

The rigour of the British Government permitted but three French officers to accompany the unhappy exile, and his choice fell on Grand Marshal Bertrand, Count Montholon and Count Las Casas. Afterwards, by special permission, General Gourgaud was included. These, with their families and servants, and Dr. O'Meara, who volunteered his services to the Emperor as surgeon, constituted the entire household; a little court, truly, but a loyal one, willingly sacrificing kindred, country and freedom upon the altar of their devotion, while they wept most who stayed at home.

At noon, on the 15th of October, after a long and tempestuous voyage, whose hardships were borne by the Emperor with unflinching courage, the strange procession cast anchor in the harbour of St. Helena. With a sad interest Napoleon gazed upon his future home. The island is situated in the tropics, six thousand miles from Europe and twelve hundred from the nearest land on the African coast; and prison-like, indeed, is its gloomy exterior. Lofty peaks tower, verdureless, to the skies. What a dreary contrast to his loved and sunny France; a storm-drenched, barren rock, one day wrapped in the cruel embrace of a dense and damp sea-fog, the next panting beneath the burning rays of a tropical sun, while "cannon to right of them, cannon to left of them," stood like silent sentinels guarding sea and land.

Late in the afternoon, as the sun was setting, the little party disembarked, and the twilight found them toiling up the long and narrow street, which was the main thoroughfare of the village of Jamestown. A small room had been prepared for the accommodation of the Emperor, and here his camp bedstead was hastily erected, and, wearied by the tempestuous tossing of the long sea-voyage, worried and annoyed by the idle curiosity of the crowd that thronged about the dwelling, he at once sought much-desired seclusion and much-needed rest. Such was the first night at St. Helena. A strange picture, truly. In that darkened chamber, upon that rude couch, sleeping an unrestful sleep, guarded with unceasing vigilance by bayoneted sentinels, lies the man who, but a few months ago, held within his own right hand the destinies of Europe—a prince then, a prisoner now; a king then, wielding a power that knew no parallel, and rejoicing in the love of a people that with one voice raised him to the throne; aye! and a king now, captive as he is. A king in dignity, a king in patient fortitude; and from far-off France there comes the sound of lamentation and of mourning, for they love him yet, who ruled them as their sovereign and led their hosts in war.

About three miles from Jamestown, on a bleak and bare plateau fifteen hundred feet above the sea level, was situated Longwood,