FRENCH EMPIRE.

Uniform decreed in February 1812.

SOLDIER LIGHT ARTILLERY. -- SOLDIER FOOT ARTILLERY.
CHAPTER IV.

QUESTION OF POLAND, NAPOLEON'S APPROACH TO ENGLAND. RUSSIA'S ULTIMATUM.

Enthusiasm of military youth at the announcement of the Russian war. --Poland and the Poles. —Napoleon's intentions with regard to them. --M. de Talleyrand; --Indiscretion. --Project postponed. --Sending a French agent to Warsaw. --Instructions on this. --The King of Saxony. --Napoleon's Approach to England. --Lord Castlereagh. --Aborted negotiations. --Russia's ultimatum. --Conditions imposed on France by the Cabinet of St. Petersburg. --The Duke of Bassano and Prince Kurakin. --Mission given to the Count of Narbonne. --Appointment assigned, at Dresden, to the Emperor of Austria, by Napoleon. --Disposition taken by the Emperor, before leaving Paris. --Raising of a National Guard organized in three bans. --Reasons for this institution. --Discussion at the Council of State. --Words of Napoleon. --Last preparations for war. --Movements of troops. --Marshal Victor and the Prussian. --Recommendations of Napoleon to his ministers. --Savary, Clarke, Montalivet. --The Arch-Chancellor Cambacérès charged with high authority, in the absence of the Emperor. --Daily reports required by Napoleon. --The diamond chest. --The Postmaster General and the Emperor's First Valet de Chambre. --Departure of Napoleon for Dresden. --The Moniteur. --The expectation of a first victory.

From the end of March 1812, Napoleon no longer hesitated to speak aloud of the war which threatened him, although the cabinet of St. Petersburg had not yet made known its final intentions. He presented it to his lieutenants as a great enterprise which was to smile upon warrior souls and put the crowning touch to the glory of the French arms. So people sought the favor of serving in the Grand Army from all sides: "It is perhaps," they said, "the last campaign that the Emperor will make in person." It was not only the generals employed in Spain who asked to go to the North. The richest young people, the sons of the noblest families disputed the patents of aides-de-camp and the lesser ranks in the general staff. Everywhere people spoke only of the gigantic expedition which was preparing, and which, to use Napoleon's expressions, "would make that of Egypt pale!..." Never, and at no time, could the imagination have more strongly seconded the instinct which generally impels the French to rush wherever danger promises them honor and glory! “We leave for Moscow, but we will be back soon!” Such were the farewells of all those who received letters of service.

If the military youth looked upon the Russian expedition as a six-month hunting trip, the old servants in Italy and Egypt did not see it in the same light. Napoleon, it is true, had noticed sadness only on a small number of faces, on those which our Parisian conscripts called, in their mocking language, the big bonnets and the feathered hats. Napoleon, we say, divined the anxiety these old warriors felt when they saw him on the point of leaving again, and this
prudence had wounded his heart, because, for him, there was a need to be seen constantly surrounded by his former comrades in arms. They had always followed him blindly and enthusiastically: why wouldn't they finish what they had started so well with him? Perhaps he also had to take into account the length of the services, the age, the positions; but, taking no account of these considerations for himself, he did not think he had to concern himself with them for others.

Of all the current questions which occupied the Emperor, that of the Poles was not the least important. If the white eagle of Poland could no longer deploy its majestic flight under an azure sky, it had at least preserved the powerful claws which, in the great epochs of the Jagiellon and the Sobieski, had more than once, their bloody embraces, choked the Russian double-headed eagle. Then, from our first campaigns in Italy, hadn't the Poles come to form legions around our republican flags? From that time Napoleon had entertained the hope of repaying France's debt to so many brave men, by a great benefit to their country, when the time came. He had presented himself in 1807, that moment so desired; but in order not to delay the peace of Tilsit, the Emperor had to confine himself to the institution of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw. It was a half-measure, and it had all the disadvantages of it, because the Poles believed themselves authorized to deserve more, and because Russia, whose anxieties had increased, retained an ulterior motive, from the bosom of which a future war with France was to germinate; but as soon as this war became imminent, would Poland at last emerge from the precarious state in which she had been left? This was the question Napoleon had to solve.

As for the Poles, they ardently desired war, as it must necessarily bring about the resurrection of their country. In 1812, Napoleon had no longer to fear opposition from Prussia for that portion of Poland which had fallen to him by way of compensation; victories and treaties had put this power out of the question. As for Austria, she had shown herself, by the treaty of 14 March, disposed to cede her share in return for a large indemnity. Saxony was not in the way, it cared little for the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, which placed it in a false position with regard to Prussia, Russia and Austria; all the same, it was easy to indemnify it: so only Russia remained.

When the Emperor Alexander had begun to grow cold towards France, and had manifested his fears on the subject of the re-establishment of Poland, Napoleon had made him the most reassuring protestations: we have had the proof of it; but the war which, in fact, broke the treaties, freed from any disturbance; the re-establishment of Poland was one more means against Russia; it promised France a powerful auxiliary, and satisfied both the present policy of Napoleon and the views which were supposed to him on the new organization of Europe.

And then, to prepare the great movement of Poland, to impress it and above all to direct it well, when the circumstances were opportune, a man experienced in revolutions was needed. From the end of 1811, Napoleon had cast his eyes on M. de Talleyrand, since the Spanish war a stranger to business, but eager to return to it: the latter had accepted this mission which reminded him to play an active role in politics. Although the secrecy of this affair had been recommended to him above all else, it was nevertheless spread in Vienna, where it was most important that he should be ignored, according to some, in order to abort the project, according to others, because of financial speculation. Be that as it may, Napoleon, indignant, was on the point of taking action against his former minister; but, at the moment of striking, his arm always
stopped. He was none the less obliged to postpone the mission until after the alliance with Austria.

But after his alliance with this power, and when it was almost certain that war with Russia was inevitable, the Emperor said to his ministers assembled in council:

"The Poles not being the subject of the quarrel between Alexander and me, should not be an obstacle to an arrangement between us; but in the meantime they prove to be an obstacle to an arrangement between us; but in the meantime they can be, for me, a powerful means of war; now, on the eve of such a great crisis, I will leave them neither without advice nor without direction. I am therefore going to send a trusted envoy to Warsaw."

Forced to renounce M. de Talleyrand, Napoleon cast his eyes on a second-rate diplomat, for whom he prepared the following instructions: "If the armed demonstration of our troops on the Vistula intimidates the Russians to the point of stopping, in its germ, the diversion that England is trying against us in the North, we will negotiate: after such a great development of forces, we will have the right to claim compensation, and the reconstruction of Poland can become the equivalent. If, on the contrary, the rupture breaks out, the Poles must not only join their arms to ours, they must, on this great occasion, the last perhaps offered to them, decide to act on their own. and for their own account. This war, which we are going to support in the North, should only be considered by them as a means added to their own resources: it is well agreed that France will be, for them, only a powerful helper. Let them prepare, from this moment, to make the greatest efforts, and that as soon as circumstances permit, all Poland mounts on horseback."*

*Baron Fain, Manuscript of 1812, tome I*, chap. VII.

The envoy to whom this instruction was delivered was to stop at Dresden, see the King of Saxony, and speak to him frankly of what was being prepared. Napoleon knew that this prince, the most faithful of his allies, did not care much for the sovereignty of the Grand Duchy. The King had even explained it several times without reserve; be that as it may, the envoy had to assure him that none of the sacrifices he made would go unrewarded.

At the same time that Napoleon was regulating the part which Poland was to have in his designs, he was attempting a step which might lead him quickly, and by the widest door, out of all the present difficulties.

"Since the Russians," he said, "place themselves under the direction of England, since that power has become the sovereign arbiter of peace and war on the Continent, let us address ourselves directly to her. It will be for the fourth time I have taken the first steps. Let us try if it is possible to avoid war, in spite of the Russians themselves, and cut the evil at its root."

The Duke of Bassano was accordingly instructed to write to Lord Castlereagh, and reduced the causes of hostilities between France and Great Britain to the two points most difficult to reconcile: the affairs of Spain and those of the Two Sicilies. The Duke of Bassano proposed an arrangement based on the following conditions: the integrity of Spain guaranteed; renunciation
by France of any extension on the side of the Pyrenees; the current dynasty declared
independent, and the government governed by a national constitution of the Cortes. The
independence and integrity of Portugal were also to be guaranteed; the house of Braganza would
reign there. The Kingdom of Naples would remain under Murat; the Kingdom of Sicily would
be handed over to the ancient dynasty of Ferdinand.

In consequence of its stipulations, Spain, Portugal and Sicily would be evacuated by English and
French troops by land and sea. As for the other subjects of discussion, they could be negotiated
according to this principle, which each power would keep what the other could not take away
from him.*

*Letter from the Duke of Bassano, 17 April 1812.

Before entering into an explanation of this opening, Lord Castlereagh asked that the precise
meaning of these words relative to Spain be fixed: "The present dynasty will be declared
independent, and Spain governed by a national constitution of the Cortes." If it was Joseph, and
the Cortes formed under his authority, he explicitly declared that existing commitments did not
allow this basis to be adopted; if it was a question of Ferdinand VII, and of the Cortes governing
in his name, we were ready to explain ourselves.*

*Ibidem, from 23rd.

By these words the present dynasty Napoleon meant that of his brother Joseph. The negotiation
was carried no further; but supposing he had yielded on this point, would England have made
peace? That is not probable, because she had had advantages in Spain, and things were too
advanced with Russia; on the other hand, Napoleon could not replace Ferdinand VII on the
throne without delivering Spain to England. The openness of the French government to Great
Britain could therefore have no other purpose than to be able to say that it had exhausted all
means to make peace with Great Britain before engaging in war with the Russians.

This negotiation lasted only eight days. Two sheets of paper sufficed to cover the
correspondence to which it gave rise*. And yet four more words: Joseph will give way to
Ferdinand, and the peace of the world was made; unfortunately, these words could not come out
of the mouth of a brother, when this brother was called Napoleon!

*See appendix (first part), the two letters relating to this negotiation.

Meanwhile, the Emperor Alexander's answer, so eagerly awaited, arrived from St. Petersburg. It
was the Baron de Serdobin, attached to the Russian legation, who brought it on 23 April to his
Ambassador Kurakin, who, after having read it, immediately went to communicate it to the Duke
of Bassano. The latter found it so imperious and offensive that he made no reply to the
ambassador. So the latter requested an audience from the Emperor, which was granted to him on
the 27th. It would seem that Napoleon avoided entering into an explanation with Kurakin, and
that he sent him back to the Minister of Foreign Relations to discuss the Russian proposals; but
at the same time he gave the Duke of Bassano the secret order to evade these explanations.
Kurakin, in desperation, decided to write to him. According to his letter, the preservation of
Prussia and her independence from all political ties directed against Russia, was indispensable to the interests of that Empire. To arrive at a real state of peace with France, it was necessary that there should be between her and Russia a neutral country which was not occupied by the troops of either of the two powers. The first basis of all negotiation could only be the formal undertaking of the complete evacuation of the states and strongholds of Prussia, a reduction of the garrison of Danzig, the evacuation of Swedish Pomerania, and an arrangement with the King of Sweden, which gave him full and complete satisfaction. On these conditions, the Emperor Alexander, without derogating from the principles adopted by him for the commerce of his States, and for the admission of neutrals to his ports, principles which he would never renounce, bound himself, by an effect of his attachment for the alliance formed at Tilsit, to plead no change in the prohibitive measures established in the empire, and hitherto strictly observed, against direct commerce with England. He undertook, moreover, to agree with the Emperor of the French on a system of licenses which, of course, would not increase, by its effects, the prejudice already experienced by the commerce of Russia in the tariff of its customs; and finally, to conclude a treaty of exchange of the Duchy of Oldenburg for a suitable equivalent. These conditions were final, added Kurakin, and his master could not allow any modification.*

*Letter from Prince Kurakin. (See in the appendix (first part), the documents relating to the negotiation between France and Russia.)

After the battle of Austerlitz, where the united army had been crushed, after the battle of Friedland, where it had been destroyed, Napoleon had not held such an imperious language; and then, far from being reduced to a situation which justified or even permitted such a demand, he was in the fullness of his power: this letter was therefore in his eyes like a declaration of war. To reject the conditions imposed by Russia was to hasten the rupture; if it were to take place, he wanted at least to gain the time necessary to collect all his resources. To accept these conditions was to accept, in substance and above all in form, a law far too harsh, especially for him who had so often dictated it. He therefore concealed the offense, seemed to believe that Kurakin had misunderstood the instructions given to him, and left him aside to speak once more, and directly, to Alexander. Did Napoleon sincerely want to avoid a rupture? This is what no one can decide. However, on 25 April, he sent his aide-de-camp, the Count de Narbonne, who was then in Berlin, to Saint Petersburg. This entirely confidential mission was only the continuation of that of M. de Chernishev, which one might rightly suppose had not been scrupulously fulfilled. The communication to the Cabinet of St. Petersburg of the latest overtures made to England served as a pretext for M. de Narbonne's journey. In a letter to the Count de Romanzoff, the Duke de Bassano again recalled the grievances of France against Russia and renewed, as he had done hitherto, the desire to reconcile the differences.

However, the month of May had begun. Napoleon could not forget the appointment he had given to his father-in-law, the Emperor of Austria, in Dresden:

"The stay I am going to make in the capital of Saxony," he said, "will give M. de Narbonne time to forestall hostilities."

But while seriously preparing for war, Napoleon nevertheless liked to believe that the Czar had no well-defined goal in his preparations for aggression.
"His armaments," he said, "are perhaps only a political game. We know how much I need to maintain the state of peace to consolidate my immense edifice, and perhaps we seek to know how far I can let myself be pushed. It's up to who will intimidate the other and uphold the challenge. I confess, it would be painful to me if Alexander's friendship were only an illusion. Here in a few days, my doubts will be cleared up: if I have been deceived, at least I would not be taken unawares. Half measures are hardly my method, and I take my precautions with such a vast plan. When the Russians see that Prussia, Austria, and probably Sweden are with me, and that the Turks are revived under our influence,* I suppose that the cabinet of St. Petersburg are not left easily at the thought of defying me."

*Napoleon could not yet be aware of either the treaty signed on 24 March by Alexander and Bernadotte, or the Peace of Bucharest, concluded in May following, between Russia and the Sublime Porte. This last treaty, as we shall see later, remained unknown to the Emperor until 13 August, just as he did not learn that at the end of October, and consequently after having left Moscow, that the Russian army of Moldavia was advancing towards Lithuania to fight him. If we have made complete prematurely of the result of the negotiations opened by France with Sweden and the Ottoman Empire, it is because intelligence of the facts demanded it.

In fact, from 16 to 20 February, the Italian troops had already left Bautzen; the Saxons assembled at Guben, and the Bavarians set out. Oudinot, with the Second Corps, was between the Rhine and the Elbe. In the first days of March, Ney, with the Third Corps, had crossed the Rhine, at Mainz; Davout, with the First, was on the Oder. From the month of April, these various corps marched forward: the First, on the Vistula; the Second, on the Elbe; the Third, on the lower Oder; the Fourth, starting from Verona, had already crossed the Tyrol and penetrated into Silesia: the Imperial Guard did not leave Paris until the 1st of April. Until the Emperor's arrival, Davout was invested with the command: he was recommended to carefully avoid anything that might militarily alarm the Russians. Napoleon wanted to be on his guard against an attack on their part, but not to provoke it, because his desire was to maintain until the end the possibility of understanding each other, and, if war became inevitable, to give the rest of his forces time to arrive. The line of the Grand Army would therefore only be completed from 1 to 15 May.

Although the Prussian contingent was in fact in the vanguard, Napoleon nevertheless took every precaution for the safety of the French columns. As they passed the capitals of Germany, they were to leave strong garrisons in the country, to prevent an insurrection of the German population, or to suppress it. He occupied Spandau, which he called the citadel of Berlin, as Pillau was that of Königsberg. He ordered Victor to establish himself at Berlin, where he was to assemble the Ninth Corps, 30,000 strong, to contain the Russians, and ensure the communications of the army. It was prescribed to this Marshal not to interfere in the affairs of the government.

"He should have the greatest respect," said Napoleon*, "for the king, the princes, the ministers and the main personages of the State. He should above all show great respect for His Prussian Majesty, and even the expression of this feeling can never be pushed too far in all the ceremonies and in all the circumstances that may arise. Finally, the Duke de Belluno must not accept a table. What I grant him in treatment must suffice for a great representation."

*Instructions to the Minister of War, 21 April 1812.
As we see, everything had been planned by the Emperor to paralyze and enchain Prussia, and prevent treason. He was blamed for treating one of his allies with so much severity; but in case of reverse could he count on his fidelity? No! for we later had the sad experience of it.

At the time when the united military forces of the French Empire were about to be absorbed by the bitter war which was continuing in the Peninsula, and by that which was being prepared against Russia, prudence advised providing, by means other than conscription, for the tranquility and safety of coasts and borders. This means had been found since the revolution of 1789: it was the resurrection of the National Guard, the armed nation. Since he was at the head of the government, Napoleon had let this fine institution fall into disuse. The soldiers were antipathetic to her, they despised her, and made fun of her. However, as the war dragged on and consumed men, the Emperor had foreseen that there might come a time when recourse would be had to the National Guard, instituting and ranking it, this time, quite militarily. It was therefore imagined to divide it into three bands intended to serve, the first, at the frontiers; the second, in the department; and the third, in the commune. The project was discussed for a long time in the Council of State, which was not favorable to it. It was objected that everyone would be alarmed by this institution and would see in it, under the pretext of an internal defense, only a means of sending to the armies the citizens included in the classification. Napoleon showed himself offended by this suspicion:

"If I have a fault," he says on this subject, "it is not that of taking oblique paths in my proposals, but of explaining myself too clearly. If I needed men, I would boldly address the senate, which would grant them to me; and, if it refused them, I would address myself to the people, who would march with me, despite the metaphysics of the fools and the malevolence of the salons of Paris; for the people understand me, me! it loves me! And do you know why?...it's because I'm the people-emperor!"

Napoleon then declared that he had no other view than the safety, peace and stability of France at home:

"With the bans of the National Guard," he added, "we will have a nation built of lime and sand, capable of defying men and centuries! Then I will raise this National Guard to the equal of my Guard, on which it will take precedence; the old retired officers will be its leaders and fathers, and you will see that they will solicit the ranks as much as others solicit the favors of the court!"

*Locré, Minutes of the Council of State, March 1812.*

This idea of Napoleon's to assimilate the National Guard of the Empire to his guard, was not new, since, already, in a decree of 1 January 1810, he had said: "Wishing to give a proof of my satisfaction to the guards departments of the North, I order that there will be added to the infantry regiments of my guard a regiment of four battalions, composed of men of good will, drawn from the companies of national guards which contributed to the defense of the coasts of Flanders and La Manche, etc."
"This regiment,” added the decree, “will receive the denomination of Regiment of the National Guard of the Guard, and will be treated in all like the guard, etc." (See our History of the Imperial Guard, book X, chap. I, page 321.)

This organization was never completed, even in the Emperor's liberal system; and when, two years later, the need arose for the nation to rise en masse in order to defend its territory invaded by all the nations of Europe, the National Guard failed.

Assured of the alliance of Prussia and Austria, Napoleon had no longer hesitated to give publicity to his arming. The Minister for Foreign Relations read, in the senate, a report from the Emperor, in which, after recalling the principles of maritime law and the attacks which had been made upon them by England, he added that, in order to maintain this great system, it was necessary to employ the powerful means permitted by the constitutions of the empire so that all its available forces could go wherever the English pavilion wished to land.

The National Guard of the Empire was therefore divided into three bans, composed, the first of men from twenty to twenty-six years old; the second, of all able-bodied men from twenty-six to forty; and the third, or back ban, of able-bodied men from forty to sixty years of age. The men composing the cohorts of the first ban had to be renewed by the sixth each year: the first ban was not to leave the territory of the Empire; it was exclusively intended, as we have said, for the guarding of the frontiers, for the interior police, and for the preservation of arsenals and strongholds. A hundred cohorts of the first rank were immediately placed at the disposal of the Minister of War.

Each cohort was composed of six fusilier companies, one of which was always to remain at the depot, and one artillery company, the whole amounting to nine hundred and twenty-six men. Six cohorts formed a brigade. Retired or discharged officers and non-commissioned officers had, preferably, the jobs of officers or non-commissioned officers, after having been judged capable of resuming active service. For pay, masses, dress, barracks, service, police, discipline, etc., the cohorts were subject to the same regulations as the troops of the Young Guard.

It was thus that the whole virile population of the Empire had to be included in this immense levy of men; it was thus that France grouped itself into myriads of bayonets called to support and defend the sacred soil of the fatherland!

Although the motive for the creation of the cohorts had not been clearly developed, this great defensive measure evidently announced an imminent war. Hearing the president of the senate, Lacépède, speak of active armies, crossing the frontiers "to go and strike the imperial thunderbolt at immense distances," it was not difficult, even if one had not been prepared for it, to recognize that it was Russia.

Either at Paris or at Saint-Cloud, Napoleon continued to spend all the hours of the day and sometimes even those of the nights calculating the needs required by the organization of a vast military administration. The ministers of finance and of the treasury were constantly occupied, under his eyes, in estimating the expenses which such a distant expedition must entail; finally, the resources of the coffers of the extraordinary domain had been counted, and the Baron de La
Bouillerie, Commissariat General, had the barrels of gold prepared which were to be the reserve of all the departments.

Provisions of all kinds, cannon, muskets, powder, ammunition, pontoon crews, were sent to Danzig: the garrison of this place was increased to twenty thousand men.

The cavalry, artillery train and military crews were complete.*

*See appendix (second part), 1st Bulletin of the Grand Army, 20 June.

All troops had to live off the resources of the country. It had been forbidden to touch the supplies, which were only to be a reserve. Numerous transports, among which one saw for the first time *voitures à la comtoise* and teams of oxen, were intended to carry the stores of the army following the columns.

Thus, while the cabinet of Saint Petersburg, relying on the statements of the situation of our army, stolen by M. de Chernishev, believed to catch Napoleon unawares, two months had sufficed for him to put himself in position, and, from the Rhine to the Vistula, all the roads were covered with soldiers!

Each time that Napoleon was to take a campaign, his first care, before leaving Paris, was to organize the public administration in such a way that none of its springs would be embarrassed. He had acted thus during the Italian campaign, crowned by Marengo; in 1805, when he left for Austerlitz; before the Prussian campaign of 1806, and in his last war with Austria, in 1809. The Russian expedition, once resolved, Fouché, who was no longer Minister of Police*, had been replaced, like us as we have said, by a man on whose devotion Napoleon could count, the Duke de Rovigo, an implacable enemy of all conspiracies against his sovereign, his idol, wherever he planted his eagles. Savary, we say, was to, by means of a daily report, inform the Emperor of all that happened in the Empire, and especially of the movements of public opinion; also when the Minister of Police took leave of the Emperor, the day before his departure, Napoleon said to him:

*Fouché, no doubt because he was no longer in power, was very opposed to the Russian campaign. On this subject he composed a Memoir for the Emperor, in which he tried to demonstrate to him the danger there would be in engaging in that distant war which, he said, "could not resemble any other." The means that Savary employed to have the certainty that his predecessor, retired to his castle of Ferrières, was engaged in similar work, and to inform the Emperor of it before Fouché could present it to him, is curious: we will have occasion to talk about it later.

"No useless rigors; make yourself loved rather than feared."

This advice was not the easiest to follow, for great energy had to be imparted to the general administration of the Empire, of which the police was in fact the real centre.

General Clarke, Minister of War, also inspired much confidence in Napoleon in his means of administering his department, which had become, by the force of circumstances, the most important of all. The interior was in the hands of M. de Montalivet, who was to come to an understanding with Savary for the administration of the departments. The other ministries, such as finance, justice and worship, were sort of specialties. At the head of everything, Napoleon
had placed Arch-Chancellor Cambacérès, because he knew him devoted, prudent and capable, by a certain temperance of will, of stopping the zeal, sometimes pushed to excess, of Savary, Montalivet and Clarke.

The council of ministers had to meet every day, under the presidency of the Arch-Chancellor, who received orders directly from the Emperor. Marie-Louise, who was to accompany her glorious husband to Dresden, received no political power; the idea of a regency had not yet occurred to Napoleon, who felt too sure of his strength for that; Marie-Louise was only to embellish Napoleon's plenary court at Dresden, to which almost all the rulers of Europe had been summoned by him.

When everything was thus settled, the Emperor presided over the Council of State for the last time and recommended to the ministers to maintain Paris and the Empire in a patriotic spirit: his language seemed to take on a tone of inspiration and solemnity: "I am going to tame Alexander," he said; "I will win two battles, and I will go to Moscow or St. Petersburg: there I will dictate peace. I will only be absent for three or four months, because this war is limited."

To the great functionaries of the State, he dictated the duties, saying to them:

"Do not be afraid to importune me with your correspondence, even every day."

To the Minister of War:

"You will activate the levies of men, and especially the organization of the cohorts."

To Savary:

"Do not forget to send me daily bulletins, written by your hand, on the spirit of the inhabitants of Paris."

Finally, he said, addressing everyone:

"Zeal, gentlemen, union among you, confidence in me, and soon I will bring you an advantageous, solid and glorious peace for France."*

*Locré, Minutes of the Council of State, May 1812.

Two days before his departure (that is to say, 7 May), Napoleon had his first treasure summoned during the day, his diamond chest, and deposited in his bedroom; then he advised her not to go away, "because," added the Emperor, "I shall need you later." Constant acquitted himself of this commission. About nine o'clock in the evening, this servant was summoned again to the Emperor, whom he found chatting with M. de La Valette, director-general of the post office. As soon as Napoleon saw Constant, he went to the casket, placed on a sofa, opened it, examined its contents, piece by piece, and said to his First Valet de Chambre, after closing the little cabinet himself:
"Constant, take this chest and carry it to Monsieur le Comte's carriage, where you will get in, and you will wait for him until he comes."

This carriage was parked at the foot of the great steps of the courtyard of the Tuileries: Constant had the door opened for him by the footman, and climbed into it laden with his precious burden. At half-past eleven, M. de La Valette arrived; Constant gave way to him, and the carriage drove off.*

*Constant, *Memoirs*, tome V, chap. III.

It is impossible to explain Napoleon's precaution of giving his diamonds for safekeeping to the postmaster; however, it was not without cause, as will be seen later. This coffer contained: the imperial sword on the pommel of which was mounted the diamond *the regent*; the large collar of the order of the Legion of Honor, the plaque, the braid of the hat, the counter-epaulette, the buttons of the coronation habit, the garter buckles, etc. etc., all in diamonds of very high price.

That same evening Napoleon had gone to sleep at Saint-Cloud.

On 9 May 1812, at five o'clock in the morning, an immense rolling of carriages was heard in the courtyard of the palace of Saint-Cloud; there were a large number of traveling crews. The whole household of the Emperor and Empress was on the move: chamberlains, squires, pages, palace prefects, etc., all leaving pell-mell in carriages bearing imperial arms and the next day's *Moniteur* announced: "*LL MM the Emperor and Empress have left the Palace of Saint-Cloud yesterday, at five o'clock in the morning, for a trip to Germany.*" It was thus that Napoleon, at each campaign, said his farewells to Paris: France was to hear from him only at the first victory!

**END OF THE FIRST PART.**