SOME NEW BOOKS.

Marbot's Recollections of Napoleon.

American readers will be glad to see an English translation of the *Memoirs of Baron De Marbot* (Longmans), which have excited so much attention since their appearance in France about six months ago. No first hand contemporary testimony concerning the Napoleonic time is more valuable than this. Not only do the Marbot memoirs incomparably surpass in usefulness those of Prince de Talleyrand, which have so disappointed expectation, but they greatly exceed in interest those of Madame de Rémusat, whose impressions of Napoleon were those of a woman who saw him not in the council room or on the battlefield, but in the drawing room, where he was notoriously at a disadvantage. It was on the battlefield that he was observed and studied by Marbot, who was an eye witness of almost the whole of his military career, from Marengo to Waterloo. From these reminiscences we learn what was thought of Napoleon by the rank and file and by commissioned officers, and also to some extent by Generals and Marshals, for the author served chiefly on the staff of Commanders-in-Chief. There seems to be no ground for questioning the authenticity of these memoirs, or their fidelity to truth wherever the author bases his statements on the evidence of his own eyes and ears. It is manifest, indeed, that some of his assertions represent rather current opinion than historical fact, but it is easy to distinguish these from the record of his personal experience.

The twelve hundred pages of the original work are condensed by the English translator into about nine hundred, which are veritably packed with historical and geographical material. After recounting very briefly who Marbot was, we shall mainly confine ourselves in the present notice to that feature of the memoirs which is of deepest and widest interest, to wit, what the author has to tell us about Napoleon Bonaparte. On another occasion we may be able to bring together some of the innumerable references to the more distinguished of Napoleon's Marshals—references scattered through the two large octavo volumes which make up this book.

I.

The Marbots were a family possessed of a moderate estate on the borders of the Limousin and Quercy, in what is now the Department of Corrèze. Although they had for some time dropped the territorial particle *de*, they were recognized as belonging to the petite noblesse, and the father of the author of these memoirs married in 1776 the daughter of M. de Certain, a nobleman of ancient race, living at the chateau of Laval de Cère. The sons of M. de Certain were zealous upholders of the monarchy, and were among the first nobles to emigrate; but their brother-in-law, Marbot, although he had been an officer in the body guard of Louis XV., and had risen to the rank of Captain, sympathized with the revolution, and entered the military service of the republic. He ultimately became a General of division, and would probably have gone much higher, had not his life been cut short in 1800 at Genoa by a wound aggravated by the typhus fever, which proved fatal to so many thousands of the French garrison.

The author of these memoirs, Marcellin De Marbot, was born in August, 1782, and in 1799, at the age of 17, entered the army by the only way then practicable, namely, by enlisting in the ranks. He became a private soldier in a regiment of Hussars which formed part of the division which his father was about to command in Italy. He rose rapidly, yet his rise was due not at all to his father's influence, but to his personal bravery and intelligence; he became a Sergeant and Second Lieutenant in the course of a few months. After a long and varied experience on the staff and in the line he became a Colonel in 1812, and served in that capacity at the battle of Waterloo. After Waterloo he was obliged to spend three years in exile, and it was during this period that he wrote the treatise "Considerations on the Art of War," which earned a flattering reference to him accompanying a legacy of 100,000 francs in Napoleon's will. In 1818 he was recalled to France and placed on half pay. Eleven years later he was put in command of a regiment, and in 1830 he became Aide-de-Camp to the Duke of Orleans and obtained the rank of Major-General. He received his thirteenth wound in the course of the Medeah expedition in Algiers. He died a Lieutenant-General in November, 1854.

II.

The first reference to Bonaparte, not, indeed, in order of mention in these memoirs, but in order of date, is encountered on page 140 of the first volume. The author is speaking of Augereau and of the distinction which he gained in the campaigns of the republican army in Italy, especially at Castiglione. We are reminded that on the eve of this battle the French army was surrounded on all sides and in a very critical position. Bonaparte, who was Commander-in-Chief, summoned a council of war for the only time in his life. All the Generals, even Masséna, were in favor of retreating, until Augereau, pointing out the way of escaping from the difficulty, ended by saying: "Were you all to go, I shall remain and with my division shall attack the enemy at daybreak." Bonaparte, struck by Augereau's arguments, said: "Very well, I will stay with you." After that there was no more talk of retreat, and on the morrow a brilliant victory, due in great part to the valor and fine tactics of Augereau, assured the position of the French army in Italy for a long time. So it came to pass that afterward, when jealous tongues thought fit to slander Augereau in the presence of the Emperor, he answered, "Let us not forget that he saved us at Castiglione," and when he created his new nobility he named Augereau Duke of Castiglione.

It is on pages 23 and 26 of the first volume, relating to a somewhat later period, the spring of 1799, that the name of Bonaparte, who was then in Egypt, first appears in these recollections. At this time young Marbot was in Paris with his father who commanded the division of the army stationed in the capital. It was through him that the author learned a good deal about the intrigues then going on, which subsequently culminated in the overthrow of the Directory and the elevation of Bonaparte to the post of First Consul. Two of the Directors, namely, Sieyès and Roger-Ducos, together with many of the Deputies (members of the Council of Five Hundred), and a vast majority of the people held that in order to save France the reins of government should be put in the hands of some strong man who had already rendered memorable services to the State. It was obvious that such a chief could only be a soldier with a great influence in the army, who should be able to rekindle the enthusiasm of the nation and so restore victory to the flag and bar out the foreigners who were on the eve of crossing the frontier. The one man who thoroughly satisfied the conditions was Gen. Bonaparte; but he was in Egypt and the need was pressing. Joubert had just been killed; Masséna was illustrious for his many victories, but in no sense a statesman; Bernadotte, then Minister of War, was not thought to have either the talents or the character required to heal the ills of France. The reformers, therefore, turned their thoughts toward Moreau, and according to Marbot it is certain that he was invited to put himself at the head of the party which wished to overthrow the Directory. The chief post in the State was offered to him with the title of President of Consul. Whatever may have been the reason, whether disinterestedness or indolence, or distrust of his own political ability, Moreau refused the offer and retired to his estate in the country to amuse himself with field sports. Thereupon Sieyès, acting through the Corsican Deputy, Salicetti, sent a trusty secret agent to Bonaparte, in Egypt, to inform him of the unsatisfactory state of affairs, and invited him to return and put himself at the head of the Government. It was recognized, however, that even with Bonaparte at hand it would be a difficult and dangerous business to overthrow the Directory without the support of the army, and especially of the Paris division. Accordingly Sieyès tried to win over Bernadotte and Marbot, first sounding them through the help of various Deputies who were at once their friends and his partisans. The author of these memoirs subsequently learned that his father answered the half advances of Sieyès to the effect that while he was well aware that the state of the country required prompt remedies, he had sworn to maintain the Constitution of the year 3, and was not going to use his authority or the troops of his division to bring about the overthrow of that Constitution; after which he waited on Sieyès, resigned his command of the Paris division, and requested to be transferred to active service. Sieyès was glad to get a man of Marbot's character out of the way before he could spoil the plot by strict adherence to his duty, and hastened to accede to his request. The General selected for Marbot's place at the head of the Paris division was Lefebvre, who on the 18th of Brumaire put his troops at the disposal of Bonaparte, and earned thereby in later days the high favor of the Emperor, the title of Marshal, Duke of Dantzic, and heaps of wealth.

III.

Gen. Marbot was assigned to a division in the army of Italy, and his son, Marcellin, who had just joined a Hussar regiment, accompanied him on his journey. Arriving at Lyons they were informed that Bonaparte, whom every one supposed to be in Egypt, had reached that city on his way to Paris. On hearing the news Gen. Marbot said: "Of course I thought they would bring him, but I never suspected that it would be so soon; they have played their game well. We shall see great events come to pass. Now I am sure that I was right in getting away from Paris; with the army I shall be able to serve my country without being mixed up in a coup d'état. It may be as necessary as it seems, but I dislike it altogether." It turned out that the apartments at the hotel, which had been ordered a week beforehand for Gen. Marbot, had been given to Gen. Bonaparte. Quick-tempered though he was, Marbot said nothing, but his courier made so great a clamor that Bonaparte's aides-de-camp, hearing the fearful uproar and learning the cause of it, told their chief what had happened. Up to that time Bonaparte had known nothing of his landlord's shabby behavior toward Marbot, and feeling that the latter, who had recently been Commandant of Paris, and at that moment was at the head of a division of the army of Italy, was too important a man for off-hand treatment, he ordered one of his officers to go down at once and ask the General to come and share his lodging with him. But the carriages had gone on before the aide-de-camp could speak to Marbot, so Bonaparte started at once on foot in order to express his regret in person. The author of these memoirs tells us that his father's suite were all in the sitting room of the house where they had found quarters, and his father was pacing up and down plunged in meditation, when suddenly a waiter, throwing open both folding doors, announced Gen. Bonaparte. On entering he ran up to Marbot and embraced him. He was received courteously but coldly. As the two were old acquaintances, it needed, of course, only a few words to explain matters with regard to the lodgings. They had much else to talk of, however, so they went alone into the bedroom, where they conferred together for more than an hour. When they came out Bonaparte asked young Marbot very courteously for news of his mother, and complimented him in a kind way on having taken up the military career. Then gently pinching the boy's ear—the flattering caress which he always employed to persons with whom he was pleased—he said, addressing the father: "Here will be a second Gen. Marbot some day." At the time the elder Marbot gave no indication of what had passed between his visitor and himself. But the son learned, later on, that Bonaparte, without actually betraying his schemes, had endeavored by the most adroit cajolery to enlist Marbot on his side. The overtures, however, were steadily evaded. When the next day Marbot went to return Bonaparte's visit, the two walked for a long time alone in the little garden of the hotel, while their staffs kept at a respectful distance. Our author tells us that he could see them at one time vigorously gesticulating; at another, talking more calmly; presently Bonaparte, coming close to Marbot with a coaxing air, took his arm in a friendly fashion. It is suggested that his motive was probably to cause the authorities in the courtyard and the many curious spectators crowding the neighboring windows to believe that Gen. Marbot had assented to his plans.

From Lyons Marbot proceeded to Nice, and before he had left that town on his way to his division, which was stationed in Liguria, he received news of the overthrow of the Directory on the 18th of Brumaire and the establishment of the Consulate. The author remarks that his father's opinion of the Directory had not been such as to make him regret its fall, but he feared that in the intoxication of power Bonaparte, when he had restored order in France, would not content himself with the modest title of Consul, and predicted that before long he would want to make himself king. He was only wrong as to the title; in four years' time Napoleon made himself Emperor. Whatever may have been his presentiments, Gen. Marbot rejoiced at being absent from Paris on the 18th of Brumaire; his son believed that if he had been there he would have vigorously opposed Bonaparte's enterprise. But being on service at the head of a division in the face of the enemy, he felt able to take refuge in the passive obedience of a soldier. He rejected, it seems, proposals which several Colonels and Generals made to him to march on Paris at the head of their troops. "Who," he asked, "will defend the frontier if we desert it? And what will become of France if the miseries of a civil war are added to our war against the foreigner?" By this caution he kept the excitement among his troops in check, though at the same time he felt apparently as little sympathy as they did with the recent coup d'état.

It will be remembered that Masséna maintained the defence of Genoa against the combined attack of the Austrians by land and the English by sea, until his soldiers were literally starved to the point of death, in order that Bonaparte might have time to transport his army across the Alps and form in Lombardy in the rear of the Austrians. When the evacuation was agreed upon, Masséna deemed it of such vital moment to the First Consul that he should have timely notice of the treaty, that he insisted on a safe conduct for two aides-de-camp in order that if one fell ill the other might take on the despatch. Young Marbot, whose father had lately died in Genoa, was selected for one of these envoys. When they reached Milan Bonaparte spoke to young Marbot with much sympathy of his recent loss and promised if he behaved well to act a father's part to him. He never tired of questioning the messengers as to what had happened at Genoa, and about the strength and direction of the Austrian forces which they had passed on their way to Milan. They were allowed to accompany the First Consul to Montebello, and on the battlefield of Marengo they were his orderly officers. Without entering into the details of this memorable fight, Marbot points out, what is well known, that the French were on the verge of defeat, and would probably have been beaten if the Austrian General Ott's 25,000 men, who had been besieging Genoa, had come up before the end of the battle. We are told that Bonaparte, fearing that they would appear at any moment, was very anxious, and only recovered his spirits when the French infantry and the cavalry of Desaix had decided the victory by repulsing Zach's column of grenadiers. Just then, noticing that the horse which young Marbot rode was slightly wounded in the leg, he took the boy by the ear and said, laughing, "Do you expect me to lend you my horses for you to treat them in that way?"

IV.

Young Marcellin Marbot and his brother Adolphe both became aides-de-camp of Gen. Bernadotte, who commanded the Army of the West at the time that many regiments detached from the Army of the Rhine were collected at Brest for the expedition to San Domingo. The author of these memoirs does not hesitate to assert that at this period Bernadotte conspired against the Government of which Bonaparte was at the head. In regard to this conspiracy he gives some details, all the more interesting for never having been publicly known. It seems that Bernadotte and Moreau, jealous of the First Consul's rise, had resolved to overthrow him and place themselves at the head of the Government, taking for their colleague some one used to civil administration, or some clear-headed lawyer. To accomplish this end Bernadotte, who, as Marbot admits, had a knack of winning the affection of officers and soldiers, visited the provinces throughout his district, reviewing bodies of troops and employing every means to attach them more firmly to himself. After having wrought the greater number of regiments to disaffection, he managed, through subordinates, to organize a secret league, which was joined by nearly all the Colonels and a great number of superior officers. Bernadotte's principal agents in this business were his chief of staff, a General of Brigade named Simon, and a Major named Fourcart. It was arranged that the garrison of Rennes, consisting of several regiments, should start the movement, which would then spread like a train of powder through all the divisions of the army. All was ready for the explosion when Bernadotte's resolution failed. He preferred to get his chestnuts out of the fire with a catspaw. So he persuaded Gen. Simon and the chief conspirators that it was indispensable for him, in order that he might be in a position to seize the reins of Government on the spot, to be in Paris at the moment when the deposition of the Consuls was proclaimed by the forces in Brittany, which numbered some 80,000 men. Before Bernadotte's departure for the capital a proclamation was drawn up, signed by him and Moreau and addressed to the people as well as to the army. Many thousands of copies, secretly printed by a bookseller of Rennes, were to be posted up on the eventful day. Bernadotte, however, desired to have a large number of copies of it in Paris, so that it might be published there the moment the Army of the West had raised the standard of revolt. In order to have a number of the proclamations at hand without compromising himself, he adopted the following course: He invited Marbot's elder brother, Adolphe, to accompany him to Paris, and advised him to have his horse and dog cart brought after him. But after Adolphe Marbot had gone off in the coach, Gen. Simon and Major Fourcart stopped his servant on some pretence, and taking out the luggage from the dog cart replaced it with parcels of the proclamation.

Meanwhile the First Consul's police having got wind of the plot going forward in the Army of the West, contrived to frustrate it. Gen. Simon having been arrested made a full confession, which was sent off by express to Paris, but the First Consul postponed the arrest of Bernadotte and Moreau for want of decisive evidence. In order to get this he gave orders that all travellers coming from Brittany should be searched; so when the servant of Adolphe Marbot reached Versailles with the dog cart he was seized and the proclamations were discovered. In these documents Bernadotte and Moreau, after reprobating the First Consul in very strong terms, announced his fall and their own accession to power. Bonaparte in a fury sent for the two Generals. Moreau said that he had no authority over the Army of the West and declined all responsibility for the conduct of the regiments composing it. His objection manifestly had some force, but it made Bernadotte's position all the worse, since he, as Commander-in-Chief over all the troops in Brittany, was responsible for the maintenance of good order among them. The First Consul thought that Bernadotte would be crushed and overwhelmed by the discovery of the rebel proclamation. But he had to do with a Gascon. Bernadotte professed surprise and indignation; he knew nothing of it, absolutely nothing. Gen. Simon, he said, was a scoundrel. He defied any one to show him the original of the proclamation signed in his own hand. Was it any fault of his, he asked, if some crazy fools had had his name printed, beneath the proclamation? He disavowed it and the guilty authors of all the proceedings from the bottom of his soul, and yielded to no one in demanding their punishment. The fact was that Bernadotte had been clever enough to let Gen. Simon conduct the whole business without putting into his hand a single word of writing which might compromise himself, thus reserving to himself the power of disavowing everything in the event of a failure of the plot. Bonaparte, though convinced of Bernadotte's guilt, had only half proofs, and upon these his Council of Ministers judged that it was impossible to base an indictment against a Commander-in-Chief whose name was very popular in the country and in the army. In the case of Adolphe Marbot they were less particular. He was arrested and imprisoned for some time, Bernadotte refusing, notwithstanding the fervent entreaties of the boy's mother, to interpose on his behalf. It was Bonaparte who restored him to liberty, though he never took him back into favor.

V.

An instance of the severity with which Bonaparte enforced his regulations, even in the case of his favorites, is recounted on page 141 of the first volume. After his elevation to the Consulate Bonaparte had formed a numerous guard, the infantry of which he placed under the command of Gen. Lannes. He, though a distinguished soldier, had no idea of administration; so instead of keeping to the established rate for the purchase of cloth, linen, and such materials, he thought that nothing could be good enough for his men. Consequently the officials of the clothing department, delighted at being able to deal with the purveyors by private contract, whereby they might obtain commissions, and further, thinking that the name of Gen. Lannes, friend of the First Consul, would cover any amount of plundering, ordered such luxurious uniforms that when it came to paying the bills they were found to be 300,000 francs in excess of the sum allowed by the regulations. The First Consul, who had resolved to bring the finances into order, and to compel the commanders of regiments not to exceed the credits sanctioned, was determined to make an example. Fond as he was of Lannes, and though convinced that not a centime had gone into his pocket, he declared him responsible for the deficit of 300,000 francs, and allowed him only eight days to pay this sum into the regimental chest under penalty of being brought before a court martial. This rigorous decision produced an excellent effect, putting a stop to the waste which had been going on in regimental expenditures. But Lannes, although recently married to the daughter of a rich Senator, found it impossible to pay. Then Augereau, learning of his friend's perilous position, hurried to his solicitor, got 300,000 francs, and told his Secretary to pay them in the name of Gen. Lannes into the regimental chest of the Guard. The First Consul, when he heard of this, was most grateful to Augereau and in order to put Lannes in a position to be able to discharge his debt, he gave him the very well paid embassy to Lisbon.

VI.

In the course of the campaign that ended at Austerlitz Napoleon had occasion to play a diplomatic and military comedy in which the author of these memoirs bore a part. It was of the utmost moment to maintain the vacillation of the King of Prussia and to prevent him from sending an army to coöperate with the Austrians and Russians. On the other hand the King of Prussia, feeling it highly desirable to know what view he might safely take with regard to the prospects of the belligerents, sent his minister, Von Haugwitz, to the French headquarters that he might judge for himself of the state of affairs. The Ambassador arrived at Brünn some days before the battle of Austerlitz. The French Emperor, knowing that Von Haugwitz sent a messenger to Berlin every day, wished to let transpire through him the news of the defeat and capture of Jellachich's army—news which, owing to the rapid march of events, was not likely to have yet reached Prussia. He took the following means to obtain this end: Duroc, the Marshal of the Household, after giving Marbot and another aide-de-camp of Augereau's notice of what they were expected to do, had all the Austrian colors which the two young officers had brought from Bregenz replaced privately in the quarters which they were occupying. Some hours afterward, when Napoleon was talking in his study with Von Haugwitz, the two aides-de-camp repeated the ceremony of presentation in precisely the same manner which they had adopted some days before. The Emperor, on hearing music in the courtyard of his house, feigned astonishment and went to the window, followed by the Ambassador. Seeing the trophies borne by the sergeants, he called the aide-de-camp on duty and asked what it all meant. The answer was that there were two aides-de-camp of Marshal Augereau, who were coming to bring the Emperor the colors of Jellachich's Austrian army, which had been captured at Bregenz. They were ordered to enter then and there without waiting, and, as if he had never seen them, Napoleon received the letter of Augereau, which had been sealed up, and read it, although he had known the contents for four days. Then he questioned them, making them enter into the minutest details. Duroc had cautioned them to speak loud, because the Prussian Ambassador was a little deaf. As one of the aides-de-camp had lost his voice, it was Marbot who had to answer the Emperor, and, seeing his plan, he depicted in the most vivid colors the defeat of the Austrians, their dejection, and the enthusiasm of the French troops. Then presenting the trophies one after another, he named all the regiments to which they had belonged, laying a special stress upon two, the capture of which was likely to produce the greatest effect upon the Prussian Ambassador. "Here," said Marbot, "are the colors of the Emperor of Austria's own regiment of infantry; there is the standard of his brother's, the Archduke Charles's Uhlans." Napoleon's eyes sparkled and seemed to say, "Well done, young man." Then he dismissed the aides-de-camp, and as they went out they heard him say to the Ambassador, "You see, Count, my armies are winning at all points; the Austrian army is annihilated, and very soon the Russian army will be, too." Von Haugwitz appeared greatly upset, and as soon as the aides-de-camp were out of the room Duroc said to them, "This evening the diplomat will write to Berlin to inform his Government of the destruction of Jellachich's army. This will somewhat calm the mind of those who are keen for war with us, and will give the King of Prussia fresh reasons for temporizing, which is what the Emperor ardently desires." The comedy having been played, Napoleon wished to get rid of an awkward witness who might report the positions of his forces, and so hinted to the Ambassador that his stay between two armies all ready for an engagement might be a little unsafe for him. The next day the Emperor said nothing to the aides-de-camp about their performance of the day before, but, wishing, no doubt, to evince his satisfaction at the way in which they had carried out his idea, pinched Marbot's ear, which, with him, as we have said, was a sort of caress.

Marbot was a witness of the battle of Austerlitz, and some of the incidents which he relates are well worth reproducing. He saw the dreadful destruction of the Russians through the breaking of the ice on the Satschan Lake. The ice, it seems, was very thick, and five or six thousand men, keeping some kind of order, had reached the middle of the lake when Napoleon, calling up the artillery of his guards, gave the order to fire upon the glistening surface. It broke at countless points, and a mighty cracking was heard. The water oozing through the fissures soon covered the floes, and Marbot beheld thousands of Russians, with their horses, guns, and wagons, slowly settle down into the depths. It was a horrid spectacle, which engraved itself upon his memory. We are also told of the peculiar ferocity with which the French troopers attacked the so-called "Noble Guard." This regiment, composed of the most brilliant of the young Russian nobility, lost heavily because, the swagger in which they had indulged against the French having come to the ears of Napoleon's soldiers, these, and above all the mounted grenadiers, attacked them with fury, shouting, as they passed their great sabres through their bodies: "We will give the ladies of St. Petersburg something to cry for!"

It will be remembered that the painter, Gérard, in his picture of the battle of Austerlitz, has taken for his subject the moment when Gen. Rapp, coming wounded out of the fight and covered with his enemies' blood and his own, is presenting to the Emperor the flags just captured and his prisoner, Prince Repnin, commander of the Noble Guard. The author of these memoirs was present at this imposing spectacle, and he assures us that the artist has depicted it with wonderful accuracy. All the heads, he says, are portraits, even that of the brave chasseur, who, making no complaint, though he had been shot through the body, had the courage to come up to the Emperor and fell stone dead as he presented the standard which he had just taken. It was Napoleon who, wishing to honor his memory, ordered the painter to find a place for him in his composition. In the picture also may be seen a mameluke who is carrying in one hand an enemy's flag and holds in the other the bridle of his dying horse. Marbot tells us that this man was named Mustapha, and was well known in the Guard for his courage and ferocity. During the charge he had pursued the Grand Duke Constantine, who only got rid of him by a pistol shot which severely wounded the mameluke's horse. Mustapha, grieved at having only a standard to offer the Emperor, said in his broken French as he presented it: "Ah, if me catch Prince Constantine, me cut him head off and bring it to Emperor." Napoleon disgusted, replied: "Will you hold your tongue, you savage!"

Among the distinguished officers of the French Imperial Guard who fell at Austerlitz, was Gen. Morland. The fate of his body was a strange one. Napoleon, always on the lookout for anything that might kindle the spirit of emulation among the troops, decided that Gen. Morland's body should be placed in the memorial building which he proposed to erect on the Esplanade des Invalides at Paris. The surgeons having neither the time nor the materials necessary to embalm the General's body on the battlefield, put it into a barrel of rum, which was transported to the French capital. But subsequent events having delayed the construction of the monument destined for Gen. Morland, the barrel in which he had been placed was still standing in one of the rooms of the School of Medicine when Napoleon lost the empire in 1814. Not long afterward the barrel broke, through decay, and people were much surprised to find that the rum had made the General's moustaches grow to such an extraordinary extent that they fell below his waist. The corpse was in perfect preservation, but in order to get possession of it his family was obliged to bring an action against some scientific man who had made a curiosity of it.

VII.

About the battle of Jéna, also, Marbot has something new and interesting to narrate. Neither Thiers nor Laufrey seems to have any inkling of the way in which Napoleon learned how to get his troops on to the Landgrafenberg, a height commanding the town of Jéna. This hill is very steep on the side toward Jéna, and the only road existing there is that to Weimar through the Mühltahl, a long and difficult passage, the exit from which was guarded by Saxon troops in alliance with the Prussians. Within a cannon shot in rear of them part of the Prussian army was drawn up in line. The Emperor, supposing himself able to reach the enemy only by this passage, was prepared for heavy losses in employing it, for it did not seem possible to turn the Prussian position. But Napoleon's luck furnished him with an unexpected means. A parson of the town of Jéna, excited by the sight of the conflagration which was devouring it, and regarding the Prussians as the coercers of his sovereign and the enemies of Saxony, thought he might give Napoleon the means of driving them from the land by pointing out to him a little path which infantry could use to climb the steep sides of the Landgrafenberg. He therefore guided a detachment of voltigeurs and some staff officers up to the place which the Prussians, thinking the ascent impracticable, had omitted to guard. On the strength of the report made by the officers Napoleon went up there himself, accompanied by Marshal Lannes and guided by the Saxon parson. Having observed that between the highest point of the path and the plain which the enemy occupied there existed a little rocky platform, the Emperor resolved to assemble there a portion of his troops who might issue from it as from a citadel to attack the Prussians. The difficulty of the task was such that in Marbot's opinion no one but Napoleon commanding Frenchmen could have surmounted it, but he sent at once for 4,000 pioneering tools from the wagons of the engineers and artillery, and ordered that every battalion should work in turn for an hour at widening and levelling the path, and that as each finished its work it should go and form up silently on the Landgrafenberg, while another took its place. They were lighted at their work by torches, the light of which was concealed from the enemies' eyes by the blaze of Jéna. The nights being long at that period of the year (Oct. 13), the French had time to make the climb practicable not only for the columns of infantry but even for the wagons and artillery, so that before daylight the corps of Lannes and Soult and Augereau's first division, together with the foot guards, were massed on the Landgrafenberg. The term massed was never more correctly used, for the breasts of the men of each regiment were almost touching the backs of those in front of them. But the troops were so well disciplined that in spite of the darkness and the packing of more than 40,000 men on that narrow platform there was not the least disorder, and although the enemy were only half a cannon shot off they perceived nothing. On the morning of Oct. 14 a thick fog covered the country and favored Napoleon's movements. Augereau's second division made a feigned attack, advancing from Jéna through the Mühltahl by the Weimar road. Believing this to be the only point by which the French could issue from Jéna, the enemy had collected, as we have said, a considerable force there. But while the Prussians were preparing to defend this narrow passage with vigor, the French Emperor caused the troops which he had massed on the Landgrafenberg during the night to debouch into the plain and drew them up in order of battle. The first cannon shots, aided by a light breeze, dispersed the fog, the sun shone out brilliantly, and the Prussians stood aghast at seeing the French army deployed in line in their front and advancing to the contest. They could not understand how the French had arrived on the plain while they believed them at the further end of the Jéna valley, with no other means of getting at the Prussian position except the Weimar road, which was carefully defended. Napoleon engaged without loss of time, and the first line of the Prussians and Saxons, under the Prince of Hohenlohe, was forced to give way.

The Jéna parson, who had rendered such valuable service, was richly rewarded by the Emperor and also by the Elector of Saxony when, as the result of the victories of Napoleon, who soon became his ally, he had become a King. The parson lived peaceably in Saxony till 1814, at which time he took refuge in France to escape the vengeance of the Prussians. They carried him off, however, and imprisoned him in a fortress for two or three years, when the King of Saxony interceded in his favor with Louis XVIII., who claimed the parson as having been arrested without authority. The Prussians agreed to release him, and he came to live in Paris.

VIII.

The next striking passage of these memoirs relates to the battle of Friedland, at which again the author had the good fortune to be present as aide-de-camp on the staff of Marshal Lannes. It was on the morning of June 14, 1807, that Marshal Lannes with 10,000 men, subsequently assisted by the corps of Marshal Mortier, attempted to make head against 70,000 Russians and to block their way to Königsberg from Friedland. The moment was very critical. Marshal Lannes was sending officers every instant to warn the Emperor, who was at Eylau, to hurry up the army corps which he knew were on the march behind him. Marbot was the first sent. He met the Emperor just as he was leaving Eylau, and found him beaming. He called the aide-de-camp to his side, and as the two galloped on bade him give an account of all that had taken place before he had left the field of battle. When the report was ended the Emperor said, smiling, "Have you a good memory?" "Pretty fair, sir." "Well, what anniversary is it to-day, the 14th of June?" "Marengo." "Yes," replied the Emperor, "that of Marengo, and I am going to beat the Russians as I beat the Austrians." So convinced was Napoleon on this point that as he rode along the columns and while the soldiers saluted him with frequent cheers, he repeatedly said to them, "To-day is a lucky day, the anniversary of Marengo."

Marbot was in Tilsit with Marshal Lannes during the conferences in that town between Napoleon and the Emperor of Russia. The unlucky King and Queen of Prussia were deeply interested in the negotiations and took part in some of the interviews with the French Emperor. We are told that on these occasions not a trace of their mutual hatred was visible. Napoleon was respectful and attentive, the Queen gracious and desirous of captivating her former enemy. She had all the more need to do so, being well aware that the projected treaty of peace created under the name of the kingdom of Westphalia a new State, whose territory was to be contributed by Electoral Hesse and Prussia. The Queen could resign herself to the loss of several provinces, but she could not make up her mind to part with the strong place of Magdeburg, the retaining of which would be Prussia's safeguard. On his side Napoleon, who proposed to make his brother Jerome King of Westphalia, wished to add Magdeburg to the new State. Marbot was told that in order to retain this important town she used all the methods of friendliness until Napoleon, to change the conversation, praised a superb rose that the Queen was wearing. The story goes that she said, "Will your Majesty have this rose in exchange for Magdeburg?" Napoleon was too practical a man to let himself be caught by such an offer, and it is averred that while praising the beauty of the rose and of the hand which tendered it, he did not take the flower. The Queen's eyes filled with tears, but the Emperor affected not to perceive it. He kept Magdeburg and escorted the Queen politely to the boat which was to take her across the Niemen.

It was after the conclusion of the peace of Tilsit that our author became, much against his will, a smuggler. The Emperor had confided to him a letter which he was personally to hand to the Empress Josephine. As Duroc had let him have 8,000 francs for posting expenses, the young officer went off in high spirits, which continued until he came to Frankfort-on-the-Main. There the Colonel in command gave him a breakfast, and insisted upon seeing Marbot back to his carriage, but as he got in he noticed a large package which formed no part of his despatches. Marbot was about to ask his servant to explain this when the Colonel stopped him, saying, in a whisper, that the packet contained dresses of Berlin wool and other stuffs contraband in France, and that they were intended for the Empress Josephine, who would be very grateful to him for bringing them. Marbot protests that he would have been very glad to oblige the Empress, but he knew how inflexibly severe Napoleon was toward all smuggling, and having shed so much blood in fighting he did not wish to lose the credit obtained in the Emperor's eyes by transgressing his laws to obtain a smile of thanks from Josephine. Accordingly he flatly refused to render the service desired of him. Nevertheless, when half way between Frankfort and Mainz he found that the Colonel had managed to tuck into the carriage a second package of contraband goods, and Marbot debated for some time whether he should not throw the dresses out into the road. But he did not venture to do this, and continued his journey fully resolved that if the smuggled goods were seized he would declare how they had got into the carriage, and by whom the seal of the Seventh Light Infantry had been put on the wrapper. Yet as this defence would have compromised the Empress, he determined to use it only at the last extremity, and meanwhile to do everything in his power to prevent his carriage from being searched. By good luck and a little subterfuge he succeeded. When he reached the bridge of the Rhine at Mainz his carriage was stopped, according to custom, and at the doors appeared simultaneously two men, namely, a custom house officer to make a search, and an aide-de-camp of Marshal Kellermann, commanding at Mainz, to inquire if the Emperor would soon arrive. Pretending not to see the Inquisitor of the Customs, Marbot replied to the aide-de-camp: "The Emperor is behind me." Nor was Marbot telling an untruth; the Emperor was behind him, but at two days' distance. All the bystanders overhearing his words were thrown into a great flutter, the Guard stood to its arms, the Custom House officers sought to draw themselves up in the most military fashion possible, and as Marbot's carriage was in their way they told the postillion to drive on. Once out of their clutches he made the best of his way out of Mainz. He learned afterward that the authorities of the town were on their legs all night and could not understand how it happened that the Emperor did not arrive until two days later.

IX.

Marbot saw a good deal of the campaigns in Spain, but as Napoleon did not personally engage in the attempt to subjugate the peninsula, after he had forced Sir John Moore to retreat, we need not dwell on this part of the memoirs. It was Marbot's luck to accompany the Emperor through the war with Austria which witnessed the severely contested battles of Eckmühl, Aspern-Essling, and Wagram. Our author does not agree with the military critics who assert that at Essling Napoleon fell thoughtlessly into a trap which the Archduke set for him when he ordered the centre of his army to retire and draw the French forward while he was having the bridges broken, their destruction having been already decided on. Marbot asks why, if the Archduke knew that he had under his hand the means of breaking up the bridges, he did not have them broken on the evening of May 21 (1809), when not more than 25,000 French troops had crossed to the left bank of the Danube, whom with the 125,000 at his disposal the Archduke could make sure of destroying or capturing? Would not this have been better than leaving the passage of the river open to Napoleon all night, thus enabling him to double the force which he could oppose to the enemy? If again he had arranged the destruction of the bridges, why did he during the afternoon of May 21 lose four or five thousand men in attacking the villages of Essling and Aspern? It would have been much wiser to wait till Messéna's corps, having its retreat cut off, should be obliged to capitulate. Why, finally, did the Archduke on the morning of May 22 renew his furious attacks upon Essling and Aspern instead of waiting until the bridges were broken? Clearly because he did not know that it was in his power to destroy them. It was only chance and the flooded state of the river which brought down upon the pontoons the floating trees which caused the first partial breaches, while later on the quick wit of an Austrian officer brought about the destruction of the great bridge by launching into the current boats laden with burning wood, and lastly a huge floating mill, which carried away nearly the whole structure. That nothing had been planned beforehand was, according to Marbot, admitted afterward by several of the enemies' Generals. It is also pointed out that the cross of Maria Theresa would never have been conferred upon the officer who managed to annihilate the great bridge, if he had done no more than his duty, and had simply obeyed directions. According to the rules governing the bestowal of this decoration, the aspirant had to prove that in performing a particular achievement he had acted on an inspiration of his own and not by the orders of a superior. It was this chain of reasoning, developed in Marbot's book, "Considerations on the Art of War," which was especially approved by Napoleon when he read the work at St. Helena.

It is well known that Napoleon, although of short stature himself, had a great preference for tall, strong, masculine men. Now, Sainte-Croix, one of the most promising soldiers in the army during the four years that followed the campaign of Austerlitz, at the opening of which he was but 23, was small, slight, and with the face of a pretty, fair-complexioned woman. In this feeble-seeming body, however, there was a soul of steel, an heroic courage, and a restless activity. The Emperor ultimately recognized these qualities, and after witnessing the performances of Sainte-Croix at Aspern-Essing his opinion of the young man's merit became so high that he said one day to the Russian envoy: "I have never since I have been in command of armies met a more capable officer, nor one who understood my thought more quickly and executed it better. He reminds me of Marshal Lannes and Gen. Desaix, and if he is not struck down by a thunderbolt France and Europe will be astonished at the distance which I shall take him." These words were soon known everywhere, and it was expected that Sainte-Croix would quickly become a Marshal. But unhappily the thunderbolt did strike him; he was killed the next year by a cannon ball at the gates of Lisbon.

Apropos of Sainte-Croix, the author recalls that Napoleon, though he usually kept at a distance the commanders whom he most esteemed, now and again was familiar with one of them, and even amused himself by inciting them to frank repartees. Lasalle, Junot, and Rapp used to say to the Emperor whatever came into their heads. The two first, who were wont to ruin themselves every other year, would relate their pranks to Napoleon, who always paid their debts. Sainte-Croix was too clever and decorous to abuse the favor which he enjoyed; still when the Emperor drove him to it he was capable of prompt and effective repartee. Thus, when Napoleon, who would often take his arm as they walked through the sands of the Lobau, said to him on one of their numerous expeditions: "I remember that after your duel with my wife's cousin I wanted to shoot you; I admit that it would have been a mistake and a very great loss." "That is quite true, sire," answered Sainte-Croix, "and I am certain that now when your Majesty knows me better you would not exchange me for one of the Emperess's cousins." "For one, indeed!" said the Emperor; "you may say for the lot of them." Another day when Sainte-Croix was present Napoleon asked, as he drank a glass of water from the spring in the park at Schönbrunn, "Do you like cold water?" "No, indeed, sire; I prefer a good glass of Bordeaux or Champagne." Whereupon the Emperor, turning to his valet, said, "Send the Colonel a hundred bottles of Bordeaux and the same number of Champagne."

A curious incident occurred while a portion of Napoleon's army remained on the isle of Lobau in the interval between the battles of Aspern-Essling and Wagram. It was of the utmost moment to prevent the Austrians from learning where the French intended to attack, but the Archduke had contrived to introduce a spy among them, and Napoleon was once acquainted with the fact by an anonymous letter written in Hungary, which was brought by a little girl to the Emperor's mameluke with the warning that it was important and urgent. The interpreter soon translated it. Napoleon at once ordered every soul on the island—troops, staff, commissaries, butchers, bakers, canteen men, even officers' servants—to be drawn up on parade. As soon as every one was in the ranks the Emperor announced that a spy had found his way into the island, hoping to escape notice among 30,000 men, and now that they were all in their places he ordered every man to look at his neighbor to right