

Memoirs of the Court of St. Cloud (Being secret letters from a gentleman at Paris to a nobleman in London) — Volume 2 eBook

Memoirs of the Court of St. Cloud (Being secret letters from a gentleman at Paris to a nobleman in London) — Volume 2

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

Volume 2

LETTER XII.

Paris, August, 1805.

My Lord:—Bonaparte has been as profuse in his disposal of the Imperial diadem of Germany, as in his promises of the papal tiara of Rome. The Houses of Austria and Brandenburg, the Electors of Bavaria and Baden, have by turns been cajoled into a belief of his exclusive support towards obtaining it at the first vacancy. Those, however, who have paid attention to his machinations, and studied his actions; who remember his pedantic affectation of being considered a modern, or rather a second Charlemagne; and who have traced his steps through the labyrinth of folly and wickedness, of meanness and greatness, of art, corruption, and policy, which have seated him on the present throne, can entertain little doubt but that he is seriously bent on seizing and adding the sceptre of Germany to the crowns of France and Italy.

During his stay last autumn at Mentz, all those German Electors who had spirit and dignity enough to refuse to attend on him there in person were obliged to send Extraordinary Ambassadors to wait on him, and to compliment him on their part. Though hardly one corner of the veil that covered the intrigues going forward there is yet lifted up, enough is already seen to warn Europe and alarm the world. The secret treaties he concluded there with most of the petty Princes of Germany, against the Chief of the German Empire which not only entirely detached them from their country and its legitimate Sovereign, but made their individual interests hostile and totally opposite to that of the German Commonwealth, transforming them also from independent Princes into vassals of France, both directly increased his already gigantic power, and indirectly encouraged him to extend it beyond what his most sanguine expectation had induced him to hope. I do not make this assertion from a mere supposition in consequence of ulterior occurrences. At a supper with Madame Talleyrand last March, I heard her husband, in a gay, unguarded, or perhaps premeditated moment, say, when mentioning his proposed journey to Italy:

“I prepared myself to pass the Alps last October at Mentz. The first ground-stone of the throne of Italy was, strange as it may seem, laid on the banks of the Rhine: with such an extensive foundation, it must be difficult to shake, and impossible to overturn it.”

We were, in the whole, twenty-five persons at table when he spoke thus, many of whom, he well knew, were intimately acquainted both with the Austrian and Prussian

Ambassadors, who by the bye, both on the next day sent couriers to their respective Courts.

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The French Revolution is neither seen in Germany in that dangerous light which might naturally be expected from the sufferings in which it has involved both Princes and subjects, nor are its future effects dreaded from its past enormities. The cause of this impolitic and anti-patriotic apathy is to be looked for in the palaces of Sovereigns, and not in the dwellings of their people. There exists hardly a single German Prince whose Ministers, courtiers and counsellors are not numbered, and have long been notorious among the anti-social conspirators, the Illuminati: most of them are knaves of abilities, who have usurped the easy direction of ignorance, or forced themselves as guides on weakness or folly, which bow to their charlatanism as if it was sublimity, and hail their sophistry and imposture as inspiration.

Among Princes thus encompassed, the Elector of Bavaria must be allowed the first place. A younger brother of a younger branch, and a colonel in the service of Louis XVI., he neither acquired by education, nor inherited from nature, any talent to reign, nor possessed any one quality that fitted him for a higher situation than the head of a regiment or a lady's drawing-room. He made himself justly suspected of a moral corruption, as well as of a natural incapacity, when he announced his approbation of the Revolution against his benefactor, the late King of France, who, besides a regiment, had also given him a yearly pension of one hundred thousand livres. Immediately after his unexpected accession to the Electorate of Bavaria, he concluded a subsidiary treaty with your country, and his troops were ordered to combat rebellion, under the standard of Austrian loyalty. For some months it was believed that the Elector wished by his conduct to obliterate the memory of the errors, vices, and principles of the Duc de Deux-Ponts (his former title). But placing all his confidence in a political adventurer and revolutionary fanatic, Montgelas, without either consistency or firmness, without being either bent upon information or anxious about popularity, he threw the whole burden of State on the shoulders of this dangerous man, who soon showed the world that his master, by his first treaties, intended only to pocket your money without serving your cause or interest.

This Montgelas is, on account of his cunning and long standing among them, worshipped by the gang of German Illuminati as an idol rather than revered as an apostle. He is their Baal, before whom they hope to oblige all nations upon earth to prostrate themselves as soon as infidelity has entirely banished Christianity; for the Illuminati do not expect to reign till the last Christian is buried under the rubbish of the last altar of Christ. It is not the fault of Montgelas if such an event has not already occurred in the Electorate of Bavaria.

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Within six months after the Treaty of Lundville, Montgelas began in that country his political and religious innovations. The nobility and the clergy were equally attacked; the privileges of the former were invaded, and the property of the latter confiscated; and had not his zeal carried him too far, so as to alarm our new nobles, our new men of property, and new Christians, it is very probable that atheism would have already, without opposition, reared its head in the midst of Germany, and proclaimed there the rights of man, and the code of liberty and equality.

The inhabitants of Bavaria are, as you know, all Roman Catholics, and the most superstitious and ignorant Catholics of Germany. The step is but short from superstition to infidelity; and ignorance has furnished in France more sectaries of atheism than perversity. The Illuminati, brothers and friends of Montgelas, have not been idle in that country. Their writings have perverted those who had no opportunity to hear their speeches, or to witness their example; and I am assured by Count von Beust, who travelled in Bavaria last year, that their progress among the lower classes is astonishing, considering the short period these emissaries have laboured. To any one looking on the map of the Continent, and acquainted with the spirit of our times, this impious focus of illumination must be ominous.

Among the members of the foreign diplomatic corps, there exists not the least doubt but that this Montgelas, as well as Bonaparte's Minister at Munich, Otto, was acquainted with the treacherous part Mehde de la Touche played against your Minister, Drake; and that it was planned between him and Talleyrand as the surest means to break off all political connections between your country and Bavaria. Mr. Drake was personally liked by the Elector, and was not inattentive either to the plans and views of Montgelas or to the intrigues of Otto. They were, therefore, both doubly interested to remove such a troublesome witness.

M. de Montgelas is now a grand officer of Bonaparte's Legion of Honour, and he is one of the few foreigners nominated the most worthy of such a distinction. In France he would have been an acquisition either to the factions of a Murat, of a Brissot, or of a Robespierre; and the Goddess of Reason, as well as the God of the Theophilanthropists, might have been sure of counting him among their adorers. At the clubs of the Jacobins or Cordeliers, in the fraternal societies, or in a revolutionary tribunal; in the Committee of Public Safety, or in the council chamber of the Directory, he would equally have made himself notorious and been equally in his place. A stoic sans-culotte under Du Clots, a stanch republican under Robespierre, he would now have been the most pliant and brilliant courtier of Bonaparte.

LETTER XIII.

Paris, August, 1805.

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My Lord:—No Queen of France ever saw so many foreign Princes and Princesses in her drawing-rooms as the first Empress of the French did last year at Mentz; and no Sovereign was ever before so well paid, or accepted with less difficulty donations and presents for her gracious protection. Madame Napoleon herself, on her return to this capital last October, boasted that she was ten millions of livres—richer in diamonds; two millions of livres richer in pearls, and three million of livres richer in plate and china, than in the June before, when she quitted it. She acknowledged that she left behind her some creditors and some money at Aix-la-Chapelle; but at Mentz she did not want to borrow, nor had she time to gamble. The gallant ultra Romans provided everything, even to the utmost extent of her wishes; and she, on her part, could not but honour those with her company as much as possible, particularly as they required nothing else for their civilities. Such was the Empress's expression to her lady in waiting, the handsome Madame Seran, with whom no confidence, no tale, no story, and no scandal expires; and who was in a great hurry to inform, the same evening, the tea-party at Madame de Beauvais's of this good news, complaining at the same time of not having had the least share in this rich harvest.

Nowhere, indeed, were bribery and corruption carried to a greater extent, or practised with more effrontery, than at Mentz. Madame Napoleon had as much her fixed price for every favourable word she spoke, as Talleyrand had for every line he wrote. Even the attendants of the former, and the clerks of the latter, demanded, or rather extorted, douceurs from the exhausted and almost ruined German petitioners; who in the end were rewarded for all their meanness and for all their expenses with promises at best; as the new plan of supplementary indemnities was, on the very day proposed for its final arrangement, postponed by the desire of the Emperor of the French, until further orders. This provoking delay could no more be foreseen by the Empress than by the Minister, who, in return for their presents and money almost overpowered the German Princes with his protestations of regret at their disappointments. Nor was Madame Bonaparte less sorry or less civil. She sent her chamberlain, Daubusson la Feuillad, with regular compliments of condolence to every Prince who had enjoyed her protection. They returned to their homes, therefore, if not wealthier, at least happier; flattered by assurances and condescensions, confiding in hope as in certainties. Within three months, however, it is supposed that they would willingly have disposed both of promises and expectations at a loss of fifty per cent.

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By the cupidity and selfishness of these and other German Princes, and their want of patriotism, Talleyrand was become perfectly acquainted with the value and production of every principality, bishopric, county, abbey, barony, convent, and even village in the German Empire; and though most national property in France was disposed of at one or two years' purchase, he required five years' purchase-money for all the estates and lands on the other side of the Rhine, of which, under the name of indemnities, he stripped the lawful owners to gratify the ambition or avidity of intruders. This high price has cooled the claims of the bidders, and the plan of the supplementary indemnities is still suspended, and probably will continue so until our Minister lowers his terms. A combination is supposed to have been entered into by the chief demanders of indemnities, by which they have bound themselves to resist all farther extortions. They do not, however, know the man they have to deal with; he will, perhaps, find out some to lay claim to their own private and hereditary property whom he will produce and support, and who certainly will have the same right to pillage them as they had to the spoils of others.

It was reported in our fashionable circles last autumn, and smiled at by Talleyrand, that he promised the Comtesse de L----- an abbey, and the Baroness de S----- a convent, for certain personal favours, and that he offered a bishopric to the Princesse of Hon----- the same terms, but this lady answered that "she would think of his offers after he had put her husband in possession of the bishopric." It is not necessary to observe that both the Countess and the Baroness are yet waiting to enjoy his liberal donations, and to be indemnified for their prostitution.

Napoleon Bonaparte was attacked by a fit of jealousy at Mentz. The young nephew of the Elector Arch-Chancellor, Comte de L——ge, was very assiduous about the Empress, who, herself, at first mistook the motive. Her confidential secretary, Deschamps, however, afterwards informed her that this nobleman wanted to purchase the place of a coadjutor to his uncle, so as to be certain of succeeding him. He obtained, therefore, several private audiences, no doubt to regulate the price, when Napoleon put a stop to this secret negotiation by having the Count carried by gendarmes, with great politeness, to the other side of the Rhine. When convinced of his error, Bonaparte asked his wife what sum had been promised for her protection, and immediately gave her an order on his Minister of the Treasury (Marbois) for the amount. This was an act of justice, and a reparation worthy of a good and tender husband; but when, the very next day, he recalled this order, threw it into the fire before her eyes, and confined her for six hours in her bedroom; because she was not dressed in time to take a walk with him on the ramparts, one is apt to believe that military despotism has erased from his bosom all connubial affection,

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and that a momentary effusion of kindness and generosity can but little alleviate the frequent pangs caused by repeated insults and oppression. Fortunately, Madame Napoleon's disposition is proof against rudeness as well as against brutality. If what her friend and consoler, Madame Delucay, reports of her is not exaggerated, her tranquillity is not much disturbed nor her happiness affected by these explosions of passionate authority, and she prefers admiring, in undisturbed solitude, her diamond box to the most beautiful prospects in the most agreeable company; and she inspects with more pleasure in confinement, her rich wardrobe, her beautiful china, and her heavy plate, than she would find satisfaction, surrounded with crowds, in contemplating Nature, even in its utmost perfection. "The paradise of Madame Napoleon," says her friend, "must be of metal, and lighted by the lustre of brilliants, else she would decline it for a hell and accept Lucifer himself for a spouse, provided gold flowed in his infernal domains, though she were even to be scorched by its heat."

LETTER XIV.

LETTER XIV.

Paris, August, 1805.

My Lord:—I believe that I have mentioned to you, when in England, that I was an old acquaintance of Madame Napoleon, and a visitor at the house of her first husband. When introduced to her after some years' absence, during which fortune had treated us very differently, she received me with more civility than I was prepared to expect, and would, perhaps, have spoken to me more than she did, had not a look of her husband silenced her. Madame Louis Bonaparte was still more condescending, and recalled to my memory what I had not forgotten how often she had been seated, when a child, on my lap, and played on my knees with her doll. Thus they behaved to me when I saw them for the first time in their present elevation; I found them afterwards, in their drawing-rooms or at their routs and parties, more shy and distant. This change did not much surprise me, as I hardly knew any one that had the slightest pretension to their acquaintance who had not troubled them for employment or borrowed their money, at the same time that they complained of their neglect and their breach of promises. I continued, however, as much as etiquette and decency required, assiduous, but never familiar: if they addressed me, I answered with respect, but not with servility; if not, I bowed in silence when they passed. They might easily perceive that I did not intend to become an intruder, nor to make the remembrance of what was past an apology or a reason for applying for present favours. A lady, on intimate terms with Madame Napoleon, and once our common friend, informed me, shortly after the untimely end of

the lamented Duc d' Enghien, that she had been asked whether she knew anything that could be done for me, or whether

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I would not be flattered by obtaining a place in the Legislative Body or in the Tribune? I answered as I thought, that were I fit for a public life nothing could be more agreeable or suit me better; but, having hitherto declined all employments that might restrain that independence to which I had accustomed myself from my youth, I was now too old to enter upon a new career. I added that, though the Revolution had reduced my circumstances, it had not entirely ruined me. I was still independent, because my means were the boundaries of my wants.

A week after this conversation General Murat, the governor of this capital, and Bonaparte's favourite-brother-in-law, invited me to a conversation in a note delivered to me by an aide-de-camp, who told me that he was ordered to wait for my company, or, which was the same, he had orders not to lose sight of me, as I was his prisoner. Having nothing with which to reproach myself, and all my written remarks being deposited with a friend, whom none of the Imperial functionaries could suspect, I entered a hackney coach without any fear or apprehension; and we drove to the governor's hotel.

From the manner in which Murat addressed me, I was soon convinced that if I had been accused of any error or indiscretion, the accusation could not be very grave in his eyes. He entered with me into his closet and inquired whether I had any enemies at the police office. I told him not to my knowledge.

"Is the Police Minister and Senator, Fouche, your friend?" continued he.

"Fouche," said I, "has bought an estate that formerly belonged to me; may he enjoy it with the same peace of mind as I have lost it. I have never spoken to him in my life."

"Have you not complained at Madame de la Force's of the execution of the ci-devant Duc d'Enghien, and agreed with the other members of her coterie to put on mourning for him?"

"I have never been at the house of that lady since the death of the Prince, nor more than once in my life."

"Where did you pass the evening last Saturday?"—"At the hotel, and in the assembly of Princesse Louis Bonaparte."

"Did she see you?"

"I believe that she did, because she returned my salute."

"You have known Her Imperial Highness a long time?"

“From her infancy.”

“Well, I congratulate you. You have in her a generous protectress. But for her you would now have been on the way to Cayenne. Here you see the list of persons condemned yesterday, upon the report of Fouche, to transportation. Your name is at the head of them. You were not only accused of being an agent of the Bourbons, but of having intrigued to become a member of the Legislature, or the Tribunate, that you might have so much the better opportunity to serve them. Fortunately for you, the Emperor remembered that the Princesse Louis had demanded such a favour for you, and he informed her

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of the character of her protege. This brought forward your innocence, because it was discovered that, instead of asking for, you had declined the offer she had made you through the Empress. Write the Princess a letter of thanks. You have, indeed, had a narrow escape, but it has been so far useful to you, that Government is now aware of your having some secret enemy in power, who is not delicate about the means of injuring you."

In quitting General Murat, I could not help deploring the fate of a despot, even while I abhorred his unnatural power. The curses, the complaints, and reproaches for all the crimes, all the violence, all the oppression perpetrated in his name, are entirely thrown upon him, while his situation and occupation do not admit the seeing and hearing everything and everybody himself. He is often forced, therefore, to judge according to the report of an impostor; to sanction with his name the hatred, malignity, or vengeance of culpable individuals; and to sacrifice innocence to gratify the vile passions of his vilest slave. I have not so bad an opinion of Bonaparte as to think him capable of wilfully condemning any person to death or transportation, of whose innocence he was convinced, provided that person stood not in the way of his interest and ambition; but suspicion and tyranny are inseparable companions, and injustice their common progeny. The unfortunate beings on the long list General Murat showed me were, I dare say, most of them as innocent as myself, and all certainly condemned unheard. But suppose, even, that they had been indiscreet enough to put on mourning for a Prince of the blood of their former Kings, did their imprudence deserve the same punishment as the deed of the robber, the forger, or the housebreaker? and, indeed, it was more severe than what our laws inflict on such criminals, who are only condemned to transportation for some few years, after a public trial and conviction; while the exile of these unconvicted, untried, and most probably innocent persons is continued for life, on charges as unknown to themselves as their destiny and residence remain to their families and friends. Happy England! where no one is condemned unheard, and no one dares attempt to make the laws subservient to his passions or caprice.

As to Fouche's enmity, at which General Murat so plainly hinted, I had long apprehended it from what others, in similar circumstances with myself, had suffered. He has, since the Revolution, bought no less, than sixteen national estates, seven of the former proprietors of which have suddenly disappeared since his Ministry, probably in the manner he intended to remove me. This man is one of the most immoral characters the Revolution has dragged forward from obscurity. It is more difficult to mention a crime that he has not perpetrated than to discover a good or just action that he ever performed. He is so notorious a villain that even the infamous National Convention expelled him from its bosom, and since his Ministry no man has been found base enough, in my debased country, to extenuate, much less to defend, his past enormities. In a nation so greatly corrupted and immoral, this alone is more than negative evidence.

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As a friar before the Revolution he has avowed, in his correspondence with the National Convention, that he never believed in a God; and as one of the first public functionaries of a Republic he has officially denied the existence of virtue. He is, therefore, as unmoved by tears as by reproaches, and as inaccessible to remorse as hardened against repentance. With him interest and bribes are everything, and honour and honesty nothing. The supplicant or the pleader who appears before him with no other support than the justice of his cause is fortunate indeed if, after being cast, he is not also confined or ruined, and perhaps both; while a line from one of the Bonapartes, or a purse of gold, changes black to white, guilt to innocence, removes the scaffold waiting for the assassin, and extinguishes the faggots lighted for the parricide. His authority is so extensive that on the least signal, with one blow, from the extremities of France to her centre, it crushes the cot and the palace; and his decisions, against which there is no appeal, are so destructive that they never leave any traces behind them, and Bonaparte, Bonaparte alone, can prevent or arrest their effect.

Though a traitor to his former benefactor, the ex-Director Barras, he possesses now the unlimited confidence of Napoleon Bonaparte, and, as far as is known, has not yet done anything to forfeit it,—if private acts of cruelty cannot, in the agent of a tyrant, be called breach of trust or infidelity. He shares with Talleyrand the fraternity of the vigilant, immoral, and tormenting secret police; and with Real, and Dubois, the prefect of police, the reproduction, or rather the invention, of new tortures and improved racks; the oubliettes, which are wells or pits dug under the Temple and most other prisons, are the works of his own infernal genius. They are covered with trap-doors, and any person whom the rack has mutilated, or not obliged to speak out; whose return to society is thought dangerous, or whose discretion is suspected; who has been imprisoned by mistake, or discovered to be innocent; who is disagreeable to the Bonapartes, their favourites, or the mistresses of their favourites; who has displeased Fouche, or offended some other placeman; any who have refused to part with their property for the recovery of their liberty, are all precipitated into these artificial abysses there to be forgotten; or worse, to be starved to death, if they have not been fortunate enough to break their necks and be killed by the fall.

The property Fouche has acquired by his robberies within these last twelve years is at the lowest rate valued at fifty million livres—which must increase yearly; as a man who disposes of the liberty of fifty millions of people is also, in a great part, master of their wealth. Except the chiefs of the Governments and their officers of State, there exists not an inhabitant of France, Italy, Holland, or Switzerland who can consider himself secure for an instant of not being seized, imprisoned, plundered, tortured, or exterminated by the orders of Fouche and by the hands of his agents.

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You will no doubt exclaim, "How can Bonaparte employ, how dares he confide, in such a man?" Fouche is as able as unprincipled, and, with the most unfeeling and perverse heart, possesses great talents. There is no infamy he will not stoop to, and no crime, however execrable, that he will hesitate to commit, if his Sovereign orders it. He is, therefore, a most useful instrument in the hand of a despot who, notwithstanding what is said to the contrary in France, and believed abroad, would cease to rule the day he became just, and the reign of laws and of humanity banished terror and tyranny.

It is reported that some person, pious or revengeful, presented some time ago to the devout mother of Napoleon a long memorial containing some particulars of the crimes and vices of Fouche and Talleyrand, and required of her, if she wished to prevent the curses of Heaven from falling on her son, to inform him of them, that he might cease to employ men so unworthy of him, and so repugnant to a Divinity. Napoleon, after reading through the memorial, is stated to have answered his mother, who was always pressing him to dismiss these Ministers: The memorial, Madame, contains nothing of what I was not previously informed. Louis XVI. did not select any but those whom he thought the most virtuous and moral of men for his Ministers and counsellors; and where did their virtues and morality bring him? If the writer of the memorial will mention two honest and irreproachable characters, with equal talents and zeal to serve me, neither Fouche nor Talleyrand shall again be admitted into my presence.

LETTER XV.

Paris, August, 1805.

My Lord:—You have with some reason in England complained of the conduct of the members of the foreign diplomatic corps in France, when the pretended correspondence between Mr. Drake and Mehee de la Touche was published in our official gazette. Had you, however, like myself, been in a situation to study the characters and appreciate the worth of most of them, this conduct would have excited no surprise, and pity would have taken the place both of accusation and reproach. Hardly one of them, except Count Philipp von Cobenzl, the Austrian Ambassador (and even he is considerably involved), possesses any property, or has anything else but his salary to depend upon for subsistence. The least offence to Bonaparte or Talleyrand would instantly deprive them of their places; and, unless they were fortunate enough to obtain some other appointment, reduce them to live in obscurity, and perhaps in want, upon a trifling pension in their own country.

The day before Mr. Drake's correspondence appeared in the *Moniteur*, in March, 1804, Talleyrand gave a grand diplomatic dinner; in the midst of which, as was previously agreed with Bonaparte, Duroc called him out on the part of the First Consul. After an absence of near an hour, which excited great curiosity and some alarm among the diplomatists, he returned, very thoughtful and seemingly very low-spirited.

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"Excuse me, gentlemen," said he, "I have been impolite against my inclination. The First Consul knew that you honoured me with your company today, and would therefore not have interrupted me by his orders had not a discovery of a most extraordinary nature against the law of nations just been made; a discovery which calls for the immediate indignation against the Cabinet of St. James, not only of France, but of every nation that wishes for the preservation of civilized society. After dinner I shall do myself the honour of communicating to you the particulars, well convinced that you will all enter with warmth into the just resentment of the First Consul."

During the repast the bottle went freely round, and as soon as they had drunk their coffee and liqueurs, Talleyrand rang a bell, and Hauterive presented himself with a large bundle of papers. The pretended original letters of Mr. Drake were handed about with the commentaries of the Minister and his secretary. Their heads heated with wine, it was not difficult to influence their minds, or to mislead their judgment, and they exclaimed, as in a chorus, "C'est abominable! Cela fait fremir!"

Talleyrand took advantage of their situation, as well as of their indiscretion. "I am glad, gentlemen," said he, "and shall not fail to inform the First Consul of your unanimous sentiments on this disagreeable subject; but verbal expressions are not sufficient in an affair of such great consequence. I have orders to demand your written declarations, which, after what you have already expressed, you cannot hesitate about sending to me to-night, that they may accompany the denunciation which the First Consul despatches, within some few hours, to all the Courts on the Continent. You would much please the First Consul were you to write as near as possible according to the formula which my secretary has drawn up. It states nothing either against convenience, or against the customs of Sovereigns, or etiquettes of Courts, and I am certain is also perfectly congenial with your individual feelings."

A silence of some moments now followed (as all the diplomatists were rather taken by surprise with regard to a written declaration), which the Swedish Ambassador, Baron Ehrenswärd, interrupted by saying that, "though he personally might have no objection to sign such a declaration, he must demand some time to consider whether he had a right to, write in the name of his Sovereign, without his orders, on a subject still unknown to him."

This remark made the Austrian Ambassador, Count von Cobenzl, propose a private consultation among the members of the foreign diplomatic corps at one of their hotels, at which the Russian charge d'affaires, D'Oubril, who was not at the dinner—party, was invited to assist. They met accordingly, at the Hotel de Montmorency, Rue de Lille, occupied by Count von Cobenzl; but they came to no other unanimous determination than that of answering a written communication of Talleyrand by a written note, according as every one judged most proper and prudent, and corresponding with the supposed sentiments of his Sovereign.

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As all this official correspondence has been published in England, you may, upon reading the notes presented by Baron de Dreyer, and Mr. Livingstone,

[In consequence of this conduct, Livingstone was recalled by his Government, and lives now in obscurity and disgrace in America. To console him, however, in his misfortune, Bonaparte, on his departure, presented him with his portrait, enamelled on the lid of a snuff-box, set round with diamonds, and valued at one thousand louis d'or.]

the neutral Ambassadors of Denmark and America, form some tolerably just idea of Talleyrand's formula. Their impolitic servility was blamed even by the other members of the diplomatic corps.

Livingstone you know, and perhaps have not to learn that, though a staunch republican in America, he was the most abject courtier in France; and though a violent defender of liberty and equality on the other side of the Atlantic, no man bowed lower to usurpation, or revered despotism more, in Europe. Without talents, and almost without education, he thinks intrigues negotiations, and conceives that policy and duplicity are synonymous. He was called here "the courier of Talleyrand," on account of his voyages to England, and his journeys to Holland, where this Minister sent him to intrigue, with less ceremony than one of his secret agents. He acknowledged that no Government was more liberal, and no nation more free, than the British; but he hated the one as much as he abused the other; and he did not conceal sentiments that made him always so welcome to Bonaparte and Talleyrand. Never over nice in the choice of his companions, Arthur O'Connor, and other Irish traitors and vagabonds, used his house as their own; so much so that, when he invited other Ambassadors to dine with him, they, before they accepted the invitation, made a condition that no outlaws or adventurers should be of the party.

In your youth, Baron de Dreyer was an Ambassador from the Court of Copenhagen to that of St. James. He has since been in the same capacity to the Courts of St. Petersburg and Madrid. Born a Norwegian, of a poor and obscure family, he owes his advancement to his own talents; but these, though they have procured him rank, have left him without a fortune. When he came here, in June, 1797, from Spain, he brought a mistress with him, and several children he had had by her during his residence in that country. He also kept an English mistress some thirty years ago in London, by whom he had a son, M. Guillaumeau, who is now his secretary. Thus encumbered, and thus situated at the age of seventy, it is no surprise if he strives to die at his post, and that fear to offend Bonaparte and Talleyrand sometimes gets the better of his prudence.

In Denmark, as well as in all other Continental States, the pensions of diplomatic invalids are more scanty than those of military ones, and totally insufficient for a man who, during half a century nearly, has accustomed himself to a certain style of life, and to expenses requisite to represent his Prince with dignity. No wonder, therefore, that

Baron de Dreyer prefers Paris to Copenhagen, and that the cunning Talleyrand takes advantage of this preference.

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It was reported here among our foreign diplomatists, that the English Minister in Denmark complained of the contents of Baron de Dreyer's note concerning Mr. Drake's correspondence; and that the Danish Prime Minister, Count von Bernstorff, wrote to him in consequence, by the order of the Prince Royal, a severe reprimand. This act of political justice is, however, denied by him, under pretence that the Cabinet of Copenhagen has laid it down as an invariable rule, never to reprimand, but always to displace those of its agents with whom it has reason to be discontented. Should this be the case, no Sovereign in Europe is better served by his representatives than his Danish Majesty, because no one seldomer changes or removes them.

While I am speaking of diplomatists, I cannot forbear giving you a short sketch of one whose weight in the scale of politics entitles him to particular notice: I mean the Count von Haugwitz, insidiously complimented by Talleyrand with the title of "The Prince of Neutrality, the Sully of Prussia." Christian Henry Curce, Count von Haugwitz, who, until lately, has been the chief director of the political conscience of His Prussian Majesty, as his Minister of the Foreign Department, was born in Silesia, and is the son of a nobleman who was a General in the Austrian service when Frederick the Great made the conquest of that country. At the death of this King in 1786, Count von Haugwitz occupied an inferior place in the foreign office, where Count von Herzburg observed his zeal and assiduity, and recommended him to the notice of the late King Frederick William II. By the interest of the celebrated Bishopsverder, he procured, in 1792, the appointment of an Ambassador to the Court of Vienna, where he succeeded Baron von Jacobi, the present Prussian Minister in your country. In the autumn of the same year he went to Ratisbon, to cooperate with the Austrian Ambassador, and to persuade the Princes of the German Empire to join the coalition against France. In the month of March, 1794, he was sent to the Hague, where he negotiated with Lord Malmesbury concerning the affairs of France; shortly afterwards his nomination as a Minister of State took place, and from that time his political sentiments seem to have undergone a revolution, for which it is not easy to account; but, whatever were the causes of his change of opinions, the Treaty of Basle, concluded between France and Prussia in 1795, was certainly negotiated under his auspices; and in August, 1796, he signed, with the French Minister at Berlin, Citizen Caillard, the first and famous Treaty of Neutrality; and a Prussian cordon was accordingly drawn, to cause the neutrality of the North to be observed and protected. Had the Count von Haugwitz of 1795 been the same as the Count von Haugwitz of 1792, it is probable we should no longer have heard of either a French Republic or a French Empire; but a legitimate Monarch of the kingdom of France would have ensured that security to all other legitimate

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Sovereigns, the want of which they themselves, or their children, will feel and mourn in vain, as long as unlimited usurpations tyrannize over my wretched country. It is to be hoped, however, that the good sense of the Count will point out to him, before it is too late, the impolicy of his present connections; and that he will use his interest with his Prince to persuade him to adopt a line of conduct suited to the grandeur and dignity of the Prussian Monarchy, and favourable to the independence of insulted Europe.

When his present Prussian Majesty succeeded to the throne, Count von Haugwitz continued in office, with increased influence; but he some time since resigned, in consequence, it is said, of a difference of opinion with the other Prussian Ministers on the subject of a family alliance, which Bonaparte had the modesty to propose, between the illustrious house of Napoleon the First and the royal line of Brandenburg.

On this occasion his King, to evince his satisfaction with his past conduct, bestowed on him not only a large pension, but an estate in Silesia, where he before possessed some property. Bonaparte also, to express his regret at his retreat, proclaimed His Excellency a grand officer of the Legion of Honour.

Talleyrand insolently calls the several cordons, or ribands, distributed by Bonaparte among the Prussian Ministers and Generals, “his leading-strings.” It is to be hoped that Frederick William III. is sufficiently upon his guard to prevent these strings from strangling the Prussian Monarchy and the Brandenburg dynasty.

LETTER XVI.

Paris, August, 1805.

My Lord:—Upwards of two months after my visit to General Murat, I was surprised at the appearance of M. Darjusun, the chamberlain of Princesse Louis Bonaparte. He told me that he came on the part of Prince Louis, who honoured me with an invitation to dine with him the day after. Upon my inquiry whether he knew if the party would be very numerous, he answered, between forty and fifty; and that it was a kind of farewell dinner, because the Prince intended shortly to set out for Compiègne to assume the command of the camp, formed in its vicinity, of the dragoons and other light troops of the army of England.

The principal personages present at this dinner were Joseph Bonaparte and his wife, General and Madame Murat, the Ministers Berthier, Talleyrand, Fouché, Chaptal, and Portalis. The conversation was entirely military, and chiefly related to the probable conquest or subjugation of Great Britain, and the probable consequence to mankind in general of such a great event. No difference of opinion was heard with regard to its

immediate benefit to France and gradual utility to all other nations; but Berthier seemed to apprehend that, before France could have time to organize this valuable conquest, she would be obliged to support another war, with a formidable league, perhaps, of all other European nations. The issue, however, he said, would be glorious to France, who, by her achievements, would force all people to acknowledge her their mother country; and then, first, Europe would constitute but one family.

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Chaptal was as certain as everybody else of the destruction of the tyrants of the seas; but he thought France would never be secure against the treachery of modern Carthage until she followed the example of Rome towards ancient Carthage; and therefore, after reducing London to ashes, it would be proper to disperse round the universe all the inhabitants of the British Islands, and to re-people them with nations less evil-disposed and less corrupted. Portalis observed that it was more easy to conceive than to execute such a vast plan. It would not be an undertaking of five, of ten, nor of twenty years, to transplant these nations; that misfortunes and proscription would not only inspire courage and obstinacy, but desperation.

“No people,” continued he, “are more attached to their customs and countries than islanders in general; and though British subjects are the greatest travellers, and found everywhere, they all suppose their country the best, and always wish to return to it and finish their days amidst their native fogs and smoke. Neither the Saxons, nor the Danes, nor Norman conquerors transplanted them, but, after reducing them, incorporated themselves by marriages among the vanquished, and in some few generations were but one people. It is asserted by all persons who have lately visited Great Britain, that, though the civilization of the lower classes is much behind that of the same description in France, the higher orders, the rich and the fashionable, are, with regard to their, manners, more French than English, and might easily be cajoled into obedience and subjection to the sovereignty of a nation whose customs, by free choice, they have adopted in preference to their own, and whose language forms a necessary part of their education, and, indeed, of the education of almost every class in the British Empire. The universality of the French language is the best ally France has in assisting her to conquer a universal dominion. He wished, therefore, that when we were in a situation to dictate in England, instead of proscribing Englishmen we should proscribe the English language, and advance and reward, in preference, all those parents whose children were sent to be educated in France, and all those families who voluntarily adopted in their houses and societies exclusively the French language.”

Murat was afraid that if France did not transplant the most stubborn Britons, and settle among them French colonies, when once their military and commercial navy was annihilated, they would turn pirates, and, perhaps, within half a century, lay all other nations as much under contribution by their piracies as they now do by their industry; and that, like the pirates on the coast of Barbary, the instant they had no connections with other civilized nations, cut the throats of each other, and agree in nothing but in plundering, and considering all other people in the, world their natural enemies and purveyors.

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To this opinion Talleyrand, by nodding assent, seemed to adhere; but he added: "Earthquakes are generally dreaded as destructive; but such a convulsion of nature as would swallow up the British Islands, with all their inhabitants, would be the greatest blessing Providence ever conferred on mankind."

Louis Bonaparte then addressed himself to me and to the Marquis de F——. "Gentlemen," said he, "you have been in England; what is your opinion of the character of these islanders, and of the probability of their subjugation?"

I answered that, during the fifteen months I resided in London I was too much occupied to prevent myself from starving, to meditate about anything else; that my stomach was my sole meditation as well as anxiety. That, however, I believed that in England, as everywhere else, a mixture of good and bad qualities was to be found; but which prevailed, it would be presumption in me, from my position, to decide. But I did not doubt that if we cordially hated the English they returned us the compliment with interest, and, therefore, the contest with them would be a severe one. The Marquis de F—— imprudently attempted to convince the company that it was difficult, if not impossible, for our army to land in England, much more to conquer it, until we were masters of the seas by a superior navy. He would, perhaps, have been still more indiscreet, had not Madame Louis interrupted him, and given another turn to the conversation by inquiring about the fair sex in England, and if it was true that handsome women were more numerous there than in France? Here again the Marquis, instead of paying her a compliment, as she perhaps expected, roundly assured her that for one beauty in France, hundreds might be counted in England, where gentlemen were, therefore, not so easily satisfied; and that a woman regarded by them only as an ordinary person would pass for a first-rate beauty among French beaux, on account of the great scarcity of them here.

"You must excuse the Marquis, ladies," said I, in my turn; "he has not been in love in England. There, perhaps, he found the belles less cruel than in France, where, for the cruelty of one lady, or for her insensibility of his merit, he revenges himself on the whole sex:

"I apply to M. de Talleyrand," answered the Marquis; "he has been longer in England than myself."

"I am not a competent judge," retorted the Minister; "Madame de Talleyrand is here, and has not the honour of being a Frenchwoman; but I dare say the Marquis will agree with me that in no society in the British Islands, among a dozen of ladies, has he counted more beauties, or admired greater accomplishments or more perfection."

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To this the Marquis bowed assent, saying that in all his general remarks the party present, of course, was not included. All the ladies, who were well acquainted with his absent and blundering conversation, very good-humouredly laughed, and Madame Murat assured him that if he would give her the address of the belle in France who had transformed a gallant Frenchman into a chevalier of British beauty, she would attempt to make up their difference. "She is no more, Madame," said the Marquis; "she was, unfortunately, guillotined two days before——" the father of Madame Louis, he was going to say, when Talleyrand interrupted him with a significant look, and said, "Before the fall of Robespierre, you mean."

From these and other traits of the Marquis's character, you may see that he erred more from absence of mind than any premeditation to give offence. He received, however, the next morning, a lettre de cachet from Fouche, which exiled him to Blois, and forbade him to return to Paris without further orders from the Minister of Police. I know, from high authority, that to the interference of Princesse Louis alone is he indebted for not being shut up in the Temple, and, perhaps, transported to our colonies, for having depreciated the power and means of France to invade England. I am perfectly convinced that none of those who spoke on the subject of the invasion expressed anything but what they really thought; and that, of the whole party, none, except Talleyrand, the Marquis, and myself, entertained the least doubt of the success of the expedition; so firmly did they rely on the former fortune of Bonaparte, his boastings, and his assurance.

After dinner I had an opportunity of conversing for ten minutes with Madame Louis Bonaparte, whom I found extremely amiable, but I fear that she is not happy. Her husband, though the most stupid, is, however, the best tempered of the Bonapartes, and seemed very attentive and attached to her. She was far advanced in her pregnancy, and looked, notwithstanding, uncommonly well. I have heard that Louis is inclined to inebriation, and when in that situation is very brutal to his wife, and very indelicate with other women before her eyes. He intrigues with her own servants and the number of his illegitimate children is said to be as many as his years. She asked General Murat to present me and recommend me to Fouche, which he did with great politeness; and the Minister assured me that he should be glad to see me at his hotel, which I much doubt. The last words Madame Louis said to me, in showing me a princely crown, richly set with diamonds, and given her by her brother-in-law, Napoleon, were, "Alas! grandeur is not always happiness, nor the most elevated the most fortunate lot."

LETTER XVII.

Paris, August, 1805.

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My Lord:—The arrival of the Pope in this country was certainly a grand epoch, not only in the history of the Revolution, but in the annals of Europe. The debates in the Sacred College for and against this journey, and for and against his coronation of Bonaparte, are said to have been long as well as violent, and arranged according to the desires of Cardinal Fesch only by the means of four millions of livres distributed apropos among its pious members. Of this money the Cardinals Mattei, Pamphili, Dugnani, Maury, Pignatelli, Roverella, Somaglia, Pacca, Brancadoro, Litta, Gabrielli, Spina, Despuig, and Galefli, are said to have shared the greatest part; and from the most violent anti-Bonapartists, they instantly became the strenuous adherents of Napoleon the First, who, of course, cannot be ignorant of their real worth.

The person entrusted by Bonaparte and Talleyrand to carry on at Rome the intrigue which sent Pius VII. to cross the Alps was Cardinal Fesch, brother of Madame Letitia Bonaparte by the side of her mother, who, in a second marriage, chose a pedlar of the name of Nicolo Fesch, for her husband.

Joseph, Cardinal Fesch, was born at Ajaccio, in Corsica, on the 8th of March, 1763, and was in his infancy received as a singing boy (*enfant de chœur*) in a convent of his native place. In 1782, whilst he was on a visit to some of his relations in the Island of Sardinia, being on a fishing party some distance from shore, he was, with his companions, captured by an Algerine felucca, and carried a captive to Algiers. Here he turned Mussulman, and, until 1790, was a zealous believer in, and professor of, the Alcoran. In that year he found an opportunity to escape from Algiers, and to return to Ajaccio, when he abjured his renegacy, exchanged the Alcoran for the Bible, and, in 1791, was made a constitutional curate, that is to say, a revolutionary Christian priest. In 1793, when even those were proscribed, he renounced the sacristy of his Church for the bar of a tavern, where, during 1794 and 1795, he gained a small capital by the number and liberality of his English customers. After the victories of his nephew Napoleon in Italy during the following year, he was advised to reassume the clerical habit, and after Napoleon's proclamation of a First Consul, he was made Archbishop of Lyons. In 1802, Pius VII. decorated him with the Roman purple, and he is now a pillar of the Roman faith, in a fair way of seizing the Roman tiara. If letters from Rome can be depended upon, Cardinal Fesch, in the name of the Emperor of the French, informed His Holiness the Pope that he must either retire to a convent or travel to France, either abdicate his own sovereignty, or inaugurate Napoleon the First a Sovereign of France. Without the decision of the Sacred College, effected in the manner already stated, the majority of the faithful believe that this pontiff would have preferred obscurity to disgrace.

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While Joseph Fesch was a master of a tavern he married the daughter of a tinker, by whom he had three children. This marriage, according to the republican regulations, had only been celebrated by the municipality at Ajaccio; Fesch, therefore, upon again entering the bosom of the Church, left his municipal wife and children to shift for themselves, considering himself still, according to the canonical laws, a bachelor. But Madame Fesch, hearing, in 1801, of her *ci-devant* husband's promotion to the Archbishopric of Lyons, wrote to him for some succours, being with her children reduced to great misery. Madame Letitia Bonaparte answered her letter, enclosing a draft for six hundred livres—informing her that the same sum would be paid her every six months, as long as she continued with her children to reside at Corsica, but that it would cease the instant she left that island. Either thinking herself not sufficiently paid for her discretion, or enticed by some enemy of the Bonaparte family, she arrived secretly at Lyons in October last year, where she remained unknown until the arrival of the Pope. On the first day His Holiness gave there his public benediction, she found means to pierce the crowd, and to approach his person, when Cardinal Fesch was by his side. Profiting by a moment's silence, she called out loudly, throwing herself at his feet: "Holy Father! I am the lawful wife of Cardinal Fesch, and these are our children; he cannot, he dares not, deny this truth. Had he behaved liberally to me, I should not have disturbed him in his present grandeur; I supplicate you, Holy Father, not to restore me my husband, but to force him to provide for his wife and children, according to his present circumstances."—"Matta—ella e matta, santissimo padre! She is mad—she is mad, Holy Father," said the Cardinal; and the good pontiff ordered her to be taken care of, to prevent her from doing herself or the children any mischief. She was, indeed, taken care of, because nobody ever since heard what has become either of her or her children; and as they have not returned to Corsica, probably some snug retreat has been allotted them in France.

The purple was never disgraced by a greater libertine than Cardinal Fesch: his amours are numerous, and have often involved him in disagreeable scrapes. He had, in 1803, an unpleasant adventure at Lyons, which has since made his stay in that city but short. Having thrown his handkerchief at the wife of a manufacturer of the name of Giroton, she accepted it, and gave him an appointment at her house, at a time in the evening when her husband usually went to the play. His Eminence arrived in disguise, and was received with open arms. But he was hardly seated by her side before the door of a closet was burst open, and his shoulders smarted from the lashes inflicted by an offended husband. In vain did he mention his name and rank; they rather increased than decreased the fury of Giroton, who pretended it was utterly impossible

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for a Cardinal and Archbishop to be thus overtaken with the wife of one of his flock; at last Madame Girot proposed a pecuniary accommodation, which, after some opposition, was acceded to; and His Eminence signed a bond for one hundred thousand livres—upon condition that nothing should transpire of this intrigue—a high price enough for a sound drubbing. On the day when the bond was due, Girot and his wife were both arrested by the police commissary, Dubois (a brother of the prefect of police at Paris), accused of being connected with the coiners, a capital crime at present in this country. In a search made in their house, bad money to the amount of three thousand livres was discovered; which they had received the day before from a man who called himself a merchant from Paris, but who was a police spy sent to entrap them. After giving up the bond of the Cardinal, the Emperor graciously remitted the capital punishment, upon condition that they should be transported for life to Cayenne.

This is the prelate on whom Bonaparte intends to confer the Roman tiara, and to constitute a successor of St. Peter. It would not be the least remarkable event in the beginning of the remarkable nineteenth century were we to witness the papal throne occupied by a man who from a singing boy became a renegade slave, from a Mussulman a constitutional curate, from a tavern-keeper an archbishop, from the son of a pedlar the uncle of an Emperor, and from the husband of the daughter of a tinker, a member of the Sacred College.

His sister, Madame Letitia Bonaparte, presented him, in 1802, with an elegant library, for which she had paid six hundred thousand livres—and his nephew, Napoleon, allows him a yearly pension double that amount. Besides his dignity as a prelate, His Eminence is Ambassador from France at Rome, a Knight of the Spanish Order of the Golden Fleece, a grand officer of the Legion of Honour, and a grand almoner of the Emperor of the French.

The Archbishop of Paris is now in his ninety-sixth year, and at his death Cardinal Fesch is to be transferred to the see of this capital, in expectation of the triple crown and the keys of St. Peter.

LETTER XVIII.

Paris, August, 1805.

My Lord:—The amiable and accomplished Amelia Frederique, Princess Dowager of the late Electoral Prince, Charles Louis of Baden, born a Princess of Hesse-Darmstadt, has procured the Electoral House of Baden the singular honour of giving consorts to three reigning and Sovereign Princes,—to an Emperor of Russia, to a King of Sweden, and to the Elector of Bavaria. Such a distinction, and such alliances, called the attention of

those at the head of our Revolution; who, after attempting in vain to blow up hereditary thrones by the aid of sans-culotte incendiaries, seated sans-culottes upon thrones, that they might degrade what was not yet ripe for destruction.

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Charles Frederick, the reigning Elector of Baden, is now near fourscore years of age. At this period of life if any passions remain, avarice is more common than ambition; because treasures may be hoarded without bustle, while activity is absolutely necessary to push forward to the goal of distinction. Having bestowed a new King on Tuscany, Bonaparte and Talleyrand also resolved to confer new Electors on Germany. A more advantageous fraternity could not be established between the innovators here and their opposers in other countries, than by incorporating the grandfather-in-law of so many Sovereigns with their own revolutionary brotherhood; to humble him by a new rank, and to disgrace him by indemnities obtained from their hands. An intrigue between our Minister, Talleyrand, and the Baden Minister, Edelsheim, transformed the oldest Margrave of Germany into its youngest Elector, and extended his dominions by the spoils obtained at the expense of the rightful owners. The invasion of the Baden territory in time of peace, and the seizure of the Duc d'Enghien, though under the protection of the laws of nations and hospitality, must have soon convinced Baron Edelsheim what return his friend Talleyrand expected, and that Bonaparte thought he had a natural right to insult by his attacks those he had dishonoured by his connections.

The Minister, Baron Edelsheim, is half an illuminato, half a philosopher, half a politician, and half a revolutionist. He was, long before he was admitted into the council chamber of his Prince, half an atheist, half an intriguer, and half a spy, in the pay of Frederick the Great of Prussia. His entry upon the stage at Berlin, and particularly the first parts he was destined to act, was curious and extraordinary; whether he acquitted himself better in this capacity than he has since in his political one is not known. He was afterwards sent to this capital to execute a commission, of which he acquitted himself very ill; exposing himself rashly, without profit or service to his employer. Frederick II., dreading the tediousness of a proposed congress at Augsburg, wished to send a private emissary to sound the King of France. For this purpose he chose Edelsheim as a person least liable to suspicion. The project of Frederick was to indemnify the King of Poland for his first losses by robbing the ecclesiastical Princes of Germany. This, Louis XV. totally rejected; and Edelsheim returned with his answer to the Prussian Monarch, then at Freyburg. From thence he afterwards departed for London, made his communications, and was once again sent back to Paris, on pretence that he had left some of his travelling trunks there; and the Bailli de Foulay, the Ambassador of the Knights of Malta, being persuaded that the Cabinet of Versailles was effectually desirous of peace, was, as he had been before, the mediator. The Bailli was deceived. The Duc de Choiseul, the then Prime Minister, indecently enough threw Edelsheim

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into the Bastille, in order to search or seize his papers, which, however, were secured elsewhere. Edelsheim was released on the morrow, but obliged to depart the kingdom by the way of Turin, as related by Frederick II. in his "History of the Seven Years' War." On his return he was disgraced, and continued so until 1778; when he again was used as emissary to various Courts of Germany. In 1786 the Elector of Baden sent him to Berlin, on the ascension of Frederick William II., as a complimentary envoy. This Monarch, when he saw him, could not forbear laughing at the high wisdom of the Court that selected such a personage for such an embassy, and of his own sagacity in accepting it. He quitted the capital of Prussia as he came there, with an opinion of himself that the royal smiles of contempt had neither altered nor diminished.

You see, by this account, that Edelsheim has long been a partisan of the pillage of Germany called indemnities; and long habituated to affronts, as well as to plots. To all his other half qualities, half modesty can hardly be added, when he calls himself, or suffers himself to be called, "the Talleyrand of Carlsruhe." He accompanied his Prince last year to Mentz; where this old Sovereign was not treated by Bonaparte in the most decorous or decent manner, being obliged to wait for hours in his antechamber, and afterwards stand during the levees, or in the drawing-rooms of Napoleon or of his wife, without the offer of a chair, or an invitation to sit down. It was here where, by a secret treaty, Bonaparte became the Sovereign of Baden, if sovereignty consists in the disposal of the financial and military resources of a State; and they were agreed to be assigned over to him whenever he should deem it proper or necessary to invade the German Empire, in return for his protection against the Emperor of Germany, who can have no more interest than intent to attack a country so distant from his hereditary dominions, and whose Sovereign is, besides, the grandfather of the consort of his nearest and best ally.

Talleyrand often amused himself at Mentz with playing on the vanity and affected consequence of Edelsheim, who was delighted if at any time our Minister took him aside, or whispered to him as in confidence. One morning, at the assembly of the Elector Arch-Chancellor, where Edelsheim was creeping and cringing about him as usual, he laid hold of his arm and walked with him to the upper part of the room. In a quarter of an hour they both joined the company, Edelsheim unusually puffed up with vanity.

"I will lay and bet, gentlemen," said Talleyrand, "that you cannot, with all your united wits, guess the grand subject of my conversation with the good Baron Edelsheim." Without waiting for an answer, he continued: "As the Baron is a much older and more experienced traveller than myself, I asked him which, of all the countries he had visited, could boast the prettiest and kindest women. His reply was really very instructive, and it would be a great pity if justice were not done to his merit by its publicity."

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Here the Baron, red as a turkey-cock and trembling with anger, interrupted. "His Excellency," said he, "is to-night in a humour to joke; what we spoke of had nothing to do with women."

"Nor with men, either," retorted Talleyrand, going away.

This anecdote, Baron Dahlberg, the Minister of the Elector of Baden to our Court, had the ingenuity to relate at Madame Chapui's as an evidence of Edelsheim's intimacy with Talleyrand; only he left out the latter part, and forgot to mention the bad grace with which this impertinence of Talleyrand was received; but this defect of memory Count von Beust, the envoy of the Elector Arch-Chancellor, kindly supplied.

Baron Edelsheim is a great amateur of knighthoods. On days of great festivities his face is, as it were, illuminated with the lustre of his stars; and the crosses on his coat conceal almost its original colour. Every petty Prince of Germany has dubbed him a chevalier; but Emperors and Kings have not been so unanimous in distinguishing his desert, or in satisfying his desires.

At Mentz no Prince or Minister fawned more assiduously upon Bonaparte than this hero of chivalry. It could not escape notice, but need not have alarmed our great man, as was the case. The prefect of the palace was ordered to give authentic information concerning Edelsheim's moral and political character. He applied to the police commissary, who, within twenty hours, signed a declaration affirming that Edelsheim was the most inoffensive and least dangerous of all imbecile creatures that ever entered the Cabinet of a Prince; that he had never drawn a sword, worn a dagger, or fired a pistol in his life; that the inquiries about his real character were sneered at in every part of the Electorate, as nowhere they allowed him common sense, much less a character; all blamed his presumption, but none defended his capacity.

After the perusal of this report, Bonaparte asked Talleyrand: "What can Edelsheim mean by his troublesome assiduities? Does he want any indemnities, or does he wish me to make him a German Prince? Can he have the impudence to hope that I shall appoint him a tribune, a legislator, or a Senator in France, or that I shall give him a place in my Council of State?"

"No such thing," answered the Minister; "did not Your Majesty condescend to notice at the last fete that this eclipsed moon was encompassed in a firmament of stars. You would, Sire, make him the happiest of mortals were you to nominate him a member of your Legion of Honour."

"Does he want nothing else?" said Napoleon, as if relieved at once of an oppressive burden. "Write to my chancellor of the Legion of Honour, Lacedepede, to send him a patent, and do you inform him of this favour."

It is reported at Carlsruhe, the capital of Baden, that Baron Edelsheim has composed his own epitaph, in which he claims immortality, because under his Ministry the Margravate of Baden was elevated into an Electorate!!!

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LETTER XIX.

Paris, August, 1805.

My Lord:—The sensation that the arrival of the Pope in this country caused among the lower classes of people cannot be expressed, and if expressed, would not be believed. I am sorry, however, to say that, instead of improving their morals or increasing their faith, this journey has shaken both morality and religion to their foundation.

According to our religious notions, as you must know, the Roman pontiff is the vicar of Christ, and infallible; he can never err. The atheists of the National Convention and the Theophilanthropists of the Directory not only denied his demi-divinity, but transformed him into a satyr; and in pretending to tear the veil of superstition, annihilated all belief in a God. The ignorant part of our nation, which, as everywhere else, constitutes the majority, witnessing the impunity and prosperity of crime, and bestowing on the Almighty the passions of mortals, first doubted of His omnipotence in not crushing guilt, and afterwards of His existence in not exterminating the blasphemous from among the living. Feeling, however, the want of consolation in their misfortunes here, and hope of a reward hereafter for unmerited sufferings upon earth, they all hailed as a blessing the restoration of Christianity; and by this political act Bonaparte gained more adherents than by all his victories he had procured admirers.

Bonaparte's character, his good and his bad qualities, his talents and his crimes, are too recent and too notorious to require description. Should he continue successful, and be attended by fortune to his grave, future ages may perhaps hail him a hero and a great man; but by his contemporaries it will always be doubtful whether mankind has not suffered more from his ambition and cruelties than benefited by his services. Had he satisfied himself by continuing the Chief Magistrate of a Commonwealth; or, if he judged that a monarchical Government alone was suitable to the spirit of this country, had he recalled our legitimate King, he would have occupied a principal, if not the first, place in the history of France,—a place much more exalted than he can ever expect to fill as an Emperor of the French. Let his prosperity be ever so uninterrupted, he cannot be mentioned but as an usurper, an appellation never exciting esteem, frequently inspiring contempt, and always odious.

The crime of usurpation is the greatest and most enormous a subject can perpetrate; but what epithet can there be given to him who, to preserve an authority unlawfully acquired, associates in his guilt a Supreme Pontiff, whom the multitude is accustomed to reverence as the representative of their God, but who, by this act of scandal and sacrilege, descends to a level with the most culpable of men? I have heard, not only in this city but in villages, where sincerity is more frequent than corruption, and where hypocrites are as little known as infidels, these remarks made by the people:

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“Can the real vicar of Christ, by his inauguration, commit the double injustice of depriving the legitimate owner of his rights, and of bestowing as a sacred donation what belongs to another; and what he has no power, no authority, to dispose of? Can Pius VII. confer on Napoleon the First what belongs to Louis XVIII.? Would Jesus Christ, if upon earth, have acted thus? Would his immediate successors, the Apostles, not have preferred the suffering of martyrdom to the commission of any injury? If the present Roman pontiff acts differently from what his Master and predecessors would have done, can he be the vicar of our Saviour?”

These and many similar reflections the common people have made, and make yet. The step from doubt to disbelief is but short, and those brought up in the Roman Catholic religion, who hesitate about believing Pius VII. to be the vicar of Christ, will soon remember the precepts of atheists and freethinkers, and believe that Christ is not the Son of God, and that God is only the invention of fear.

The fact is, that by the Pope's performance of the coronation of an Emperor of the French, a religious as well as a political revolution was effected; and the usurper in power, whatever his creed may be, will hereafter, without much difficulty, force it on his slaves. You may, perhaps, object that Pius VII., in his official account to the Sacred College of his journey to France, speaks with enthusiasm of the Catholicism of the French people. But did not the Goddess of Reason, did not Robespierre as a high priest of a Supreme Being, speak as highly of their sectaries? Read the *Moniteur* of 1793 and 1794, and you will be convinced of the truth of this assertion. They, like the Pope, spoke of what they saw, and they, like him, did not see an individual who was not instructed how to perform his part, so as to give satisfaction to him whom he was to please, and to those who employed him. As you have attended to the history of our Revolution, you have found it in great part a cruel masquerade, where none but the unfortunate Louis XVI. appeared in his native and natural character and without a mask.

The countenance of Pius VII. is placid and benign, and a kind of calmness and tranquillity pervades his address and manners, which are, however, far from being easy or elegant. The crowds that he must have been accustomed to see since his present elevation have not lessened a timidity the consequence of early seclusion. Nothing troubled him more than the numerous deputations of our Senate, Legislative Body, Tribunate, National Institute, Tribunals, etc., that teased him on every occasion. He never was suspected of any vices, but all his virtues are negative; and his best quality is, not to do good, but to prevent evil. His piety is sincere and unaffected, and it is not difficult to perceive that he has been more accustomed to address his God than to converse with men. He is nowhere so well in his place as before

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the altar; when imploring the blessings of Providence on his audience he speaks with confidence, as to a friend to whom his purity is known, and who is accustomed to listen favourably to his prayers. He is zealous but not fanatical, but equally superstitious as devout. His closet was crowded with relics, rosaries, *etc.*, but there he passed generally eight hours of the twenty-four upon his knees in prayer and meditation. He often inflicted on himself mortifications, observed fast-days, and kept his vows with religious strictness.

None of the promises made him by Cardinal Fesch, in the name of Napoleon the First, were performed, but all were put off until a general pacification. He was promised indemnity for Avignon, Bologna, Ferrara, and Ravenna; the ancient supremacy and pecuniary contributions of the Gallican Church, and the restoration of certain religious orders, both in France and Italy; but notwithstanding his own representations, and the activity of his Cardinal, Caprara, nothing was decided, though nothing was refused.

By some means or other he was made perfectly acquainted with the crimes and vices of most of our public functionaries. Talleyrand was surprised when Cardinal Caprara explained to him the reason why the Pope refused to admit some persons to his presence, and why he wished others even not to be of the party when he accepted the invitations of Bonaparte and his wife to their private societies. Many are, however, of opinion that Talleyrand, from malignity or revenge, often heightened and confirmed His Holiness's aversion. This was at least once the case with regard to De Lalande. When Duroc inquired the cause of the Pope's displeasure against this astronomer, and hinted that it would be very agreeable to the Emperor were His Holiness to permit him the honour of prostrating himself, he was answered that men of talents and learning would always be welcome to approach his person; that he pitied the errors and prayed for the conversion of this savant, but was neither displeased nor offended with him. Talleyrand, when informed of the Pope's answer, accused Cardinal Caprara of having misinterpreted his master's communications; and this prelate, in his turn, censured our Minister's bad memory.

You must have read that this De Lalande is regarded in France as the first astronomer of Europe, and hailed as the high priest of atheists; he is said to be the author of a shockingly blasphemous work called "The Bible of a People who acknowledge no God." He implored the ferocious Robespierre to honour the heavens by bestowing, on a new planet pretended to be discovered, his *ci-devant* Christian-name, Maximilian. In a letter of congratulation to Bonaparte, on the occasion of his present elevation, he also implored him to honour the God of the Christians by styling himself Jesus Christ the First, Emperor of the French, instead of Napoleon the First. But it was not his known impiety that made Talleyrand wish to exclude

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him from insulting with his presence a Christian pontiff. In the summer of 1799, when the Minister was in a momentary disgrace, De Lalande was at the head of those who imputed to his treachery, corruptions, and machinations all the evils France then suffered, both from external enemies and internal factions. If Talleyrand has justly been reproached for soon forgetting good offices and services done him, nobody ever denied that he has the best recollection in the world of offences or attacks, and that he is as revengeful as unforgiving.

The only one of our great men whom Pius VII. remained obstinate and inflexible in not receiving, was the Senator and Minister of Police, Fouche. As His Holiness was not so particular with regard to other persons who, like Fouche, were both apostate priests and regicide subjects, the following is reported to be the cause of his aversion and obduracy:

In November, 1793, the remains of a wretch of the name of Challiers—justly called, for his atrocities, the Murat of Lyons—were ordered by Fouche, then a representative of the people in that city, to be produced and publicly worshipped; and, under his particular auspices, a grand fete was performed to the memory of this republican martyr, who had been executed as an assassin. As part of this impious ceremony, an ass, covered with a Bishop's vestments, having on his head a mitre, and the volumes of Holy Writ tied to his tail, paraded the streets. The remains of Challiers were then burnt, and the ashes distributed among his adorers; while the books were also consumed, and the ashes scattered in the wind. Fouche proposed, after giving the ass some water to drink in a sacred chalice, to terminate the festivity of the day by murdering all the prisoners, amounting to seven thousand five hundred; but a sudden storm prevented the execution of this diabolical proposition, and dispersed the sacrilegious congregation.

LETTER XX.

Paris, August, 1805.

My Lord:—Though all the Bonapartes were great favourites with Pius VII., Madame Letitia, their mother, had a visible preference. In her apartments he seemed most pleased to meet the family parties, as they were called, because to them, except the Bonapartes, none but a few select favourites were invited,—a distinction as much wished for and envied as any other Court honour. After the Pope had fixed the evening he would appear among them, Duroc made out a list, under the dictates of Napoleon, of the chosen few destined to partake of the blessing of His Holiness's presence; this list was merely pro form, or as a compliment, laid before him; and after his tacit approbation, the individuals were informed, from the first chamberlain's office, that they would be honoured with admittance at such an hour, to such a company, and in such an

apartment. The dress in which they were to appear was also prescribed. The parties usually met

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at six o'clock in the evening. On the Pope's entrance all persons, of both sexes, kneeled to receive his blessing. Tea, ice, liqueurs, and confectionery were then served. In the place of honour were three elevated elbow-chairs, and His Holiness was seated between the Emperor and Empress, and seldom spoke to any one to whom Napoleon did not previously address the word. The exploits of Bonaparte, particularly his campaigns in Egypt, were the chief subjects of conversation. Before eight o'clock the Pope always retired, distributing his blessing to the kneeling audience, as on his entry. When he was gone, card-tables were brought in, and play was permitted. Duroc received his master's orders how to distribute the places at the different tables, what games were to be played, and the amount of the sums to be staked. These were usually trifling and small compared to what is daily risked in our fashionable circles.

Often, after the Pope had returned to his own rooms, Madame Letitia Bonaparte was admitted to assist at his private prayers. This lady, whose intrigues and gallantry are proverbial in Corsica, has, now that she is old (as is generally the case), turned devotee, and is surrounded by hypocrites and impostors, who, under the mask of sanctity, deceive and plunder her. Her antechambers are always full of priests; and her closet and bedroom are crowded with relics, which she collected during her journey to Italy last year. She might, if she chose, establish a Catholic museum, and furnish it with a more curious collection, in its sort, than any of our other museums contain. Of all the saints in our calendar, there is not one of any notoriety who has not supplied her with a finger, a toe, or some other part; or with a piece of a shirt, a handkerchief, a sandal, or a winding-sheet. Even a bit of a pair of breeches, said to have belonged to Saint Mathurin, whom many think was a sans-culotte, obtains her adoration on certain occasions. As none of her children have yet arrived at the same height of faith as herself, she has, in her will, bequeathed to the Pope all her relics, together with eight hundred and seventy-nine Prayer-books, and four hundred and forty-six Bibles, either in manuscript or of different editions. Her favourite breviary, used only on great solemnities, was presented to her by Cardinal Maury at Rome, and belonged, as it is said, formerly to Saint Francois, whose commentary, written with his own hand, fills the margins; though many, who with me adore him as a saint, doubt whether he could either read or write.

Not long ago she made, as she thought, an exceedingly valuable acquisition. A priest arrived direct from the Holy City of Jerusalem, well recommended by the inhabitants of the convents there, with whom he pretended to have passed his youth. After prostrating himself before the Pope, he waited on Madame Letitia Bonaparte. He told her that he had brought with him from Syria the famous relic, the shoulder-bone of Saint John the Baptist; but that, being in want of money for his voyage, he borrowed upon it from a Grecian Bishop in Montenegro two hundred louis d'or. This sum, and one hundred louis d'or besides, was immediately given him; and within three months, for a large sum in addition to those advanced, this precious relic was in Madame Letitia's possession.

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Notwithstanding this lady's care not to engage in her service any person of either sex who cannot produce, not a certificate of civism from the municipality as was formerly the case, but a certificate of Christianity, and a billet of confession signed by the curate of the parish, she had often been robbed, and the robbers had made particularly free with those relics which were set in gold or in diamonds. She accused her daughter, the Princesse Borghese, who often rallies the devotion of her mamma, and who is more an amateur of the living than of the dead, of having played her these tricks. The Princess informed Napoleon of her mother's losses, as well as of her own innocence, and asked him to apply to the police to find out the thief, who no doubt was one of the pious rogues who almost devoured their mother.

On the next day Napoleon invited Madame Letitia to dinner, and Fouche had orders to make a strict search, during her absence, among the persons composing her household. Though he, on this occasion, did not find what he was looking for, he made a discovery which very much mortified Madame Letitia.

Her first chambermaid, Rosina Gaglini, possessed both her esteem and confidence, and had been sent for purposely from Ajaccio, in Corsica, on account of her general renown for great piety, and a report that she was an exclusive favourite with the Virgin Mary, by whose interference she had even performed, it was said, some miracles; such as restoring stolen goods, runaway cattle, lost children, and procuring prizes in the lottery. Rosina was as relic-mad as her mistress; and as she had no means to procure them otherwise, she determined to partake of her lady's by cutting off a small part of each relic of Madame Letitia's principal saints. These precious 'morceaux' she placed in a box upon which she kneeled to say her prayers during the day; and which, for a mortification, served her as a pillow during the night. Upon each of the sacred bits she had affixed a label with the name of the saint it belonged to, which occasioned the disclosure. When Madame Letitia heard of this pious theft, she insisted on having the culprit immediately and severely punished; and though the Princesse Borghese, as the innocent cause of poor Rosina's misfortune, interfered, and Rosina herself promised never more to plunder saints, she was without mercy turned away, and even denied money sufficient to carry her back to Corsica. Had she made free with Madame Letitia's plate or wardrobe, there is no doubt but that she had been forgiven; but to presume to share with her those sacred supports on her way to Paradise was a more unpardonable act with a devotee than to steal from a lover the portrait of an adored mistress.

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In the meantime the police were upon the alert to discover the person whom they suspected of having stolen the relics for the diamonds, and not the diamonds for the relics. Among our fashionable and new saints, surprising as you may think it, Madame de Genlis holds a distinguished place; and she, too, is an amateur and collector of relics in proportion to her means; and with her were found those missed by Madame Letitia. Being asked to give up the name of him from whom she had purchased them, she mentioned Abbe Saladin, the pretended priest from Jerusalem. He, in his turn, was questioned, and by his answers gave rise to suspicion that he himself was the thief. The person of whom he pretended to have bought them was not to be found, nor was any one of such a description remembered to have been seen anywhere. On being carried to prison, he claimed the protection of Madame Letitia, and produced a letter in which this lady had promised him a bishopric either in France or in Italy. When she was informed of his situation, she applied to her son Napoleon for his liberty, urging that a priest who from Jerusalem had brought with him to Europe such an extraordinary relic as the shoulder of Saint John, could not be culpable.

Abbe Saladin had been examined by Real, who concluded, from the accent and perfection with which he spoke the French language, that he was some French adventurer who had imposed on the credulity and superstition of Madame Letitia; and, therefore, threatened him with the rack if he did not confess the truth. He continued, however, in his story, and was going to be released upon an order from the Emperor, when a gendarme recognized him as a person who, eight years before, had, under the name of Lanoue, been condemned for theft and forgery to the galleys, whence he had made his escape. Finding himself discovered, he avowed everything. He said he had served in Egypt, in the guides of Bonaparte, but deserted to the Turks and turned Mussulman, but afterwards returned to the bosom of the Church at Jerusalem. There he persuaded the friars that he had been a priest, and obtained the certificates which introduced him to the Pope and to the Emperor's mother; from whom he had received twelve thousand livres for part of the jaw bone of a whale, which he had sold her for the shoulder-bone of a saint. As the police believe the certificates he has produced to be also forged, he is detained in prison until an answer arrives from our Consul in Syria.

Madame Letitia did not resign without tears the relic he had sold her; and there is reason to believe that many other pieces of her collections, worshipped by her as remains of saints, are equally genuine as this shoulder-bone of Saint John.

LETTER XXI.

Paris, August, 1805.

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My Lord:—That the population of this capital has, since the Revolution, decreased near two hundred thousand souls, is not to be lamented. This focus of corruption and profligacy is still too populous, though the inhabitants do not amount to six hundred thousand; for I am well persuaded that more crimes and excesses of every description are committed here in one year than are perpetrated in the same period of time in all other European capitals put together. From not reading in our newspapers, as we do in yours, of the robberies, murders, and frauds discovered and punished, you may, perhaps, be inclined to suppose my assertion erroneous or exaggerated; but it is the policy of our present Government to labour as much as possible in the dark; that is to say, to prevent, where it can be done, all publicity of anything directly or indirectly tending to inculcate it of oppression, tyranny, or even negligence; and to conceal the immorality of the people so nearly connected with its own immoral power. It is true that many vices and crimes here, as well as everywhere else, are unavoidable, and the natural consequences of corruption, and might be promulgated, therefore, without attaching any reproach to our rulers; but they are so accustomed to the mystery adherent to tyranny, that even the most unimportant lawsuit, uninteresting intrigue, elopement, or divorce, are never allowed to be mentioned in our journals, without a previous permission from the prefect of police, who very seldom grants it.

Most of the enormities now deplored in this country are the consequence of moral and religious licentiousness, that have succeeded to political anarchy, or rather were produced by it, and survive it. Add to this the numerous examples of the impunity of guilt, prosperity of infamy, misery of honesty, and sufferings of virtue, and you will not think it surprising that, notwithstanding half a million of spies, our roads and streets are covered with robbers and assassins, and our scaffolds with victims.

The undeniable *truth* that this city alone is watched by one hundred thousand spies (so that, when in company with six persons, one has reason to dread the presence of one spy), proclaims at once the morality of the governors and that of the governed: were the former just, and the latter good, this mass of vileness would never be employed; or, if employed, wickedness would expire for want of fuel, and the hydra of tyranny perish by its own pestilential breath.

According to the official registers published by Manuel in 1792, the number of spies all over France during the reign of Louis XVI. was nineteen thousand three hundred (five thousand less than under Louis XV.); and of this number six thousand were distributed in Paris, and in a circle of four leagues around it, including Versailles. You will undoubtedly ask me, even allowing for our extension of territory, what can be the cause of this disproportionate increase of distrust and depravity? I will explain it as far as my abilities admit, according to the opinions of others compared with my own remarks.

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When factions usurped the supremacy of the Kings, vigilance augmented with insecurity; and almost everybody who was not an opposer, who refused being an accomplice, or feared to be a victim, was obliged to serve as an informer and vilify himself by becoming a spy. The rapidity with which parties followed and destroyed each other made the criminals as numerous as the sufferings of honour and loyalty innumerable; and I am sorry to say few persons exist in my degraded country, whose firmness and constancy were proof against repeated torments and trials, and who, to preserve their lives, did not renounce their principles and probity.

Under the reign of Robespierre and of the Committee of Public Safety, every member of Government, of the clubs, of the tribunals, and of the communes, had his private spies; but no regular register was kept of their exact number. Under the Directory a Police Minister was nominated, and a police office established. According to the declaration of the Police Minister, Cochon, in 1797, the spies, who were then regularly paid, amounted to one hundred and fifty thousand; and of these, thirty thousand did duty in this capital. How many there were in 1799, when Fouché, for the first time, was appointed a chief of the department of police, is not known, but suppose them doubled within two years; their increase since is nevertheless immense, considering that France has enjoyed upwards of four years' uninterrupted Continental peace, and has not been exposed to any internal convulsions during the same period.

You may, perhaps, object that France is not rich enough to keep up as numerous an army of spies as of soldiers; because the expense of the former must be triple the amount of the latter. Were all these spies, now called police agents, or agents of the secret police, paid regular salaries, your objection would stand, but most of them have no other reward than the protection of the police; being employed in gambling—houses, in coffee—houses, in taverns, at the theatres, in the public gardens, in the hotels, in lottery offices, at pawnbrokers', in brothels, and in bathing-houses, where the proprietors or masters of these establishments pay them. They receive nothing from the police, but when they are enabled to make any great discoveries, those who have been robbed or defrauded, and to whom they have been serviceable, are, indeed, obliged to present them with some *douceur*, fixed by the police at the rate of the value recovered; but such occurrences are merely accidental. To these are to be added all individuals of either sex who by the law are obliged to obtain from the police licenses to exercise their trade, as pedlars, tinkers, masters of puppet-shows, wild beasts, *etc.* These, on receiving their passes, inscribe themselves, and take the oaths as spies; and are forced to send in their regular reports of what they hear or see. Prostitutes, who, all over this country, are under the necessity of paying

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for regular licenses, are obliged also to give information, from time to time, to the nearest police commissary of what they observe or what they know respecting their visitors, neighbours, *etc.* The number of unfortunate women of this description who had taken out licenses during the year 12, or from September, 1803, to September, 1804, is officially known to have amounted to two hundred and twenty thousand, of whom forty thousand were employed by the armies.

It is no secret that Napoleon Bonaparte has his secret spies upon his wife, his brothers, his sisters, his Ministers, Senators, and other public functionaries, and also upon his public spies. These are all under his own immediate control and that of Duroc, who does the duty of his private Police Minister, and in whom he confides more than even in the members of his own family. In imitation of their master, each of the other Bonapartes, and each of the Ministers, have their individual spies, and are watched in their turn by the spies of their secretaries, clerks, *etc.* This infamous custom of espionage goes ad infinitum, and appertains almost to the establishment and to the suite of each man in place, who does not think himself secure a moment if he remains in ignorance of the transactions of his rivals, as well as of those of his equals and superiors.

Fouche and Talleyrand are reported to have disagreed before Bonaparte on some subject or other, which is frequently the case. The former, offended at some doubts thrown out about his intelligence, said to the latter:

“I am so well served that I can tell you the name of every man or woman you have conversed with, both yesterday and today; where you saw them, and how long you remained with them or they with you.”

“If such commonplace espionage evinces any merit,” retorted Talleyrand, “I am even here your superior; because I know not only what has already passed with you and in your house, but what is to pass hereafter. I can inform you of every dish you had for your dinners this week, who provided these dinners, and who is expected to provide your meats to-morrow and the day after. I can whisper you, in confidence, who slept with Madame Fouche last night, and who has an appointment with her to-night.”

Here Bonaparte interrupted them, in his usual dignified language: “Hold both your tongues; you are both great rogues, but I am at a loss to decide which is the greatest.”

Without uttering a single syllable, Talleyrand made a profound reverence to Fouche. Bonaparte smiled, and advised them to live upon good terms if they were desirous of keeping their places.

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A man of the name of Ducroux, who, under Robespierre, had from a barber been made a general, and afterwards broken for his ignorance, was engaged by Bonaparte as a private spy upon Fouché, who employed him in the same capacity upon Bonaparte. His reports were always written, and delivered in person into the hands both of the Emperor and of his Minister. One morning he, by mistake, gave to Bonaparte the report of him instead of that intended for him. Bonaparte began to read: "Yesterday, at nine o'clock, the Emperor acted the complete part of a madman; he swore, stamped, kicked, foamed, roared—", here poor Ducroux threw himself at Bonaparte's feet, and called for mercy for the terrible blunder he had committed.

"For whom," asked Bonaparte, "did you intend this treasonable correspondence? I suppose it is composed for some English or Russian agent, for Pitt or for Marcoff. How long have you conspired with my enemies, and where are your accomplices?"

"For God's sake, hear me, Sire," prayed Ducroux. "Your Majesty's enemies have always been mine. The report is for one of your best friends; but were I to mention his name, he will ruin me."

"Speak out, or you die!" vociferated Bonaparte.

"Well, Sire, it is for Fouché—for nobody else but Fouché."

Bonaparte then rang the bell for Duroc, whom he ordered to see Ducroux shut up in a dungeon, and afterwards to send for Fouché. The Minister denied all knowledge of Ducroux, who, after undergoing several tortures, expiated his blunder upon the rack.

LETTER XXII.

Paris, August, 1805.

My Lord:—The Pope, during his stay here, rose regularly every morning at five o'clock, and went to bed every night before ten. The first hours of the day he passed in prayers, breakfasted after the Mass was over, transacted business till one, and dined at two. Between three and four he took—his siesta, or nap; afterwards he attended the vespers, and when they were over he passed an hour with the Bonapartes, or admitted to his presence some members of the clergy. The day was concluded, as it was begun, with some hours of devotion.

Had Pius VII. possessed the character of a Pius VI., he would never have crossed the Alps; or had he been gifted with the spirit and talents of Sextus V. or Leo X., he would never have entered France to crown Bonaparte, without previously stipulating for himself that he should be put in possession of the sovereignty of Italy. You can form no idea what great stress was laid on this act of His Holiness by the Bonaparte family, and what sacrifices were destined to be made had any serious and obstinate resistance

been apprehended. Threats were, indeed, employed personally against the Pope, and bribes distributed to the refractory members of the Sacred College; but it was no secret, either here or at Milan, that Cardinal Fesch had carte

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blanche with regard to the restoration of all provinces seized, since the war, from the Holy See, or full territorial indemnities in their place, at the expense of Naples and Tuscany; and, indeed, whatever the Roman pontiff has lost in Italy has been taken from him by Bonaparte alone, and the apparent generosity which policy and ambition required would, therefore, have merely been an act of justice. Confiding foolishly in the honour and rectitude of Napoleon, without any other security than the assertion of Fesch, Pius VII., within a fortnight's stay in France, found the great difference between the promises held out to him when residing as a Sovereign at Rome, and their accomplishment when he had so far forgotten himself and his sacred dignity as to inhabit as a guest the castle of the Tuileries.

Pius VII. mentioned, the day after his arrival at Fontainebleau, that it would be a gratification to his own subjects were he enabled to communicate to them the restoration of the former ecclesiastical domains, as a free gift of the Emperor of the French, at their first conference, as they would then be as well convinced of Napoleon's good faith as he was himself. In answer, His Holiness was informed that the Emperor was unprepared to discuss political subjects, being totally occupied with the thoughts how to entertain worthily his high visitor, and to acknowledge becomingly the great honour done and the great happiness conferred on him by such a visit. As soon as the ceremony of the coronation was over, everything, he hoped, would be arranged to the reciprocal satisfaction of both parties.

About the middle of last December, Bonaparte was again asked to fix a day when the points of negotiation between him and the Pope could be discussed and settled. Cardinal Caprara, who made this demand, was referred to Talleyrand, who denied having yet any instructions, though in daily expectation of them. Thus the time went on until February, when Bonaparte informed the Pope of his determination to assume the crown of Italy, and of some new changes necessary, in consequence on the other side of the Alps.

Either seduced by caresses, or blinded by his unaccountable partiality for Bonaparte, Pius VII., if left to himself, would not only have renounced all his former claims, but probably have made new sacrifices to this idol of his infatuation. Fortunately, his counsellors were wiser and less deluded, otherwise the remaining patrimony of Saint Peter might now have constituted a part of Napoleon's inheritance, in Italy. "Am I not, Holy Father!" exclaimed the Emperor frequently, "your son, the work of your hand? And if the pages of history assign me any glory, must it not be shared with you—or rather, do you not share it with me? Anything that impedes my successes, or makes the continuance of my power uncertain or hazardous, reflects on you and is dangerous to you. With me you will shine or be obscured, rise or fall. Could you, therefore,

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hesitate (were I to demonstrate to you the necessity of such a measure) to remove the Papal See to Avignon, where it formerly was and continued for centuries, and to enlarge the limits of my kingdom of Italy with the Ecclesiastical States? Can you believe my throne at Milan safe as long as it is not the sole throne of Italy? Do you expect to govern at Rome when I cease to reign at Milan? No, Holy Father! the pontiff who placed the crown on my head, should it be shaken, will fall to rise no more.” If what Cardinal Caprara said can be depended upon, Bonaparte frequently used to intimidate or flatter the Pope in this manner.

The representations of Cardinal Caprara changed Napoleon’s first intention of being again crowned by the Pope as a King of Italy. His crafty Eminence observed that, according to the Emperor’s own declaration, it was not intended that the crowns of France and Italy should continue united. But were he to cede one supremacy confirmed by the sacred hands of a pontiff, the partisans of the Bourbons, or the factions in France, would then take advantage to diminish in the opinion of the people his right and the sacredness of His Holiness, and perhaps make even the crown of the French Empire unstable. He did not deny that Charlemagne was crowned by a pontiff in Italy, but this ceremony was performed at Rome, where that Prince was proclaimed an Emperor of the Holy Roman and German Empires, as well as a King of Lombardy and Italy. Might not circumstances turn out so favourably for Napoleon the First that he also might be inaugurated an Emperor of the Germans as well as of the French? This last compliment, or prophecy, as Bonaparte’s courtiers call it (what a prophet a Caprara!), had the desired effect, as it flattered equally Napoleon’s ambition and vanity. For fear, however, of Talleyrand and other anti-Catholic counsellors, who wanted him to consider the Pope merely as his first almoner, and to treat him as all other persons of his household, His Eminence sent His Holiness as soon as possible packing for Rome. Though I am neither a cardinal nor a prophet, should you and I live twenty years longer, and the other Continental Sovereigns not alter their present incomprehensible conduct, I can, without any risk, predict that we shall see Rome salute the second Charlemagne an Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, if before that time death does not put a period to his encroachments and gigantic plans.

ETEXT EDITOR’S BOOKMARKS:

Bestowing on the Almighty the passions of mortals
Bow to their charlatanism as if it was sublimity
Cannot be expressed, and if expressed, would not be believed
Feeling, however, the want of consolation in their misfortunes
Future effects dreaded from its past enormities
God is only the invention of fear

Gold, changes black to white, guilt to innocence
Hail their sophistry and imposture as inspiration

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Invention of new tortures and improved racks
Labour as much as possible in the dark
Misfortunes and proscription would not only inspire courage
My means were the boundaries of my wants
Not suspected of any vices, but all his virtues are negative
Nothing was decided, though nothing was refused
Now that she is old (as is generally the case), turned devotee
Prelate on whom Bonaparte intends to confer the Roman tiara
Saints supplied her with a finger, a toe, or some other parts
Step is but short from superstition to infidelity
Suspicion and tyranny are inseparable companions
Two hundred and twenty thousand prostitute licenses
Usurped the easy direction of ignorance
Would cease to rule the day he became just