

# THE MINERVA.

PUBLISHED (WEEKLY) BY WILLIAM BOYLAN.

Vol. 11.]

RALEIGH, (N. C.) MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 1865.

[No. 542]

## The Secret History of the COURT AND CABINET OF ST. CLOUD.

LETTER IV.

That Bonaparte had, as far back as February, 1803 (when the king of Prussia proposed to Louis XVIII the formal renunciation of his hereditary rights in favor of the First Consul) determined to assume the rank and title, with the power, of a sovereign, nobody can doubt. Had it not been for the war with England, he would, in the spring of that year, or twelve months earlier, have proclaimed himself emperor of the French, and probably would have been acknowledged as such by all other princes. To a man so vain and so impatient, so accustomed to command and to intimidate, this suspension of his favorite plan was a considerable disappointment, and not a little increased his bitter and irreconcilable hatred of Great Britain.

Here, as well as in foreign countries, the multitude pay homage only to Napoleon's uninterrupted prosperity; without penetrating or considering whether it be the consequence of chance or of well digested plans; whether he owes his successes to his own merit, or to a blind fortune. He asserted, in his speech to the constitutional authorities, immediately after hostilities had commenced with England, *that the war would be of short duration*, and he firmly believed what he said. Had he by his gun-boats, or by his intrigues or threats, been enabled to exact a second edition of the peace of Amiens, after a warfare of some months, all mouths would have been ready to exclaim, *Oh the illustrious warrior!* *Oh the profound politician!* Now, after three fruitless campaigns on the coast, when the extravagance and ambition of our government have extended the continuation of war over the continent; when both our direct offers of peace, and the negotiations and mediations of our allies have been declined by, or proved unavailing with, the cabinet of St. James, the inconsistency, the ignorance, and the timidity of the fortunate man seem to be not more remembered than the outrages and encroachments that have provoked Austria and Russia to take the field. Should he continue victorious, and be in a position to dictate another peace of Lunéville, which probably will be followed by another pacific overture to or from England, mankind will again be ready to call out, *"Oh the illustrious warrior! Oh the profound politician!"* he foresaw, in his wisdom, that a continental war was necessary to terrify or to subdue his maritime foe, that a peace with England could only be obtained in Germany; and that this war must be excited by extending the power of France on the other side of the Alps. Hence his coronation as king of Italy; hence his incorporation of Parma and Genoa with France; and hence his domination of Rome and Lucca, to his brother-in-law, *Bacchiocchi!* No where in history have I read of men of sense being so easily led astray, as in our times, by confounding fruitless events with consequences resulting from preconcerted plans and well organized designs.

Only rogues can disseminate, and fools believe, that the disgrace of Moreau, and the execution of the Duke of Enghien, of Pichegru, and Georges, were necessary as footsteps to Bonaparte's imperial throne; and that, with all the treachery of Mchec de la Fouché, and the conspiracy he pretended to have discovered, France would still have been ruled by a First Consul. It is indeed true, that this plot is to be counted (as the imbecility of Mchec, which lost the battle of Marengo) among those accidents presenting themselves a-propos to give the favorite of fortune in his ambitious views; but without it he would equally have been hailed an emperor of the French in May 1804. When he came from the coast, in the preceding winter, and was convinced of the impossibility of making any impression on the British islands with his flotilla, he convoked his confidential senators, who then with Talleyrand, seated the Senate's Councils, which appeared five months afterwards. Mchec's correspondence with Mr. Doke was then known to him; but he and the minister of police

were both unacquainted with the residence and arrival of Pichegru and Georges in France, and of their connexion with Moreau; the particulars of which were first disclosed to them in the February following, when Bonaparte had been absent from his army of England six weeks. The assumption of the imperial dignity procured him another decent opportunity of offering his olive-branch, to those who had caused his *travels to Austria*, and by whom, notwithstanding his abuse, calumnies, and menaces, he would have been more proud to be hailed Emperor, than by all other nations upon the continent. His vanity, interest, and policy, all required this last degree of supremacy and elevation at that period.

Bonaparte had so well penetrated the weak side of Moreau's character, that, although he could not avoid doing justice to this general's military talents and exploits, he neither esteemed him as a citizen, nor dreaded him as a rival. Moreau possessed great popularity; but so did Dumourier and Pichegru before him; and yet neither of them had found adherents enough to shake those republican governments with which they avowed themselves openly discontented, and against which they secretly plotted. I heard Talleyrand say, at Madame de Montcaumon's, in the presence of fifty persons: "Napoleon Bonaparte had never any thing to apprehend from Gen. Moreau, and from his popularity, even at the head of an army. Dumourier too was at the head of an army, when he revolted against the National Convention; but had he not saved himself by flight, his own troops would have delivered him up to be punished as a traitor. *Moreau, and his popularity, could only be dangerous to the Bonaparte dynasty, were he to survive Napoleon; had not this Emperor wisely averted this danger.*" From this official declaration of Napoleon's confidential minister, in a society of known anti-imperialists, I draw the conclusion, that Moreau will never more, during the present reign, return to France. How very feeble, and how badly advised must this general have been, when, after his condemnation to two years imprisonment, he accepted of a perpetual exile; and renounced all hopes of ever again entering his own country. In the Temple, or in any other prison, if he had submitted to the sentence pronounced against him, he would have caused Bonaparte more uneasiness than when at liberty; and been more a point of rally to his adherents and friends, than when at his palace of Grosbois; because compassion and pity must have invigorated and sharpened their feelings.

If report be true, however, he did not voluntarily exchange imprisonment for exile; racks were shown him; and by the act of banishment was placed a poisonous draught. This report gains considerable credit, when it is remembered, that immediately after his condemnation, Moreau furnished his apartments in the Temple in a handsome manner, so as to be lodged well, if not comfortably, with his wife and child, whom it is said, he was not permitted to see, before he had accepted of Bonaparte's proposal of transportation.

It may be objected to this supposition, that the man in power, who did not care about the barefaced murder of the Duke of Enghien, and the secret destruction of Pichegru, could neither much hesitate, nor be very conscientious, about adding Moreau to the number of his victims. True, but the assassin in authority is also generally a politician. The untimely end of the Duke of Enghien and of Pichegru was certainly lamented and deplored by the great majority of the French people; but though they had many who pitied their fate, but few had any relative interest to avenge it; whilst in the assassination of Moreau, every general, every officer, & every soldier of his former army, might have read the destiny reserved for himself by that chieftain, who did not conceal his preference of those who had fought under him in Italy and Egypt; and his mistrust and jealousy of those who had vanquished under Moreau in Germany; numbers of whom had already perished at St. Domingo, or in other colonies, or were dispersed in se-

parate and distant garrisons of the mother country. It has been calculated, that of eighty-four generals, who made, under Moreau, the campaign of 1800, and who survived the peace of Lunéville, sixteen had been killed or died at St. Domingo, four at Guadaloupe, ten in Cayenne, nine at Ile de France, and eleven at Pile Reunion and Madagascar. The mortality among the officers and men has been in proportion.

An anecdote is related of Pichegru, which does honor to the memory of that unfortunate general. Fouché paid him a visit in prison the day before his death, and offered him "Bonaparte's commission as a field marshal, and a diploma as a grand officer of the Legion of Honor, provided he would turn informer against Moreau, of whose treachery against himself, in 1797, he was reminded. On the other hand, he was informed, that, in consequence of his former dealings, if he persisted in his refractory conduct, he should never more appear before any judge, but that the affairs of state and the safety of the country required that he should be privately dispatched in his gaol. "So," answered this virtuous and indignant warrior, "you will only spare my life, upon condition that I prove myself unworthy to live. As this is the case, my choice is made without hesitation: I am prepared to become your victim, but I will never be numbered among your accomplices. Call in your executioners; I am ready to die as I have lived, a man of honor and an irreproachable citizen." Within twenty-four hours after this answer, Pichegru was no more.

That the Duke of Enghien was shot in the night of the 21st of March 1804, in the wood or in the ditch of the castle of Vincennes, is admitted even by government; but who really were his assassins is still unknown. Some assert that he was shot by the grenadiers of Bonaparte's Italian guard; others say, by a detachment of the gens d'armes d'élite; and others again, that the men of both these corps refused to fire; and that General Murat, hearing the troops murmur, and fearing their mutiny, was sunk if the executioner of this young and innocent prince of the House of Bourbon, riding up to him, and blowing out his brains with a pistol. Certain it is, that Murat was the first, and Louis Bonaparte the second in command, on this dreadful occasion.

## POLITICAL.

From the ENQUIRER.

The importance of the following communication must speak for itself. The editor has neither inclination nor ability to impart to it a higher interest, than what it intrinsically possesses.

To the Editor of the Enquirer.

Sir,

The events of the last session of Congress, have furnished ample cause of speculation to the curious, and of regret to every true friend of his country. The mystery, which enveloped their proceedings, and beneath which some of their most important transactions yet remain shrouded, could not conceal from the most careful observer that a schism had arisen in the republican party. But the causes which led to this affecting event, are still buried in obscurity. In the history of this memorable occurrence, all is darkness, confusion and contradiction. The public mind, impatient of suspense, and as if despairing of further information, seems to have cut-run the evidence, upon which alone its judgment should have been bottomed. So far as their opinion can be gathered from the public prints, the voice of the people has declared for the administration. In this decision, perhaps it might have been the duty of the republican minority, and of their friends, to acquiesce, had a fair view of the subject been laid before the public. But knowing, as I do, from the most indisputable proof, that facts have been misstated, opinions misrepresented, much truth suppressed, and more falsehood suggested;—approving at the same time, from my heart, the course which they have pursued, I am impelled to offer to the world some facts and observa-

tions, which may enable them to form a more just opinion of the conduct of the republican minority, during the last session of Congress, and of the motives by which they were probably actuated.

It must be obvious to the most superficial eye, that every consideration of a selfish or prudential nature, would have dissuaded any man, or set of men, among the republicans, from an open opposition to any leading and favorite measure of the Executive at that juncture. The President of the United States had just been re-elected by a great and imposing majority of the people. The acquisition of Louisiana had given an éclat to the executive, and cast a splendour around the administration in which every minor defect of the government was eclipsed and forgotten. The colossal popularity of the President seemed to mock at all opposition. Unmindful of past and dear-bought experience, the republicans had erected a political idol on whose altars he, who dared to question its infallibility, must prepare to bleed. In this posture of affairs, all opposition was indeed a forlorn hope. There was every thing to lose, nothing to gain. The minority had only to compromise their principles, to betray their duty to themselves, their constituents, and their country, in order to enjoy the countenance of the administration, to ensure the approbation of the public, for a time, and their own compensation, &c. They had but to acquiesce in measures which their conscience and judgment condemned, and swim in ignoble conformity with the current of the day. They were not insensible to the danger of the opposite course; but whilst they coolly estimated the difficulty, they had the fortitude to encounter it.—Let it be admitted, for a moment, that these gentlemen were mistaken in their views; still I pronounce, that he who does not applaud their independence and firmness, is unworthy the name of freeman. They had the courage to assert and maintain the deliberate convictions of their honest judgment against the proudest authority, and preferred the hazard of their popularity to the surrendering of their understanding and consciences. Let the people look at it. Is there any danger of a dearth of time servers, under any administration, which has the power of rewarding them? That due respect will not always be paid to the leaves are fishes?—The history of this government of every executive with royal powers must answer the question. Let the members constituting the republican minority be dissuaded from the confidence and employment of the people—can they look for any thing like independence in their successors? It would indeed be an idle expectation. They must enter upon their legislative duties with instructions to lay aside the suggestions of their own understandings, and conform themselves in all things to the wishes of the cabinet. The first lesson which they learned, would teach them to consider any variation from the executive standard as the most heinous sin in the political decalogue. Would such men dare to oppose any presidential project, however criminal? From the very nature of their appointments, they must become the puppets of the administration, for the time being. A house of representatives, so constituted, must dwindle into a mere chamber for engraving ministerial edicts; and whilst the forms of the constitution were preserved, its substance would vanish.

On the third of December, 1803, the president's public message was laid before the two houses of Congress. The aggressions of Spain were specially noticed.—"With Spain," says the chief magistrate, "our negotiations for a settlement of differences have not had a satisfactory issue. Spoils during the former war for which she had formally acknowledged herself responsible, have been refused to be compensated, but on conditions affecting other claims in no wise connected with them, yet the same practices are renewed in the present war, and are already of great amount. Our commerce through the Mobile continues to be obstructed by arbitrary duties and vexatious searches. Proposals for adjusting amicably the bound-

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