FRENCH EMPIRE.

Uniforms decreed in February 1812.

CUIRASSIER. -- INFANTRY OF THE LINE, GRENADIER.

CHAPTER III.
PRUSSIA AND AUSTRIA ADMITTED INTO NAPOLEON'S ALLIANCE.

DEFECION OF SWEDEN.

The King of Prussia asks Napoleon for his alliance. --State of Prussia. --MM. von Krusemarck and Hardemberg. --Instructions given to M. von Krusemarck. --Negotiations open in Paris. --Delays introduced by the cabinet of Berlin. --Means employed by Napoleon to hasten the negotiation. --Treaty of alliance between Prussia and France. --Secret Items. - -M. de Chernishev again. --His intrigues and attempts at employment. --Michel, employed at the Ministry of War. --Death sentence. --Napoleon's last conference with M. de Chernishev; departure of the latter: his arrival in Saint Petersburg. --Words of M. de Romanzoff reported to Napoleon: his resolution. --Alliance of Austria with France. --Various opinions on this subject. --The truth. --Treaty concluded between the two powers: spirit and object of this treaty. --Sweden and Crown Prince Bernadotte; his hatred against Napoleon. --His letter to the Emperor of Russia; he also wrote to Napoleon. --Laconic response from the latter to the explanations requested by Sweden. --Conditions imposed on this power. --Bernadotte lines up with Russia, against France: England adheres to the treaty. --Turkey. --Negotiations begun with the Divan to dissuade him from making peace with the Russians. --M. Andréossy sent as ambassador to Constantinople. --Napoleon's instructions. --Influence of England. --Letter falsely attributed to Napoleon and produced by General Kutuzov. --Peace of Bucharest. --Consequences, for France, of the poor success of these negotiations.

While M. von Knesebeck, that colonel sent to Russia by the King of Prussia, parleyed uselessly with the Emperor Alexander, and while the latter only listened too much to the suggestions of England, the Count of Löwenhielm tried, in St. Petersburg, to make as many partisans as possible for Bernadotte. As for Frederick-William, despairing, by the reports of M. von Knesebeck, of an accommodation between Russia and France, he had determined to send to Paris, as minister plenipotentiary, the Baron von Krusemarck, a diplomat brought up in the school of M. von Hardemberg, to offer his alliance to Napoleon.

It may be remarked that at this time Prussia found itself in a perplexing situation, which the great quarrel that had arisen between Napoleon and Alexander had only aggravated. By considering this power only in its relations with France, it had descended to the last degree of the hierarchy of the States of Europe; but thinking of her nationality, her resources, it still had an easily mustered army; it could count on the patriotism of its universities; its finances were well managed, and better than all that, no doubt, it had at the head of its government a man of undeniable ability: M. von Hardemberg, called by his background to seize all the eventualities of a situation which could restore to Prussia the state and strength she had lost since 1806.

The instructions that M. von Hardemberg gave to Baron von Krusemarck on leaving were limited to this: "Explain clearly to the Emperor Napoleon that the situation of Prussia is not tenable, such as it is today; that he alone can restore honor and preponderance to it, and that
this can only result from a sincere and lasting alliance: King Frederick William desires it; it is all the more indispensable, as the cabinet of Berlin must take a decisive party in the state of effervescence of German minds. The King of Prussia relies on the wisdom and just judgment of the Emperor of the French in such a delicate case."


Napoleon did not at first receive the envoy of the King of Prussia very well. He liked neither this nation nor the policy of his cabinet. And then, what did Prussia matter to him? Didn't he already occupy all its fortresses? What more could he want? But thinking of the seriousness of the Russian expedition, he understood that an alliance with Prussia might be useful to him in assuring the march of his troops through Germany, and perhaps obtaining an auxiliary corps which would advance towards Königsberg and Riga, while he would maneuver on the center of the Muscovite empire.

Then a negotiation opened at Paris between the Baron von Krusemarch and the Duke de Bassano (Maret), who had replaced, in 1811, M. de Champagny at the Ministry of External Relations; but the Prussian minister was in no hurry to make up his mind. The Duke de Bassano explained it aloud to M. von Krusemarch, who did not answer in a categorical manner. In order to activate the negotiation, Napoleon ordered troop movements, "to come," he said, "to the rescue of this soft and indecisive diplomacy." At the same time, Marshal Davout* received the order to be ready to occupy the Prussian states militarily.

*We will henceforth designate the marshals of the empire and the corps commanders by their primitive names, firstly because they are much better known to everyone than the titles which had been awarded to them by Napoleon as a reward for their glorious services, then because most of them put together knew several titles.

"There therefore remained to the King of Prussia, in order to preserve his existence, no other choice than to become the ally of him who could annihilate him, and to sacrifice his dearest inclinations and all these other wishes to his duty. of sovereign."**

**Schoell, Prussian Manifesto.

Already State Councilor Bequelin had come to Paris to assist M. von Krusemarch. The Prince von Hatzfeld had been sent there in the same way. Both were accredited and authorized to spare nothing to give their proceedings the support of all their influence.

After much delay on the part of the Prussian diplomats, by a patent treaty of 24 February 1812, a defensive alliance was contracted between France and Prussia, the effects of which would be regulated by a special convention. It was said in this treaty, the case arising, that whenever England would attack the rights of commerce by blockade of coasts, or other provisions contrary to maritime law, consecrated by the treaty of Utrecht, the ports and the coasts of the two French and Prussian powers would also be forbidden to vessels of neutral nations which would allow the independence of their flag to be violated.

By separate and secret articles, it was stipulated that the alliance would be offensive and defensive in all the wars of the two powers in Europe; that, however, in the wars which France
might have to sustain beyond the Pyrenees, in Italy or in Turkey, Prussia would not be obliged to furnish a contingent.

Authorized by the circumstances to foresee a change of dispositions on the part of Russia, and the possibility of a more or less imminent rupture with France, the two contracting powers wanted, if necessary, that everything be settled and agreed upon in advance between them. They therefore signed a first special convention according to which, in case of war between France and Russia, the King of Prussia would make common cause with Napoleon, and would provide a contingent of twenty thousand men, of all arms, sixty pieces of cannon, and crews to transport supplies. In addition, four thousand garrison men at Colberg, three thousand at Graudenz, and twelve hundred at Potsdam, which could be increased to three thousand, if the King established his residence there. Prussia bound itself, moreover, not to make any levy, any military movement, while the French army occupied its territory, or was on enemy territory, unless it was for the advantage of the alliance, and in concert between the two powers. In the event of a happy outcome of the war against Russia, always supposing that it too took place, France undertook to procure for Prussia an indemnity in territory, to compensate for the charges which it would have had to bear.*

*See the appendix to the first part, the text of these treaties as well as the diplomatic correspondence relating thereto.

The King of Prussia received with the liveliest satisfaction the news of the signature of these treaties; he hastened to ratify them and sent the members of the French legation the decoration of the Black Eagle.

Meanwhile, M. de Chernishev continued his intrigues and espionage in Paris. He is accused, in particular, of having sought to hire General Jomini, attached to the general staff of the army, and of having offered, to a secretary of Prince Berthier, great pecuniary advantages, if he wanted, during the campaign which would probably take place, to correspond with him, once back in Russia. Be that as it may, as soon as the treaty with Prussia had been concluded, Napoleon had sent for M. de Chernishev**, to give with him a clear and decisive explanation relative to Alexander's intentions.

**25 February 1812.

"In matters like ours," he told him, "facts speak louder than words. While the greater part of my forces are in Spain, on the faith of our treaties, why do you withdraw yours before the Turks, who are your natural enemies, to bring them before me, who am your ally? Why does your Emperor keep two hundred thousand men united between St. Petersburg and the Grand Duchy of Warsaw? Isn't it to force me to take similar measures? I have only Davout's five divisions on the Oder, you must know that; but I do not want to hide anything: you find me busy putting my line of defense on a more respectable footing. My troop movements are beginning; the Grand Duchy is taking up arms, and our allies of the Confederation are preparing their contingents. You are also aware that Prussia has decided to line up on my side. It is a done deal: the treaty is signed. All this takes a very serious turn, and yet I hear that Nesselrode will not come. It's a misfortune: his arrival here could have put an end to quarrels which are getting worse every
day. Negotiations must take place, and I believe there is still time to explain. The measures which I have just adopted, with the Cabinet of Berlin, have for their main object the avoidance of a premature explosion which would then render any compromise impossible. In the position in which your hostile attitude has placed me for some time, I had to secure myself from Prussia by a treaty or by a coup de main. Disarmament was too violent a party not to immediately determine a rupture. On the contrary, the alliance is only a very simple precaution on my part, which leaves intact between us the great question of peace or war. The more I think about it, moreover, the less I accustom myself to the idea that war might break out between the Emperor Alexander and myself; because, after all, what is it? Come on, tell me frankly? you have all the confidence of your master, I know it; Well, let's finish - once and for all... Speak: I'm listening."

Then they entered into an explanation, and M. de Chernishev set forth the grievances of Russia. He complained, first, of the design which it supposed in France of completing the institution of the Duchy of Warsaw by the re-establishment of Poland; and second, from the occupation of the Duchy of Oldenburg.

Napoleon immediately declared that he did not favor the re-establishment of Poland; he had already offered to undertake it, he was always ready to do so.

"As for the country of Oldenburg," he added, "Alexander demands compensation from the city of Danzig. I cannot consent to this exchange, because it would only shift the difficulty instead of ending it. The occupation of Oldenburg has had for sole object, I shall never cease to repeat, that of removing a depot from English commerce. The cession of the port of Danzig would cause the continental system a wanted to close; but I would like nothing better than to cede an equivalent territory in the interior, the country of Erfurt, for instance, if that may be convenient. As for me, I complain of infringement on the part of Russia to my continental system, and the unfavorable dispositions taken by her against my trade. I therefore demand that the Emperor Alexander strictly maintain the stipulations of Tilsit, save some reliefs for the export of the products of the country, in exchange for the articles of 'import, that is to say, in adoption, by mutual agreement, a system of licenses. As for your tariff of 1810, I offer to conclude a treaty of commerce which will spare the interests of Russia without hurting those of France."

“None of these debates,” Napoleon said in conclusion, “is worth a cannon shot. Go back to your master, give him this letter, and tell him, above all, that I beg him not to delay any longer the negotiation which must put an end to all these misunderstandings.”

Leaving this audience, M. de Chernishev set out for St. Petersburg. The police, to whom he had been singled out because of the double role he had played, made a search of his apartment on the very day of his departure, and found there, among other papers, a note addressed to him. thus designed:

"Monsieur count, you overwhelm me with your solicitations. Can I do more than I am doing for you? What annoyance I feel to deserve a fleeting reward! You will be surprised tomorrow at what I will give you. Be at home at seven o'clock in the morning. It is ten o'clock, I left the rain to have the complete disposition of the Grand Army of Germany. See you tomorrow then."
"Signed: M."

This indication of rendezvous was from a certain Michel, employed at the Ministry of War.

M. de Chernishev had, it is said, already crossed the Rhine, when the order to arrest him arrived by telegraph at Strasbourg. The Duke de Rovigo, then Minister of Police, asserts, on the contrary, in his Memoirs, that his person could have been seized; but that the Emperor did not wish it, in order to spare an aide-de-camp of the Emperor Alexander the humiliation of a criminal procedure. It resulted from that which was heard before the Imperial Court of Paris, and from Michel's own confessions, that for several years he had been supplying the Russian legations, for money, with the secret of our military operations. Michel was found guilty by the jury, condemned to death and executed.

While the conduct of M. de Chernishev was giving rise to unfortunate inquiries in Paris, this officer arrived at St. Petersburg, bearing the letter which had been delivered to him by Napoleon for Alexander. He praised himself greatly for the consideration and benevolence which had been shown him in France and showed himself persuaded that in reality Napoleon had the sincere desire to maintain peace.

"What is embarrassing," he said later to M. de Romanzoff, "is to pull back the troops of the two empires."

"Even on the ground," replied the latter, "we can still manage."*

*Letter from General Lauriston, 13 March 1812.

This statement of M. de Romanzoff, and many others like it, reported to Napoleon, did little to confirm to him that the Czar intended to push matters to their limits. As for him, Napoleon, without positively desiring war, but quite determined to make it if he could not otherwise achieve his goal, that is to say to reach an arrangement with Russia, he thought seriously of the deployment of the forces that he intended to take action against her.

Prussia had offered her alliance to France, with a request to accept it; it is notorious. As for the alliance with Austria, opinions are divided: others maintain that she would have liked to remain neutral, but that Napoleon advised her not to separate her cause from his, and invited her to share the chances of war. Finally, the Emperor Francis consented, it is said, to ally himself with his son-in-law, less to help him than to watch and restrain him. This prince could not hide from himself that the cause of Russia was that of all Europe and showed great reluctance to cooperate in the ruin of a power whose fall was to wipe out the last glimmers of hope for emancipation of the continent: we will see the proof of this in the course of the campaign.

By the treaty concluded on 14 March 1812, the two nations reciprocally guaranteed the integrity of their present territories and pledged to help each other mutually in the event that one or the other should come to be attacked or threatened. The relief offered by Austria was fixed at thirty thousand men: twenty-four thousand men also the integrity of the territory of the Ottoman Empire in Europe. They recognized the principle of neutral navigation, enshrined in the Treaty
of Utrecht. Austria renewed her engagement to adhere to the prohibitive system against England during the present maritime war.

According to separate and secret articles, Austria was not bound to furnish a contingent in the wars of France against England or beyond the Pyrenees; it provided one, if war broke out between Russia and France. The Austrian auxiliary corps was to set out, so that from the 1st of May it could be assembled at Lemberg (Lvov). For his part, Napoleon was to make his arrangements so as to be able to operate against Russia at the same time. In the event that, as a result of the war, the Kingdom of Poland should come to be re-established, Napoleon specially guaranteed to the Emperor of Austria the possession of Galicia. If, the case occurring, it entered into the propriety of the latter to yield, to be reunited with the Kingdom of Poland, a part of Galicia in exchange for the Illyrian Provinces, Napoleon pledged himself to this exchange; and, in the event of a happy issue of the war, he bound himself to procure for the Emperor of Austria indemnities, enlargements of territory, &c.

By this treaty,* Austria gave nothing; all its commitments remained conditional; it was mobilizing a corps and, in the eventualities of the future, it could direct it against France as well as for its cause. M. von Metternich also reserved all the chances of war: in the event of a reverse, decisions would be made according to the circumstances. The Prince of Schwarzenberg, then Austrian Ambassador in Paris, was to command the auxiliary corps. He was not only a skilful diplomat, but also a captain as experienced as he was prudent; and, in any case, Austria having to operate only in Poland, it would certainly be due to this power a few shreds of conquests.

*See appendix (first part), the text of these treaties as well as the diplomatic documents and correspondence relating thereto.

In the midst of these negotiations with the great cabinets, Napoleon had to secure two indispensable auxiliaries to second his designs against Russia: we mean Sweden and the Ottoman Porte. In fact, among the States most directly interested in the quarrel between France and Russia, still remained Sweden. On the night of 26 to 27 January 1812, General Friant, of Marshal Davoust's army corps, had invaded Swedish Pomerania, as we have said before, by seizing the island of Rugen. The Swedish charge d'affaires, in Paris, had asked for explanations on this invasion, by preventing the orders of the King; he was told that no explanation would be given until he had received instructions from his court; but all communication having been interdicted between Pomerania and Sweden, Stockholm was not known until 11 February, following the entry of the French into that province.

At this news, Bernadotte exclaimed, it is said, speaking of Napoleon:

"Since he absolutely wants it, he must be satisfied; but it will cost him dearly!"

And from that moment he had thrown himself and Sweden into the arms of Russia and England.

Bernadotte was all the more sure of being well received by Alexander, as, through this same M. de Chernishev, a rapprochement had just taken place between them. The Czar had told him:
"Raised myself by a republican, I learned early on to esteem the man more than the titles; never let yourself be frightened by the fears that they will try to give you about Russia. etc."*

Bernadotte replied that he was unreservedly attached to him.

*Thibaudeau, *The Consulate and the Empire*, volume V, chap. LXXIX.

The Count von Löwenhielm, that aide-de-camp to the Crown Prince who had been sent to St. Petersburg, as we have said, had been closely followed by the Chevalier de Schoukron, also Bernadotte's aide-de-camp. This prince, not limiting himself to the affair of Pomerania and the interests of Sweden, but stipulating for all the kings of Europe, to write to the Emperor Alexander that the coasts of the Mediterranean, of Holland and of the Baltic, successively reunited, and the interior of Germany encircled, must have given the less far-sighted princes a glimpse that the rules of politics, put aside, would soon give way to a system which, destroying all kinds of balance, would unite a multitude of nations under a single leader; that these tributary monarchs, frightened by this ever-increasing domination, awaited, in consternation, the development of this vast plan; that in the midst of this universal mourning, the gaze of men turned towards him and contemplated him with the faith of hope. Then afterwards, he had written confidentially to Napoleon to ask that he be promptly informed of the causes of the invasion of Pomerania; that, not very jealous of his glory and his power, he was nevertheless jealous of not being regarded as his vassal, and that, although he was not Coriolanus and that he did not command Volsci, he had a good enough opinion of the Swedes to ensure that they were capable of fearing nothing, and of undertaking everything to avenge an affront which they had not provoked, and preserve rights to which they valued even more than their very existence.

Napoleon responded to Bernadotte officially with these lines alone: "The invasion of Pomerania was motivated by the non-observance, by Sweden, of the continental system, to which she adhered by the treaties."* Then, by an unofficial way, one communicated to the cabinet of Stockholm these conditions of an arrangement: A new declaration of war of Sweden with England; the severe prohibition of all communication with the English cruisers; the armament of the Sound batteries and the equipping of the fleet; the setting up of an army of thirty thousand men to attack Russia, at the moment when hostilities would begin between that power and the French Empire. In compensation, Sweden was promised the restitution of Finland, and they were obliged to buy from her twenty million francs worth of colonial produce, payment for which would be made after they had been transported to Danzig or Lübeck. Finally, Sweden was allowed to participate in all the advantages enjoyed by the States of the confederation of the Rhine.

* Report by Swedish Chancellor Engeström.

These proposals, it must be admitted, were hardly acceptable; also Sweden had answered it only by opening her ports to the English.

From then on any way to an arrangement between France and Sweden became impossible; but Bernadotte had already guarded himself against the storm which was infallibly to burst upon his head, by linking himself, in advance and secretly, with our enemies; for at the moment when he seemed to aspire only to the recognition of his neutrality, he concluded, if it had not already been concluded, the treaty of 24 March 1812 with Russia.*
These two powers reciprocally guaranteed their States. Sweden engaged to make a diversion, in case of hostilities with France, on such point of Germany as was judged suitable, aided by thirty thousand Swedes and twenty thousand Russians. Russia, on her side, promised to guarantee Sweden the reunion of Norway, by the aid of an army of forty thousand men. The King of Denmark would be invited to accede to the alliance and to consent to the cession of Norway, in return for a full and entire indemnity in Germany, and at the proximity of its States; in case of refusal, war would be declared on him. The King of England would likewise be invited to accede to the treaty and to guarantee its stipulations: England acceded to it on the following 3 May.

Such an unfavorable result for French diplomacy was reserved for the Ottoman Porte. Evidently a diversion to the South was indispensable to Napoleon in so powerful a movement against Russia. The war continued sluggishly between the Russians and the Turks; it was a question of reigniting it: unfortunately, France had lost all influence in Constantinople.

By their treaty of alliance of 14 March 1812, France and Austria had, as we have seen, guaranteed the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire in Europe and had agreed to invite the Porte to accede to the covenant. So we hastened to inform him. Discouraged by its setbacks in 1811, this power was then negotiating with Russia at the Bucharest Congress. No means was neglected to bring him back from his dejection and to prevent him from concluding peace. Napoleon sent General Andréossy as ambassador to Constantinople. “Ask Sultan Mahmud," he told him in his instructions, “his alliance is with France. Tell him that he does not mind breaking with the Russians. Persuade him to command his army in person, their sultan at their head, cross the Danube, and I promise him, in return, not only Moldavia and Wallachia, but also the Crimea.”

The progress of this negotiation was further hampered by the English. There was a moment when it was believed that the congress of Bucharest would be dissolved: hostilities between the Russians and the Turks even recommenced on the Danube; but Russia and England, above all, corrupted the Divan with money. Andréossy's arrival was delayed by the slowness with which the firman of the Grand Sultan was sent to him; Kutuzov showed the Turkish negotiators a letter from Napoleon* proposing the partition of Turkey, and ultimately the Turks signed a shameful peace treaty on 28 May at Bucharest. The Porte thus lost the finest opportunity that had ever presented itself to recover from the Russians all their previous conquests.

*This letter was false.

From these two diplomatic negotiations, that with Sweden and that with Turkey, negotiations badly combined and above all badly directed, were to result from facts of great importance. The break with Russia was henceforth inevitable; the two colossi were going to collide, because there was no longer any intermediary between them. In vain we hoped for a rapprochement with England. In truth, Prussia and Austria marched as auxiliaries of France; but these two powers had not sufficiently abdicated their personality to deprive themselves of the chances of the
future. Sweden had openly declared itself hostile to Napoleon, and Turkey, because of the peace concluded with the cabinet of St. Petersburg, left available all the Russian forces which were then in Moldavia and Wallachia.