

Such were the true dispositions of the Emperor Alexander at the moment he awoke and found himself a conqueror at the gates of Paris. He admitted the magistrates, the chiefs of the National Guard, and the citizens, to an audience. He appeared with modesty before them: it was the conqueror who seemed to supplicate. "I deplore this war," he said to them. "I do not wage it against the French, but against the man who makes an abuse of their name and of their blood to oppress all Europe. It was he who came to provoke me to the very centre of my Empire, to ravage my provinces, to immolate my people, and to burn my cities." The justice of God has brought me this day under those walls from which the aggression went forth. I shall only profit by this favour that Providence has bestowed upon my arms, by reconciling France with the other nations of the earth, and by giving peace to the human race."

The Emperor then promised to protect the capital, and addressing the chiefs of the National Guard, he authorized them to preserve their organization and their arms, and to watch conjointly with his troops over the safety of the citizens.

During this interview, M. de Nesselrode, the Emperor Alexander's minister, privately informed M. de Talleyrand, that his imperial master was desirous of conversing with him, and that he would go and reside in his hotel, after the allied armies had entered Paris.

Nothing in the aspect of Paris announced the consternation of a capital which expects its conqueror. The Boulevards, the faubourgs, the streets, were crowded with an immense multitude, whose countenances expressed more curiosity than sorrow. Everything, even its own humiliation, it mere spectacle for such a city. It must, however, be acknowledged that what rendered this humiliation less visible was the sentiment of the people, and of the immense majority of the citizens. It was not so much France as the Emperor, who appeared to them to be conquered. They said to themselves with truth, "It is not the enemy that triumphs over him; it is we, who allow him to fall. If he had not pushed his tyranny, and the usurpation of all our rights over our liberties, to that excess that makes patriotism give way before the dignity of man, France, arousing herself as in 1792, would have driven back, even to their very capitals, these sovereign profane of our soil. We are invaded because we permit it. We are vanquished in the man that was our chief: but it is chief, being once out of the question, we will again seize on victory, in re-annexing our hearts and our desire for combat." Every face and every expression still further displayed the most passionate curiosity to know the object for which this eventful day would produce for the country. Would that military despotism elevated itself again in a capital which it could not preserve? And if not, what description of government would it fall impose upon, or have to the free choice of France? These thoughts scarcely allowed time to terminate on the aspect of our reverses, or on the disgrace of the occupation. The co-troiseries of the citizens amongst themselves, on the probability of the future, and their individual preferences for such or such a form of government, agitated Paris with a movement and a murmur which gave it an appearance of a day of festival, of spectacle, and of degradation.

The people of the populous quarters and of the faubourgs alone bore on their countenances the rage of patriotism, and the consternation of citizens. These simple beings, strangers to political debates for the choice of governments, had their minds only occupied with the fate of their country. The families, from which the ranks of the army were recruited, interested themselves above all others with the struggles, the defeats, and the victories of their sons and brothers. The soldiers of Mortier and Marmont, famished, suffering, and wounded, after passing the night in the faubourgs, and retiring through the streets, had disseminated all round an ardent pity for their miseries, a fanatical hatred against the foreigners, and a low but deep murmur of indignation against a capitulation which would deliver Paris to the mercy of our enemies, and

condemn our yet remaining troops to the shame and misery of a retreat. Some groups of these men of the lower classes, armed with pikes which the king Joseph had distributed amongst them in great numbers, brandished their arms, protested against the cowardice of the city, and gave utterance to imprecations against the abandoned traitors and ministers of Napoleon. But these imprecations died away amidst the silence and resignation of the crowd. No one took up arms for the capital, lest it should be thought he was arming in the cause of Napoleon.

At ten o'clock in the morning, under a beautiful spring sun, and amidst crowds peaceful and contented, as if they had assembled to witness a review of all Europe, the allied armies commenced their march into Paris. These troops, having reposed for several days after their marches and battles, had had time to remove from their clothes and their arms the stains of a short but terrible campaign. The men, the horses, the artillery, the standards, shone forth in all the military splendour of gold and steel. Each of the Russian, Prussian, Austrian, and German regiments seemed to come out of their barracks, or their quarters, to march past in review order under the eyes of their respective sovereigns. 250,000 cavalry, artillery, and infantry marched in close columns of thirty men in front, on all the roads to the east and north of Paris, and entered the gates of the city with drums beating and colours flying.

Some squadrons of Cossacks, and Oriental cavalry from Caucasus, were thrown out in front of the army, as if to keep its passage clear through the principal streets of the city. On their appearance the people of the quarter of the Bastille arose in a tumult, and uttered, in sign of defiance, shouts of "Vive Bonaparte!" Some armed men rushed out of the crowd towards an aide-de-camp of the Emperor Alexander, who was going to prepare his quarters. "Come on, Frenchmen!" cried these desperate fellows. "The Emperor Napoleon is coming! let us destroy the enemy!" The people, however, were deaf to the cry. The National Guard interposed, protected the detachment, and raised up a few wounded officers. The heads of the foreign columns soon after appeared on the Boulevards.

The alleys, the balconies, the roofs of the houses were like so many benches of an immense and silent circus, contemplating this denouement of the European drama of ten years. The Grand Duke Constantine, brother of the Emperor Alexander, advanced on a wild and powerful horse from the Steppes of Tartary, at the head of the Russian cavalry. This prince, with a Tartar countenance, a wild look, rough accented and martial gestures, represented the barbarian warrior, called forth from the depths of the northern deserts to overtake the south. But, alas! as we are all so blind and unacquainted with our own history, the Grand Duke Constantine imposed upon his squires as the discipline and humanity of the noblest race.

While the Grand Duke was slowly marching his 30,000 cavalry towards the Champs-Elysees, by the Boulevards, the Emperor Alexander had gone with all his generals to await the King of Prussia, at the gates of Paris, in order not to be a partaker of the triumph as he had been of the victory. The Mayors of Paris waited on him to recommend the capital to his protection.

"The fate of arms has conducted me hither," Alexander replied to them. "Your Emperor, who was once my ally, has twice deceived me. I am far from wishing to return upon France the evil she has done me. The French people are my friends, and I wish to prove to them that I am come to do good for evil. Napoleon alone is my enemy. I shall protect Paris: I shall respect its citizens and its monuments. I shall only quarter in it my select troops. I shall preserve your National Guard, which constitutes the elite of your citizens. Your future fate rests entirely with yourselves."

In these words Alexander sufficiently indicated who was to be the victim of the invasion. — Napoleon being his only enemy, it was evident

that he must be sacrificed on the altar of peace. But though this was the conclusion to be drawn, he did not express it in direct terms.

After these words admirably calculated to sound and to conciliate public opinion against the only obstacle to the reconciliation of mankind, the Emperor Alexander and the King of Prussia rode slowly towards the Porte St. Martin. They were surrounded by a numerous and brilliant cortege of minor sovereigns, princes, and generals; and were escorted, in front and rear, by the regiments of their guards, and by a regular regiment of Cossacks of the Don, whose Oriental aspect excited general astonishment. — These troops, by the beauty of their horses, the stature of the men of the north, the cleanliness, elegance and richness of their uniforms, arms, and appointments, formed a striking contrast with the half starved and harassed cavalry of the haughty of French heroes, bowed down with fatigue, and their uniforms stained with blood and dirt, whom Paris had seen traversing its streets the night before. The drums, the trumpets, and the brass instruments of the military bands, made the streets resound with martial music;—warlike flourishes for them, but sorrow and humiliation for us. The streets leading from the barriers to the faubourg Saint Martin appeared from the windows like a river of steel.

At the spot where this wide faubourg joins the boulevards by the triumphal arch of Louis XIV., the columns, obstructed by the immense crowds of the population of Paris, collected from every quarter of the south and west, wavered a moment as if arrested by this tide of humanity; but at length they slowly opened a passage for themselves, by the avenue which leads to the Champs-Elysees. Paris had never seen such an ocean of sabres, of bayonets, and of cannons, inundate its streets and squares. The people, so often deceived by the bulletins of the Emperor, who only spoke to them of the victories of his arms and the defeats of his enemies, at length saw the melancholy truth with their own eyes; France disarmed and exhausted—Europe armed and inexhaustible. This spectacle detached them from the Emperor. The masses only judge by their senses; visible power attracts them to the side of fortune. On this occasion the multitude, at first silent and confounded, began to think the fall of Napoleon accomplished. From this feeling of his fall to a general execration of his fatal power, there was but one step; and some royalists speedily gave the signal for it.

When the allied sovereigns, the Emperor Alexander, the King of Prussia, the Prince of Schwartzenburg, the generals, the ministers, and the ambassadors, all on horseback, had attained that part of the Boulevard adjoining the most opulent quarters of Paris, cries of "Vive Bonaparte!" were uttered amongst some groups around them. This cry, stifled since 1791, and new to the rising generation, astonished at first, like the echo of another century. The people, scarcely conceiving its object, continued a long time to do. The sovereigns themselves, although secretly predisposed to receive it, seemed to think the demonstration was premature, and did not smile propitious. Their aspects grew dark, and they made signs with their hands to some gentlemen who had raised the cry to check and reserve their dangerous enthusiasm for another occasion. But whether this silent recommendation of prudence in the attitude of the sovereigns was sincere,—whether it was only a more clever and more delicate provocation for an expression of popular feeling,—certain it is that it was not obeyed. The groups, amongst which were a number of old republicans, mingled with young partisans of the Bourbons, seemed willing to do violence to the sovereigns and their suite,—to extort from them a sign of acquiescence in their cries. Around the Emperor and the King of Prussia, the generals and ministers, fearing less than their sovereigns to take part in the demonstration, gave visible encouragement, by looks, smiles, and gestures, to acclamations which avenged them on the Empire. As the staff of the allies penetrated still farther into the quarters inhabited by the jobbery, bankers, and wealthy merchants, the seats of avarice and luxury, these cries increased in voi-