only fit to be seen as supplicants in her antechambers, and as associates with her valets or chambermaids.

The fact was that Madame Napoleon knew as well as her husband that these gentry were not in their place in the company of an Empress; but they were her creditors, some of them even Jews; and as long as she continued debtor to them she could not decently—or rather, she dared not prevent them from being visitors to her. By confiding her situation to her old friend, Talleyrand, she was, however, soon released from those troublesome personages. When the Minister was informed of the occasion of the attendance of these impertinent intruders, he humbly proposed to Bonaparte not to pay

their demands and their due, but to make them examples of severe justice in transporting them to Cayenne, as the only sure means to prevent, for the future, people of the same description from being familiar or audacious.

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When, thanks to Talleyrand's interference, these family arrangements were settled, Madame Napoleon recovered her health with her good-humour; and her husband, who had begun to forget the English blockade, only to think of the papal accolade (dubbing), was more tender than ever. I am assured that, during the fortnight he continued with his wife at Aix-la-Chapelle, he only shut her up or confined her twice, kicked her three times, and abused her once a day.

It was during their residence in that capital that Comte de Segur at last completed the composition of their household, and laid before them the list of the ladies and gentlemen who had consented to put on their livery. This De Segur is a kind of amphibious animal, neither a royalist nor a republican, neither a democrat nor an aristocrat, but a disaffected subject under a King, a dangerous citizen of a Commonwealth, ridiculing both the friend of equality and the defender of prerogatives; no exact definition can be given, from his past conduct and avowed professions, of his real moral and political character. One thing only is certain;—he was an ungrateful traitor to Louis XVI., and is a submissive slave under Napoleon the First.

Though not of an ancient family, Comte de Segur was a nobleman by birth, and ranked among the ancient French nobility because one of his ancestors had been a Field-marshal. Being early introduced at Court, he acquired, with the common corruption, also the pleasing manners of a courtier; and by his assiduities about the Ministers, Comte de Maurepas and Comte de Vergennes, he procured from the latter the place of an Ambassador to the Court of St. Petersburg. With some reading and genius, but with more boasting and presumption, he classed himself among French men of letters, and was therefore as such received with distinction by Catharine II., on whom, and on whose Government, he in return published a libel. He was a valet under La Fayette, in 1789, as he has since been under every succeeding King of faction. The partisans of the Revolution pointed him out as a fit Ambassador from Louis XVI. to the late King of Prussia; and he went in 1791 to Berlin, in that capacity; but Frederick William II. refused him admittance to his person, and, after some ineffectual intrigues with the Illuminati and philosophers at Berlin, he returned to Paris as he left it; provided, however, with materials for another libel on the Prussian Monarch, and on the House of Brandenburg, which he printed in 1796. Ruined by the Revolution which he had so much admired, he was imprisoned under Robespierre, and was near starving under the Directory, having nothing but his literary productions to subsist on. In 1799, Bonaparte made him a legislator, and in 1803, a Counsellor of State,—a place which he resigned last year for that of a grand master of the ceremonies at the present Imperial Court. His ancient inveteracy against your country has made him a favourite with Bonaparte. The indelicate and scandalous attacks, in 1796 and 1797, against Lord Malmesbury, in the then official journal, *Le Redacteur*, were the offspring of his malignity and pen; and the philippics and abusive notes in our present official *Moniteur*, against your Government and country, are frequently his patriotic progeny, or rather, he often shares with Talleyrand and Hauterive their paternity.



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The Revolution has not made Comte de Segur more happy with regard to his family, than in his circumstances, which, notwithstanding his brilliant grand-mastership, are far from being affluent. His amiable wife died of terror, and brokenhearted from the sufferings she had experienced, and the atrocities she had witnessed; and when he had enticed his eldest son to accept the place of a sub-prefect under Bonaparte, his youngest son, who never approved our present regeneration, challenged his brother to fight, and, after killing him in a duel, destroyed himself. Comte de Segur is therefore, at present, neither a husband nor a father, but only a grand master of ceremonies! What an indemnification!

Madame Napoleon and her husband are both certainly under much obligation to this nobleman for his care to procure them comparatively decent persons to decorate their levees and drawing-rooms, who, though they have no claim either to morality or virtue, either to honour or chastity, are undoubtedly a great acquisition at the Court of St. Cloud, because none of them has either been accused of murder, or convicted of plunder; which is the case with some of the Ministers, and most of the generals, Senators and counsellors. It is true that they are a mixture of beggared nobles and enriched valets, of married courtesans and divorced wives, but, for all that, they can with justice demand the places of honour of all other Imperial courtiers of both sexes.

When Bonaparte had read over the names of these Court recruits, engaged and enlisted by De Segur, he said, "Well, this lumber must do until we can exchange it for better furniture." At that time, young Comte d'Arberg (of a German family, on the right bank of the Rhine), but whose mother is one of Madame Bonaparte's Maids of Honour, was travelling for him in Germany and in Prussia, where, among other negotiations, he was charged to procure some persons of both sexes, of the most ancient nobility, to augment Napoleon's suite, and to figure in his livery. More individuals presented themselves for this honour than he wanted, but they were all without education and without address: ignorant of the world as of books; not speaking well their own language, much less understanding French or Italian; vain of their birth, but not ashamed of their ignorance, and as proud as poor. This project was therefore relinquished for the time; but a number of the children of the principal ci-devant German nobles, who, by the Treaty of Luneville and Ratisbon, had become subjects of Bonaparte, were, by the advice of Talleyrand, offered places in French Prytanees, where the Emperor promised to take care of their future advancement. Madame Bonaparte, at the same time, selected twenty-five young girls of the same families, whom she also offered to educate at her expense. Their parents understood too well the meaning of these generous offers to dare decline their acceptance. These children are the plants of the Imperial nursery, intended to produce future pages, chamberlains, equerries, Maids of Honour and ladies in waiting, who for ancestry may bid defiance to all their equals of every Court in Christendom. This act of benevolence, as it was called in some German papers, is also an indirect chastisement of the refractory French nobility, who either demanded too high prices for their degradation, or abruptly refused to disgrace the names of their forefathers.

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### ETEXT EDITOR'S BOOKMARKS:

Easy to give places to men to whom Nature has refused parts  
Indifference of the French people to all religion  
Prepared to become your victim, but not your accomplice  
Were my generals as great fools as some of my Ministers  
Which crime in power has interest to render impenetrable