

NAPOLEON BONAPARTE.

Military Studies Begun In the School of Brienne.

HIS WAR GENIUS FORESHADOWED.

Defiant In Manner, He Incurred the Antipathy of His Fellow-Scholars—Arrested For Challenging a Schoolmate—Battle of the Snow Fort—Desired to Lead, Not Follow.

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III.—AUTUN AND BRIENNE.

The old town of Autun lies on the left bank of the Arroux, 164 miles south-east of Paris. Here the boys Buonaparte were put to school, in January of 1779. The town is an epitome of European history. It was the capital of the brave Eduans, whom Caesar overcame in the first year of the Gallic war. Napoleon, in his tenth year, arrived at the gates. He was put under charge of the Abbe Chardon, nephew of the General Marboeuf. The latter devoted himself to the interests of the Buonaparte family, and paid a part of the expenses.

Meanwhile the father and Marboeuf had gone to Versailles, and were assiduous in their efforts to get the boys established as pensioners.



NAPOLEON AT TWENTY-TWO.

The solicitation was that the young fellows should be educated at the expense of the state. Marboeuf invented a fiction, decked with fact, about the nobility of his wards; and the petition was granted finally as to Napoleon. But Joseph had now passed the limit of his eleventh year, and was no longer eligible—unless by violation of law. He must therefore be diverted to the priesthood, while the younger brother was assigned, at the public charge, to the military academy at Brienne-la-Chapelle, on the right bank of the Aube, in the department of the same name, a hundred and eighteen miles from Paris. Thither he was transferred in the latter part of April, 1779, and was admitted as a cadet.

At Autun, the chief business had been to teach him French. He applied himself closely to this task, but not very successfully. He learned to speak French, brokenly, with an Italian accent. To the end of his life he never acquired a nice knowledge of the adopted tongue. His grammar was broken, his composition thunderstruck, and his spelling heretical. His practical knowledge of the language which he was destined to use for forty-two years in his intercourse with men was sufficient; but his mind was never tolerant of technicalities.

This trait of neglecting the exactitudes was strongly manifested from Napoleon's childhood. He went as far as the practical in whatever subject he touched; but having seized thus much, he cared for nothing else. He desired correctness in others, for that was useful to him; but as for himself, he wanted only aggregate results and a knowledge of their practical advantage. All authors have commented on the inaccuracies and lapses in the Napoleonic correspondence and manuscripts. It became his habit to slur over, in his rapid way, the errors in his writing; and his arrogance seemed to convince him that, while correct spelling was an accomplishment in pedagogues, it was rather a fault in great men.

The young Bonaparte is described by his master as being of solemn demeanor; rarely laughing; never happy or mirthful; no disposition for playing; proud and solitary; easily wounded; always resentful; learning with lightning-like rapidity; but stopping short of correctness; vain of his faculties; patriotism almost morbid; disliking the powerful foreign race with which his lot had been cast; looking back regretfully to Corsica, and (most unboylike) thinking more of his country than he did of his home and mother.

Already, before leaving Autun, the pale little Bonaparte fell into frequent quarrels with his French schoolmates about the Corsican revolution! They insulted him with the charge that his countrymen had been cowards—else they would have won their independence. To this he answered angrily that if the French had outnumbered his people only four to one, the invaders would have been defeated. Military calculation already!

The military academy at Brienne was one of ten of like kind recently established in the kingdom. Besides these, there were two higher schools, one at Paris and the other at La Fleche. This system had superseded another which had failed on account of its unpopularity. The military education and the right thereto was a plum for the nobles. Boys of the Third Estate had therein no part or lot. In the schools were gathered the weakened reproductions of a moribund nobility. The governors of the schools were even as the cadets. The institutions degenerated, until there was a popular reaction against them. There was a reform, headed by the Church. New schools were established, and monks were put in charge of them!

At the time when the boy Napoleon went to Brienne, the remarkable condition was presented of a system of military schools in charge of the monastic

orders. The Brienne academy was conducted by the Minim Fathers, good men in their way, but as sources of inspiration to lads with the gleam of military glory in their brains they were mere dullness and obfuscation! The courses of study were mathematics, geography, history, Latin, modern languages, philosophy, and such poor misnamed science as might be squeezed from the sponge of clerical dogmatism in the eighteenth century.

Such was the disciplinary fare which was offered to the boy Napoleon. He was now far removed from friends and kinsmen. He made the acquaintance of his schoolmates; admired one of them—Bourienne—and seemed to love another—Des Mazis; but his character and manner were rocks of offense to the rest of the hundred and fifty. Nothing more striking has been presented in personal annals than the contrast which the poor Corsican lad, with his solemn face, long, stiff black hair, haughty expression, close-shut Italian mouth, solitary pride of bearing, and unfashionable insular suit, afforded to the throng of noble, mocking effeminate among whom he was washed up as from the sea.

On his entrance into the academy—which was a clean, well-ordered place—Napoleon brought from the Abbe Chardon certificates of moderate proficiency and the usual character-sketch of himself as a pupil. But nothing protected him from the inane animosity of his fellows. They jeered at him in a manner that would have driven a less resolute spirit to despair. Had he been complaisant, he might easily have won peace, if not popularity; but his defiant air seemed to challenge the attacks of the contemptuous crowd.

Deep down in the situation lay the provocation of poverty. The boy perceived the disparagement to which he was subjected on this score; and it maddened him not a little. His most troublesome characteristic was this—that he would not follow in anything. He would lead. He would be first or nothing. Assumption of leadership and the air of it brought on him still greater contumely. The bitterness of the situation sometimes came to the verge of bloodshed. Once he got himself arrested for challenging another to fight him on account of an insulting remark about his father. The sullen boy went muttering to the guard-house. Nor was he restored to condition until Marboeuf had interceded in person with the authorities.

Out of this epoch came some well-known stories of the student Bonaparte at Brienne. In course of time, his fellow-cadets, understanding him better, became first tolerant, and then friendly. Friendship in the case of the proud and arbitrary cadet meant subjection to his will. While he could not be companionable in sports, he could and would command. The existence of the tradition about his dividing his fellows into two armies, building a fort in winter out of snow (building it, too, according to the principles of good engineering), making a siege, with snowballs for bombs, and with all the seriousness of Genghis Khan carrying the place by storm, may well attest his disposition and growing ascendancy at the academy.

The young Napoleon remained at Brienne from April of 1779 to the year 1784. The inspector Keralio, coming from Paris to the military school, discerned in the slender cadet from Ajaccio the hints of promise. The method was in such cases to send up students from the minor academies to the Military School of Paris. Sometimes promotion was made directly to the navy; and this was considered a great honor. It appears that the inspector would have had Cadet Bonaparte sent to the fleet; but the officer died before his wish could be fulfilled.

Accordingly, at the end of Napoleon's course at Brienne, he was recommended for promotion to the military school in Paris. At this time, namely, in 1784, when Napoleon was in his sixteenth year, he was personally described by the inspector in the following terms: "M. de Bonaparte (Napoleon), born August 15, 1769. Height, 4 paces, 10 paces, 10 lignes (= 1 metre, 50 centimetres, 3 millimetres = 5 feet, 2.7 inches), in the fourth class; of good constitution, excellent health, mild disposition (mistake there, Inspector!). Is upright, grateful; conduct very regular; has been always distinguished for his application to mathematics; is fairly acquainted with history and geography; is weak in all accomplishments (very true, Monsieur de Keralio!) and Latin. He will make an excellent sailor; deserves promotion to the Military School in Paris."

The character of the young Napoleon at this period of his career reveals in one thing a depth and far-off sight that might well have belonged to the forceful years of his maturity. The thing related to Joseph, his brother. As early as the coming to Autun, Napoleon exulted the scheme to lodge his brother on the safe ledge of the priesthood. Thus would he have him out of his way! Given a military career for both, and Joseph must be, by seniority, before him. But nothing shall be before him. Arguments fit for Richelieu are found why Joseph shall enter the Church, rise to distinction, be a Monseigneur, and by that way defend, support and advance the prospects of the family of Buonaparte. As for me, I will accept the hardships of the military life; and maybe something beyond! There are on record several subtle communications written by the young cadet, strongly urging the priestly office as the one thing suitable and advantageous for Joseph. Our future king of Naples or Spain or both, willingly obedient to the imperial scepter, shall testify to our presence and brotherly wisdom!

JOHN CLARK RIDPATH.

Corks.

Inasmuch as Spain produces more wine than almost any other country in the world, it is only fair that she should supply the corks for the bottles in which the ambrosial fluid is sold, and from official statistics it seems that her annual yield of bottle corks amounts to over 8,000,000,000.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

LESSON X, FIRST QUARTER, INTERNATIONAL SERIES, MARCH 10.

Text of the Lesson, Mark x, 17-27—Memory Verses, 21, 22—Golden Text, Math. vi, 33—Commentary by the Rev. D. M. Stearns.

17. "And when He was gone forth into the way there came one running and kneeled to Him and asked Him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" This event is also recorded by both Matthew and Luke. It is in each immediately preceded by the saying of Christ that we must become as little children in order to enter the kingdom, and it is followed by Peter's remarks about their having left all, and the question as to what they should have, and the Saviour's reply. By comparing the three accounts we find that this earnest, anxious soul was a young man, a ruler and very rich. These facts, coupled with that of his running after Jesus and kneeling down before Him in the street, seem to indicate very great earnestness on his part in reference to this great matter of eternal life.

18. "And Jesus said unto him: Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is God." As he said, "In calling me good, do you confess that I am God?" He does not, as we might hastily receive the young man, saying, "I am so glad you have asked me. Sit down with me quietly, and I will show you in a few minutes, for it is very easy." He does not think in His heart: Now, here is a splendid catch. I must get him by all means. Think what his social position and influence will be to us and think what his money will do for us. We must have him.

19. "Thou knowest the commandments. Do not commit adultery. Do not kill. Do not steal. Do not bear false witness. Defraud not. Honor thy father and mother." Thus in answer to His question He takes him, as he did the lawyer, at once to the law, and to what we call the second table, his duty to man, for we can only prove our love to God by our love to our fellows. Before we can know the way to life eternal we must have our eyes opened to see our guilt and inability to do anything to obtain this eternal life.

20. "And he answered and said unto Him, Master, all these have I observed from my youth." We will suppose that he was thoroughly honest in this reply and actually thought he had not failed in any of these commands, but it is evident that he neither knew his own heart nor the spirit of the law as Jesus had taught it (Math. v, 21-28), or he would not thus have justified himself. Paul speaks of a kind of righteousness which every young man had as "mine own righteousness which is of the law," but he learned to count it all as dross when he saw the righteousness which is of God by faith (Phil. iii, 9).

21. "Then Jesus, beholding him, loved him and said unto him, One thing thou lackest, go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come, and take up the cross and follow me." There is no one whom Jesus does not love. He loves those who are dead in sins (Eph. ii, 4, 5), but His heart went out with a special love to this young man. The one thing he lacked was just this knowledge of the love of Christ.

22. "And he was sad at that saying and went away grieved, for he had great possessions." Jesus had now put His hand upon the sore spot as when He said to the woman of Samaria, "Go, call thy husband." Empty and dependent as a little child we must come if we would know Him and His love and grace and fullness. 23. "And Jesus looked round about and said unto His disciples, How hardly shall they that are rich enter into the kingdom of God." The kingdom of God meant more to Jesus than it meant to His disciples or than it means to many Christians now. This day listened to a sermon preached to about 2,000 people in St. Giles' cathedral, where once the voice of John Knox rang out the truth, in which the real kingdom which Jesus and all the prophets preached was wholly set aside.

24. "And the disciples were astonished at His words, but Jesus answered again and said unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God." There is not necessarily any sin in money. It is the love of money (1 Tim. vi, 10), or as Jesus here puts it, the trust in or reliance upon riches, instead of upon the giver of every good gift, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy. Abraham was rich, and David and Zachariah and many others whom the Lord saved. It is not said that "Not any mighty or noble is called," but "not many mighty, not many noble" (1 Cor. i, 26). One has well said, "Thank God for the letter M."

25. "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." It is simply impossible for any man, rich or poor, to enter the kingdom without being born from above (John iii, 3, 5, 7), but that is not probably the truth taught here. If there was in a large city gate a small gate which only a camel could go through with difficulty by unaided effort, and if this small gate was called "a needle's eye," it would help us to understand these words of the Saviour. Whatever illustration He had in mind, it is plain that He teaches us that it is next to impossible for one who is rich to enter the kingdom of heaven, but God, who is love, has made full provision for whosoever will receive His love (Rev. xxi, 17).

26. "And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved?" It would seem that to the minds of the disciples Jesus had spoken, not of a bare possibility, but of an impossibility, at least as far as all the rich were concerned. This, with many other passages of Scripture, such as 1 Tim. vi, 9, 17; Zeph. i, 18; Ps. xlii, 6, 7; should certainly teach us not to covet riches, except as they may be used for Him and His kingdom. It is possible to be poor, yet make many rich, to seemingly have nothing and yet possess all things (II Cor. vi, 10). Think of Him who, though He was rich, yet for our sakes became poor and let Him be our durable riches as well as our righteousness (II Cor. viii, 9; Prov. viii, 18).

27. "And Jesus, looking upon them, said, With men it is impossible, but not with God, for with God all things are possible." There is nothing too hard or too wonderful for the Lord, for His name is wonderful (Gen. xvi, 14; Jer. xxxii, 17; Judg. xiii, 18; margin, Isa. li, 6). When simple faith receives the wonderful Saviour and Lord, the most commonplace life will become wonderful by His indwelling and outworking. The great thing on our part is to know our nothingness that we may not seek to bring Him anything, but our poor worthless selves. Then He will glorify Himself in us.

SHE IS ALWAYS RIGHT.

Mrs. Dr. Sherlock Holmes as Good a Detective as Her Husband.

"Let him enter!" It was Mrs. Dr. Sherlock Holmes who received Old Sleuth in her laboratory, where she was closely examining the bristles of a spotted dog under a powerful microscope to see wherein they differed from the hairs of a black cow.

"You have come to tell me that you have failed in the great Adamantine murder case," she said, as the detective sat down on the edge of a chair and gasped for breath.

"Yes, mum."

"And you want my help? You have so muddled the case that I am disgusted with the whole matter, but as I feel sorry for your wife and children, I will help you out. Mr. Adamantine was murdered in his bed, and a search proved that his money and watch were taken. You, therefore, proceeded on the theory that robbery was the motive."

"Yes, mum; I am sure that robbery was the sole and only—"

"Silence, sir! You are but a novice in this work and should hang on to your mouth! Did you delve into the past life of the victim?"

"Of course not! Had you done so you would have discovered that twenty-two years ago he fell in love with his mother's cook and became engaged. The family opposed the match, and he gave the girl the cold throw over. Conscience could not be quieted, however. He married his typewriter, became rich, was elected to the Legislature and was apparently content and happy. I say apparently, for his conscience ever accused him. On the night of the supposed murder what happened?"

"He was murdered, mum."

"Oh, he was! You had better go and saw wood! On that night the cook was in his garden. You could have found her tracks there. She threw dirt against his window. You will find some sticking to the glass. When he opened it she accused him of heartlessness in breaking his vows and of making her life a dreary desert. She left him for the river. Conscience drove him to desperation. He dropped his watch in the soap grease barrel, threw his Turkish dagger from the wall, stretched himself on the bed and deliberately plunged the weapon into his body behind the left shoulder and died with the name of Mary Ann on his lips."

"But, mum, you see—"

"Yes, I see it all. Imbecile, go look for the tracks and the dirt. On a gooseberry bush you will find a bit of Mary Ann's calico dress. On a bench in the summer house there still remain seven of the scalding tears she shed that night. She flung herself into the river from wharf No. 6, and at the present moment her body is floating in the Atlantic Ocean, exactly 231 1/2 miles southeast of Sandy Hook."

"Then it was a case of suicide. I could have told you so six weeks ago had you come to me. That is all, and you may now take a skate. I am working on the great Cobble tragedy, where Mr. Cobble is supposed to have killed his wife and seven children and then committed suicide. In two hours I shall satisfy the public that they were smothered by escaping gas or died of heart disease. No thanks—come again—good morning!" M. QUAD.

WONDERFUL OLD MAN.

Hon. C. P. Villiers, Father of the British House of Commons.

C. P. Villiers, the wonderful "father of the house of commons," celebrated his ninety-third birthday recently. Whatever may be the effect of the house of commons atmosphere upon some constitutions it evidently agrees with Mr. Villiers, who has sat uninterruptedly for the same constituency for a period of sixty years.

What a marvelous kaleidoscope of constant change must be the memory of a



C. P. VILLIERS, M.P.

man who has been continuously in public life ever since the days when the "sailor king" sat upon the throne, and all the amazing products of the Victorian era were still unknown and undreamt of! The venerable member for Wolverhampton must have felt Mr. Gladstone's retirement keenly, for with the departure of the ex-premier disappeared the last of his brother members who was also his brother member in those far-off days when he sat in a parliament convened by King William the Fourth.

Mr. Gladstone—who, by the way, is quite a boy compared with Mr. Villiers, being no less than eight years his junior—seems to be still as prone to awkward little adventures as he was before his retirement. His heavy fall at Hawarden the other day might easily have been attended with very serious results; but the wonderful veteran seems specially fortunate in such escapades. It is no doubt his mental absorption that renders him so prone to come to physical grief. When he was constantly walking about in town there was seldom a day in which he did not place himself in more or less serious danger of being run over, though only two or three of his narrower escapes found their way into the papers.

A Paderevski Story.

The story is told of Paderevski, he of the long locks and supple fingers, that he was invited to tea by a New York millionaire. The pianist rather coolly refused his intended host to his agent. When the agent was seen the first question he asked was: "I suppose Mrs. V— will expect Paderevski to play?" "I suppose so." "Then Mr. Paderevski will accept your invitation as an engagement." "Oh, very well, if you prefer to put it that way," returned the millionaire. "What are the terms?" "Three thousand dollars for one piece and Mr. Paderevski will consent to a single encore." The terms were not accepted.

Like His Impudence.

"Excuse me," said the young lawyer. "I cannot," replied the learned Judge. "I should have remembered," reflected the young lawyer, semiaudibly, "ignorance of the law excuses nobody."

REASON ALMOST LOST AT TIMES

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