NAPOLEON.

The Young Husband and Boy Conqueror—His Early Career.

Reminiscences by Count Miot.

This is the latest and one of the most valuable of the recent contributions to the literature of the time of the first Napoleon. Count Miot (made a count by Joseph Bonaparte) was an eye-witness of many of the greatest of the events which distinguished the period beginning with the French Revolution and ending with the downfall of Napoleon. He was born in 1762, and his early home was in Versailles. He saw the movement of the Paris mob upon the palace; he walked through the building after it had been sacked; he looked into the faces of the unhappy king and queen as they were dragged to the city, and he remained in the city all through the reign of terror, holding office with remarkable dexterity under the successive administrations. With many of the leaders of the Revolution he had personal acquaintance, and his descriptions of some of them are not a little interesting. Of Danton he says:

He had a hideous face. His proportions were athletic; in that respect he was even thought to resemble Mirabeau. But the complexion of the latter was of a livid pallor, while that of Danton was of a reddish brown, and his countenance was very animated. The tone of his voice was impressive; he spoke with warmth and energy that appeared natural to him. His elocution was fiery, and always accompanied by violent gesticulation.

Robespierre is thus described, as he was seen at a dinner:

Elegant in dress, carefully curled and powdered, composed in manner, he formed the most curious contrast with the disorder, affected neglect and coarseness that appeared in the attire and manners of his colleagues. His deportment was grave, and he took hardly any part in the conversation, speaking only now and then a few sententious words. But notwithstanding the immobility of his pale and sinister countenance, it was evident that he did not feel at his ease, and I learned afterward that he owed a grudge to Deforgues for having thrown him into the company of men whom he pretended to regard as very uncertain patriots, or, what was still more criminal in his eyes, as 'moderate.' Thus the conversation at dinner was constrained. I also thought I could perceive by the few words uttered by Robespierre that he especially desired to be distinguished as a great statesman.

Count Miot made a narrow escape from the guillotine, and it was only by accident that he was permitted to live and see the wonderful things that followed the terror. While Napoleon was in Italy, during his first campaign, Count Miot was sent thither upon a diplomatic mission by the committee of public safety. He met Napoleon for the first time at Brescia, and he speaks thus of the appearance of the young conqueror at that period:

I was quite astonished at his appearance. Nothing could be more unlike the idea my imagination had formed of him. In the midst of a numerous staff I saw a man below the middle height and of an extremely spare figure. His powdered hair oddly cut and falling squarely below the ears, reached down to his shoulders. He was dressed in a straight coat buttoned up to the chin and edged with very narrow gold embroidery, and he wore a tricolor feather in his hat. At first sight he did not strike me as handsome; but his strongly marked features, his quick and piercing eyes, his brusque and animated gestures revealed an ardent spirit, while his wide and thoughtful brow was that of a profound thinker. He made me sit near him, and we talked of Italy. He spoke in short sentences, and, at that time of his life, very incorrectly. He crossed the rooms adjoining that in which he received me, and gave some orders to Murat, Lannes and Junot, his aides-de-camp, and other officers in attendance. Everyone maintained toward him an attitude of respect, and I may even say of admiration. I saw none of those marks of familiarity between him and his companions that I had observed in other cases, and which was consonant with republican equality. He had already assumed his own place and set others at a distance.

Oftentimes he encountered Napoleon under other circumstances, and the glimpses he affords of the man whose fame was growing so fast are interesting. At Montebello:

Strict etiquette already reigned around him; his aides-de-camp and his officers were no longer received at his table, and he had become fastidious in the choice of the guests whom he admitted to it. An invitation was an honor and eagerly sought and obtained with great difficulty. He dined, so to speak, in public; the inhabitants of the country were admitted to the room in which he was eating, and allowed to gaze at him with a keen curiosity. He was in no wise embarrassed or confused by these excessive honors, but received them as though he had been accustomed to them all his life. His reception-rooms and an immense tent pitched in front of the palace were constantly full of a crowd of generals, administrators, besides members of the highest nobility, and the most distinguished men in Italy, who came to solicit the favor of a momentary glance or the briefest interview; in a word, all bowed before the glory of his victories, and the haughtiness of his demeanor. He was no longer the general of a triumphant republic, but a conqueror on his own account, imposing his laws on the vanquished.

At another time he writes.

We left Milan on the 1st Fructidor (August 18). I had a place in Bonaparte's carriage with his wife and Berthier. During the drive he was gay and animated, told us several anecdotes of his youth, and said that he had just completed his 29th year. He was extremely attentive to his wife, frequently taking little conjugal liberties that rather embarrassed Berthier and me; but his free and easy manners were so full of affection and tenderness toward a woman as lovable as she was good, that they might easily be excused.

When Napoleon organized his expedition to Egypt, Miot was in Paris; but, shortly afterwards, he was sent with an embassy to Holland, and he was in that country during the events of 18th and 19th Brumaire. When he returned he entered Napoleon's service, and his attachment to the Bonaparte family continued until after the battle of Waterloo. The count was apparently one of the class of professional office-holders who can never be persuaded to resign. He served the Bonapartes quite as faithfully as he served the leaders of the Revolution, and there is no reason to doubt that he would easily have reconciled his conscience to acceptance of office under the Bourbons if they had returned just after the Revolution. When he explains the facts about his appointment to this position or that, he nearly allways indicates that he was at first reluctant to take the place, but that he finally yielded because he discovered that he would have opportunities to do good. It is, however, to be said of him that he appears to have been faithful and devoted when he had once given his allegiance, and also that he was very frank and honest in his condemnation of the evil things which he saw going on about him. The impression made upon the reader of his memoirs is that he was a simple hearted man, of moderate abilities and force of character, who took care of his country as well as he could while he was taking excellent care of himself.

When Napoleon had returned from the campaign in Italy during which was fought the battle of Marengo, Miot was made a councellor of state, and was sent upon a mission to Corsica. When he came back to Paris he was startled at the advancement made by Napoleon towards imperialism. His account of the manner in which these approaches were made and the way in which they were regarded by the people, is singularly interesting. Miot participated in some of the proceedings with relation to the Pichegru and Cadoudal conspiracies, and be contributes some fresh information with respect to them and to the murder of the Ducd'Enghein.

When Joseph Bonaparte was reised to the rank of prince Miot became one of his officers, and he was from that time forth a member of Joseph's official family. He followed him to Naples, and then to Spain, and from Miot's pen we have the most graphic and detailed narrative yet given of the miserable events that followed the elevation of Joseph Bonaparte to the throne of Spain. Miot of course throws the blame of the series of humiliating disasters upon Napoleon, but he shows plainly that Joseph Bonaparte was not only weak and corrupt, but that he was so consumed by ambition as to be willing to sacrafice anything rather than to surrender the almost empty honors of his kingship. Miot's account of the flight of the French from Spain is spirited and it reveals incidentally the character of Joseph Bonaparte, for it shows that upon one occasion he placed the lives of his friends in jeopardy merely that he might secure for himself the company of a woman for whom he had formed an unlawful attachment.

Miot's very intimate relations with Joseph Bonaparte enbled him to obtain an inside view of many things which were known to the world only from the outside. It permitted him also to obtain possession of some bits of family history which are interesting. One of the most extraordinary things in the memoirs is the account given him by Joseph of the dying hours of the father of Napoleon. It is as follows:

M. Charles Bonaparte, the father, died a Montpelier in his thirty-seventh year, of a very long-standing chronic disease. Joseph Bonaparte, who was with him in his last moments, often heard him, when party delirious from pain, asking for his son Napoleon. "Where is he?" he repeatedly exclaimed. "Where is my son Napoleon? He whose sword will make kings tremble! He who will change the face of Europe? He would defend me from my enemies; he would save my life!" Joseph Bonaparte added: "I am almost ashamed of what I say to you, and certainly I would say it to no one but yourself. But the thing is certain. There exists, moreover, another witness to this singular fact—Fesch, my mother's brother. He, as well as I, was present at my father's death-bed, and can confirm what I have just told you."

After Waterloo, in which battle several members of Miot's family mere engaged, the count went into retirement, where he remained writing his memoirs and caring for his family until the day of his death.

—A contract for building a $50,000 courthouse has been let by the county commissioness of Harris.

The Action of Coffee and Sugar On the Stomach.

M. Levan has communicated to the Paris Society of Biology some experiments which he has made on this subject on dogs, with the assistance of M. Semerie. The action of coffee on the stomach has been much discussed and variously interpreted; the majority of writers admit that coffee stimulates the circulation and provokes hyperæmia of the gastric mucous membrane, but they have not adduced experimental proof of the fact.

The contrary opinion is supported by a certain number of observers, to whom M. Leven has given in his adhesion. He recalls to mind the experiments he made some years since on caffeine absorbed by frogs, guinea pigs, and rabbits. It retarded the action of the heart, which, at the same time, became strong; it increased the arterial tension; like the vaso-constrictor agents, it dilated the pupil. Caffeine has even been used in certain places to replace digitaline, of which it has, to a great extent, the properties, though in a smaller degree.

The latest experiments of M. Leven were as follows: He gave to a dog a meal of 200 grammes of meat; he then administered an infusion of 36 grammes of coffee in 150 grammes of water; the animal was then killed, and, at the end of three hours the stomach still contained 145 grammes of meat, while in the absence of coffee it only contained about 100 grammes. The abdominal mucous membrane was pale as well on the external surface as in the interior, and the vessels were strongly contracted. It follows, then, that coffee, producing anæmia of the stomach, retards digestion; and, the anæmia repeating itself, ends by bringing on habitual increased congestion of the stomach, which, according to M. Leven, is synonymous with dyspepsia.

It is well known, and English physicians have laid great stress upon this point, that the abuse of coffee and tea often brings on gastralgia, dyspepsia, and, at the same time, more or less disturbance of the apparatus of innervation. It is, therefore, necessary precisely to distinguish the local anæmia produced by coffee on the stomach from the more general action exercised by it over the central nervous system, and which has conferred on it the merited qualification of an intellectual drink. In opposition to coffee, sugar is, according to M. Leven, an eminently digestive substance; and he does not fail to order it in certain cases of dyspepsia. He has made the following experiments:

He gave to a dog 80 grammes of sugar at the same time as 200 grammes of meat; six hours afterward there was nothing found in the stomach but 20 grammes of undigested meat. The abdominal mucous membrane was red and turgescent; the liver was wholly congested.

M. Leven draws this practical lesson from his experiments: that the infusion of coffee should be sufficiently sweetened to stimulate the secretory function, and thus assist digestion.—*British Medical Journal.*

NOT too funny: "Dwo vas schoot enough, budt dree vas too blendty," remarked Hans, when his best girl asked him to take her mother along with them to dance.

CHARLES Edwards Smith, of Barkhamstead, has asked the legislature to change his name to Charles Smith-Edwards. Charles is probably on the back of some heavy note.—*Danbury News.*

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