The Book of Princes and Princesses

"Developer Tales for Kids"



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THE FAIRY BOOK SERIES

EDITED BY ANDREW LANG

ILLUSTRATED &

PUBLISHED BY

E-KİTAP PROJESİ & CHEAPEST BOOKS



www.cheapestboooks.com

www.facebook.com/EKitapProjesi

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Istanbul

ISBN: 978-625-6310-42-1



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DEDICATED TO

ELIZABETH ANGELA MARGARET BOWES LYON

BY

THE AUTHORESS

PREFACE

All the stories about Princes and Princesses in this book are true stories, and were written by Mrs. Lang, out of old books of history. There are some children who make life difficult by saying, first that stories about fairies are true, and that they like fairies; and next that they do not like true stories about real people, who lived long ago. I am quite ready to grant that there really are such things as fairies, because, though I never saw a fairy, any more than I have seen the little animals which lecturers call *molecules* and *ions*, still I have seen people who have seen fairies—truthful people. Now I never knew a lecturer who ventured to say that he had seen an ion or a molecule. It is well known, and written in a true book, that the godmother of Joan of Arc had seen fairies, and nobody can suppose that such a good woman would tell her godchild what was not true—for example, that the squire of the parish was in love with a fairy and used to meet her in the moonlight beneath a beautiful tree. In fact, if we did not believe in fairy stories, who would care to read them? Yet only too many children dislike to read true stories, because the people in them were real, and the things actually happened. Is not this very strange? And grown-ups are not much wiser. They would rather read a novel than Professor Mommsen's 'History of Rome'!

How are we to explain this reluctance to read true stories? Is it because children are *obliged*, whether they like it or not, to learn lessons which, to be sure, are often dry and disagreeable, and history books are among their lessons. Now Nature, for some wise purpose probably, made most children very greatly dislike lesson books. When I was about eight years old I was always reading a book of true stories called 'The Tales of a Grandfather': no book could be more pleasant. It was in little dumpy volumes that one could carry in his pocket. But when I was sent to school they used this book as a school book, in one large

ugly volume, and at school I never read it at all, and could not answer questions in it, but made guesses, which were not often right. The truth seems to be that we hate doing what we *must* do; and Sir Walter Scott himself, who wrote the book, particularly detested reading or writing what he was obliged to read or write, and always wanted to be doing something else.

This book about Princes and Princesses is not one which a child is *obliged* to read. Indeed the stories are not put in order, beginning with the princes who lived longest ago and coming down gradually to people who lived nearest our own time. The book opens with the great Napoleon Bonaparte, who died when some very old people still living were alive. Napoleon was not born a prince, far from it; his father was only a poor gentleman on a wild rough little island. But he made himself not merely a king, but the greatest of all emperors and generals in war. He is not held up as a person whom every boy should try to imitate, but it is a truth that Napoleon always remained a boy in his heart. He liked to make up stories of himself, doing wonderful things which even he was unable to do. When he was a boy he played at being a general, making snow fortresses and besieging them, just as many boys do. And when he was a man he dreamed of conquering all the East, Asia, and India, and Australia; and he tried to do all that, but it was too much even for him.

He used to think that he would write a new religious book, like Mahomet, and ride on a dromedary to conquer India, with his own book in his hand. Can anything be more like a boy's fancy? He even set out in the direction of India, but he stopped to besiege a little weak ruinous town called Acre, in the Holy Land, and the Turks and English, under Sir Sidney Smith, defeated him, and made him turn back, so that, later, he never came nearer India than Moscow, whence he was driven back to France by the snow and frost and the Russian army. After that he never had much luck, though he had won so many battles, and made himself an Emperor, and married an Emperor's daughter, like a poor young man in a fairy tale. I am sure that no fairy prince ever did such extraordinary things of all sorts as Napoleon; but another story shows

how his only son was very unfortunate, and had a very short and unhappy life, always longing to be like his famous father. No doubt he might have been happy and fortunate if Napoleon—like the great boy he was—had not tried to do more than was possible even for himself. It was like a great boy to take no trouble to learn difficult languages, and to write such a bad hand that his marshals and generals could not read his notes written on the battlefield, and could not be certain what he wanted them to do. Now the Duke of Wellington, though not so wonderful a general as Napoleon, wrote a very good hand, when shot and shell were falling all round him, and there could be no mistake as to what he meant.

In fairy stories the princes and princesses are not always fortunate and happy, though they are always brave, good, beautiful, and deserving. If they were always happy and fortunate, nobody would care to read about them; the stories would be very dull. For example, Prince Meritorio was the eldest son of Meritorio III., King of Pacifica. He was born healthy, brave, and clever. At the age of twenty-one years, all of them spent serenely in learning his lessons, including fencing and fortification, Prince Meritorio married the eldest daughter of King Benevolo, of the happy island of Crete. The two kingdoms were always at peace; on the death of Meritorio III. and Benevolo II. Prince Meritorio came to the throne of both countries. He had eleven sons, who used to play the Eleven of the island of Crete and beat them; and when Prince Meritorio died, at a great age, beloved by all his subjects, he was succeeded by his eldest son, Prince Sereno.

No doubt Prince Meritorio was happy and fortunate, but as he never had any troubles or sorrows, as he married his first and only love with the full consent of the dear and royal parents of both, never was changed into a rabbit by a wicked magician, never had to fight a dragon or giant, never was a starving, banished man, but continually had his regular meals, why, the Life of Prince Meritorio is not worth reading. Nobody cares a penny about him, any more than they care about George II., who was a brave man, and as fortunate as a king can be,

and yet we prefer to read about Prince Charlie, who was nearly as unfortunate as King George was lucky.

Even Napoleon himself, with all his wonderful victories, is more interesting because he was defeated at last, and died like an imprisoned eagle, a captive on a little island, than he would be if he had been constantly fortunate and enormously fat.

It cannot be said that the princes and princesses in this book were too happy. The Princess Jeanne was perhaps the luckiest, and she had troubles enough while still a little girl, with being nearly forced to marry a prince whom she did not want. Indeed all young princesses and princes were much to be pitied, when they were being vexed with marrying before they were out of the nursery or the school room. They were obliged to marry first, and fall in love afterwards if they could, which is quite the wrong arrangement. Think of King Hacon's mother, too, who was obliged to prove that she was good by carrying a red-hot iron in her hands without being burned. The best little girl now alive will be wise not to try this experiment, if she is accused of breaking anything which she did not break. Then poor Marie Louise was obliged to marry a king who was little better than an idiot; and no amount of diamonds, nor all the gold of Peru, could console her for living such a strange life as hers was in a foreign country with such a very foolish king. However, he was fond of her, at least, whereas Henry VIII. was not fond of his many wives for more than a very short time, and then he cut their heads off, or sent them away. It was a wise princess who said, when he asked her to marry him, that if she had two heads he would be welcome to one of them, but as she had only one she would prefer some other monarch. The Princess Henriette, too, after all her wanderings, when she was as poor as a goose girl in a fairy tale, found a very unsatisfactory prince to marry her at last, and perhaps was not sorry to die young. Truly they all had strange adventures enough; even Henry VII., though, when once he was king, he took good care to have no more adventures.

The story of Mary, Queen of Scots, who had so much unhappiness, is not told here, because very little is known of her childhood. But there

are two tales of her childhood worth remembering. When she was a very little girl in Scotland, the Governor of the country was Cardinal Beaton. He was a Catholic, and Henry VIII., being a Protestant, was always at war with Scotland, and often tried to seize Mary when she was a little child. Now she had been told a fairy tale about the Red Etin of Ireland, a kind of red ogre, who stole a king's daughter, 'the flower of fair Scotland,' and beat her every day. So when Mary, being about three years old, first saw Cardinal Beaton in all his scarlet clothes, she thought that *he* was the Red Etin of Ireland, and was terribly frightened, crying, 'Kill Red Etin! Kill Red Etin!' They *did* kill him, presently, but not because of her command.

The other story is merely that when she was about ten years old, or not so much, she was taken across the sea with her four little friends, the four Maries, to France, to marry the king's son. They had a very stormy voyage, and she was the only one of the company who was not sea-sick. So she was very merry at the expense of all the others. No doubt a saintly little princess would have been sorry for their sufferings; still, perhaps many little girls would have laughed. Many princes have had disagreeable uncles, like Crookedback Richard; indeed one might think, like a little girl who had read history books, that 'all uncles are *villains*.' But perhaps no prince ever had such a terrible ogre of a father as Prince Frederick of Prussia, who became the great king and general. Though his father was very particular about making Frederick clean and neat, we do not find that he ever had a bath, or did more than wash his hands and face. Indeed Frederick's father was a horrible ogre in every way, though perhaps it was not unnatural that he did not like the prince to be perpetually playing the flute, even when out hunting!

After all, when a child thinks of his own father and mother, and his excellent uncles and aunts, he may be glad that he was not born to be a prince, and be hidden from his enemies in a bundle of hay, like Duke Richard, or dressed as a little boy, when she is a little girl; or locked up for a year in a cold sanctuary; or be smothered in the Tower; or run all the many uncomfortable risks of all these poor royal children. The greater a man or woman is, the more terrible are the falls from great-

ness, as in the case of the most unhappy of all queens, Marie Antoinette. To be a good king a man must be far better and wiser than other men, far more clever too; if he is not, he does more mischief, and probably has to bear more misfortunes, like Richard II., than any ordinary person. When we read about kings like Charles II., who only lived to amuse himself; or Charles VII. of France, who was little better—and not nearly so amusing—and think how many people far fitter to be kings died for these unworthy princes, we begin to wonder at kingship, at making a man king merely because he is his father's son. However, to consider thus is to consider too curiously, and certainly the lives of princes and princesses have been full of great adventures, and are rather more interesting to read about than the lives of the sons and daughters of the Presidents of Republics. Nobody tries to run away with them; they have not to be dressed up as beggar boys, or hidden in bundles of hay, and their fathers never burn their books, break their flutes, shut them up in prison, and threaten to cut their heads off.

Thus we learn that there is a good side to everything, if we know where to look for it, which is a very comforting reflection. But only a truly sagacious person knows where to look for it, if the misfortune happens to himself.

Meanwhile let British children remember that their forefathers were loyal even to kings not of the best—"at least, as far as they were able"—and that we have in our time been blessed with the best Queen who ever lived. So, as the old song says:

Here's a health unto his Majesty!

And he who will not drink his health,

We wish him neither wit nor wealth,

But only a rope to hang himself!

NAPOLEON

If you look out of your window in a clear dawn on the French Riviera you may, if you are fortunate, see, far away to the south, a faint mountain range hanging on the sea, and if you *do* see it, it is a sight so beautiful that you will never forget it. The mountain range belongs to Corsica, and under its shadow was born the most wonderful man the world has ever seen—Napoleon.

In the year 1769 two babies were born in widely distant places, both destined to spend the best years of their lives in a life and death struggle with each other. The birthday of Arthur Wellesley, afterwards Duke of Wellington, was on May 1, and his home was an Irish castle; while Napoleon Buonaparte saw the light in a small house in the little town of Ajaccio, in Corsica. Napoleon's ancestors came over from Tuscany early in the sixteenth century, and found in the island a large number of colonists like themselves, some Italian and some Greek, but all of them seeking refuge from the foreign armies which for fifty years had been trying to parcel out Italy among themselves. Though distant only a few hours' sail from its coasts, the inhabitants of the island were as different from those of the mainland as if the whole world lay between them. In Italy men were lazy, yet impulsive, lovers of beauty, of art, of literature, and of luxury; in Corsica they were gloomy, silent, watchful, living hardly, careless of everything which had not to do with their daily lives.

Their hatreds were not only deep and strong, but lasting. As in old Rome, it was the rule that he 'who slew the slayer' should himself be slain, and these blood feuds never died out. No wonder that a traveller was struck with the sight of nearly the whole population wearing mourning. Almost everyone was related to the rest, and in almost every family one of its members had recently fallen a victim to a *vendetta*—what we call a 'blood feud.' Periods of mourning were long, too, often lasting for ten years, sometimes for life. So the country was dismal to

look at, with the high bare mountains shadowing all. While in Italy things moved fast, and new customs seemed best, in Corsica they seldom altered. The father was in some ways as absolute over his wife and children as in ancient Rome. He gave his orders and they were obeyed, no matter how hard they might be or how much disliked. His wife was not expected or wished to be a companion to her husband or a teacher to her children. Even if a lady by birth, like the mother of Napoleon, she worked as hard as any servant, for there was little money in Corsica, and people cultivated their ground so that they might have produce to exchange with their neighbours—olive oil for wine, chestnuts for corn, fish for garments woven by the women, from the hair of the mountain sheep or goats.

The life led by both boys and girls in Corsica made them grow old early, and Charles Buonaparte, Napoleon's father, married at eighteen the beautiful Laetitia Ramolino, four years younger than himself. Charles had studied law in the University of Pisa, and, unlike his fellow-countrymen, was able to talk French, so that his friends looked up to him with awe, and often consulted him about their affairs, which greatly pleased him, as he loved to think himself a person of importance. He was both restless and ambitious, and in the disturbed state of the island he saw his chance for advancement. The Corsicans had lately risen against the rule of Genoa, under the leadership of Paoli, who wished to form a Republic. But his party was not powerful enough of itself to drive out the Genoese, so Paoli sent over to Paris to beg the help of France. It is curious that his common-sense did not tell him what would be the consequence of this step. The French arrived, and by their aid the islanders got the upper hand, but when the Genoese had sailed away the newcomers refused to follow their example. Charles Buonaparte had at first been one of the strongest partisans of Paoli, but he was not proof against the offer of the title of 'Conseiller du Roi,' and of some small legal appointments that were given him by the French governor. He forsook his former leader and took service with the French. Henceforward he was no longer 'Buonaparte,' after the Italian manner, but 'Bonaparte.'

So Napoleon, who was born a few months after this event, was a Frenchman. He was the fourth child of his parents, but only Joseph, a year older than himself, was living; and though by-and-by Napoleon completely ruled his elder brother, for a long while the two stood apart from the younger children, Joseph sharing Napoleon's affections with Marianna, his next sister, who died at the age of five. The others who lived were all much younger, Lucien, the next, being born in 1775. Madame Bonaparte was so much occupied after Napoleon's birth with trying to put things straight which had been upset by the war that she was forced to get a nurse for him. This woman, Camilla Ilari, was the wife of a man who picked up a living on the seashore, and all her life was devoted to her nursling, whom she always addressed as 'my son.'

Napoleon, on his part, fully returned her affection, and was never too great or too busy to give her proofs of it. Thirty-five years later, when the world was at his feet, she sent to say that she wished to be present at his coronation in Nôtre Dame. 'There is no one who will be more welcome,' was his reply, and when she had made the journey and braved the perils of the sea, and weary days of travel that seem so strange and so long when you do not understand a word of what is being said around you—when all this was over, and the Tuileries was reached, she found Méneval, the Emperor's own secretary, awaiting her, saying that he was to place himself at her orders and to show her everything she wished to see. Oh, how happy that old woman was, and what stories she had to tell when she got back to Corsica! She had long talks with 'Madame Mère,' as the Emperor's mother was now called, and with all her children, one by one. Even Marianna—or Elise, to give her the new name she thought more elegant—and Caroline, the youngest, forgot for a few minutes how grand they had become, and laughed as Camilla reminded them of the old days and the scoldings she had given them, while Paulette, who gave herself no airs, but only wanted admiration and petting, asked fifty questions all at once, and never waited for the answers!

Of course, Camilla had no intention of going home without seeing the wife of 'mon fils,' and Napoleon's wife, Josephine, sent for her into

her rooms, and, though she could not make out a word that Camilla said, smiled and nodded in reply, and presented her with two beautiful diamonds. Most wonderful of all, His Holiness Pope Pius VII. announced that he wished to give her an audience! Camilla was the proudest woman in the world when she received that message, but at the same time she was rather frightened. Why, she had never spoken to a bishop, and how was she to behave to a Pope? However, M. Méneval, who was the messenger, suggested that obedience was her first duty, so Camilla rose up and followed him meekly into the apartments of His Holiness.

'Be seated, my daughter,' said a gentle voice; and Camilla, who had knelt down at the threshold, got up slowly, and sat very upright in the chair which Méneval placed for her. For an hour and a half the audience lasted, the Pope putting to her all sorts of questions as to Napoleon's infancy and childhood. To begin with she only answered in as few words as possible, but gradually she ceased to remember where she was and to whom she was speaking, and poured forth a torrent of recollections about the nursling whom she loved better than her own son.

'Ah, the Signora Laetitia was a grand lady, and beautiful as an angel! Yes, there were many children to be sure, and much work needing to be done for them, but the Signora Laetitia saw to their manners and never suffered them to lie, or be greedy or rude to each other. Punished? Oh yes, they were punished; in Corsica punishments were many, but the children loved their mother none the less for that; and had not her Napoleone told her only last night how much he had all his life owed to the advice of his mother? How the poor darling had suffered when he had gone, at five, for a few months to a girls' school, and how the horrid little creatures had laughed at him because his stockings would not keep up! Did they make him cry? Napoleone? She could count on one hand the tears he had shed since he was born! Well, it was true she *had* heard he had wept a little when Joseph, whom he loved better than anyone in the world, was separated from him at that French school where they were together; but then, as everyone knew, one tear of Napoleone's was worth bucketsful of Joseph's! What friends

they were, those two, though they *did* quarrel sometimes! And how, big and little, they *did* love water! If ever you missed them, you might be certain they were bathing in one of the streams that came down from the mountains, and even when they were being driven in state to see their noble relations the boys would be sure to wriggle out of the carriage and jump into the river with their clothes on!'

Not since he was a boy himself had the Pope been so well amused, but all kinds of important people were waiting to see him, and very unwillingly he must put a stop to Camilla's interesting talk. So, reaching some chaplets and rosaries from a table beside him, he held them out to her, and signing her to kneel before him, he gave her his blessing. A few days after the great ceremony Camilla returned to Corsica laden with gifts, and richer by a pension and many vineyards from 'Napoleone.'

Like other Corsican ladies Laetitia Bonaparte knew nothing of books, probably not even as much as her friend, the mother of Madame Junot, who had only read one in her whole life, and that was the 'Adventures of Telemaque,' which perhaps accounts for her never wishing to read another! She wrote very badly, and could not speak even her own language, which was Italian, without making many mistakes, and in this Napoleon resembled her. In spite of all his wars, of his reading, of the people he came in contact with, he never succeeded in learning either German or English, and was forced to speak Spanish through an interpreter.

It was this inability to 'pick up' languages which made him feel so dreadfully lonely when, in 1778, he and Joseph were taken by their father to France, and placed at school at Autun. Neither of them knew a word of French, but Joseph soon managed to learn enough to make himself understood, while Napoleon was tongue-tied. For five months they were left together, and then the younger boy, who was nine, was removed to the great military school of Brienne, in Champagne, for which the King had given his father a nomination. It was on this occasion that he shed the 'few tears' of which Camilla had told the Pope.

Poor little boy! he had no one he could speak to, and hated games unless they had to do with soldiers. His schoolfellows did not like him, and thought him sulky because he spent most of his time by himself. Occasionally he wrote home, but letters to Corsica cost nineteen sous apiece, and he knew that there was not much money to spare for postage.

Now and then he sent a letter to Joseph, in which he begs him to do his work and not be lazy; and once he writes to his uncle pointing out that it would be a pity to make Joseph into a soldier, for he would be no good in a fight. And as to this Napoleon could speak with certainty, for in all their boyish quarrels Joseph was never known to return a blow. One friend he did have, Bourrienne, in after-years his military secretary, who entered Brienne only a month after he did, and has written memoirs of his own life. But the rest of the boys stood aloof, though Napoleon seems to have got on better with the masters. When he had been at Brienne four years, his father again returned to France to place Marianna, who was six, at school at St. Cyr, near Paris, and Lucien, who was eight, at Brienne. Napoleon was glad to see his father, who died about fifteen months later; but he and Lucien were, of course, far apart in the school, and, what was more important, they never got on together, so that Napoleon was not much less lonely than before. Besides, he was fourteen now, and would soon be going to the military school in Paris.

That winter it was very cold, and snow fell heavily in Champagne. In England it would have been welcomed heartily by the boys, who would have spent hours in snowballing each other; but the masters at Brienne never thought of this, and gave orders that exercise was to be taken in the big hall of the college. Now the hall, which only had a fire at one end, looked very dreary, and nobody felt inclined to play. The older boys stood round the chimney and the younger ones peered disconsolately out of the windows, hoping in vain to catch a glimpse of blue sky. Suddenly young Bonaparte left the fireplace where he had been leaning, and touched Bourrienne on the shoulder.

'I am not going to stay here,' he said. 'Let us go and make a snow castle, and besiege it. Who will come?'

'I,' and 'I,' and 'I,' they all shouted, and in a moment they were all gathered round Napoleon in the courtyard, begging him to tell them what to do.

'Get as many shovels as you can find in the tool house, and we will make a castle,' he answered. 'A proper castle with a keep, and a donjon and battlements. Then we must dig some trenches for cover. When we have finished we must garrison the castle, and I will lead the attacking party.' Unfortunately, the spades and shovels left by the gardeners only numbered about one to every fifteen or twenty boys, so they had to take them in turns, the others using any tools they could find, or even their own hands. All the afternoon they worked without a moment's pause, and at sunset, just before the bell for lessons sounded, the castle was finished. That night, when the lights were put out in their cold dormitory, they asked each other anxiously, before they went to sleep, if they were *quite* sure that it did not feel any warmer. It would be dreadful to wake up and to find that their beautiful castle had crumbled away! Never before had there been so little difficulty in getting out of bed as when the boys woke up the next morning. No, it was certainly not warmer; in fact, it was a good deal colder, and their fingers were so frozen that they could hardly fasten the buttons of their uniforms, but their faces were rosy and smiling as they trooped down the stairs. At the classes they were more attentive than usual, and no pranks were played; nothing must be done which could earn them a punishment, or risk their being deprived of that glorious sport. So when the hour of recreation came the whole school filled the courtyard.



BONAPARTE COMMANDS HIS FIRST ARMY

It was wonderful, if anyone had cared to notice, what a change had taken place in the feelings of the boys towards the gloomy, masterful youth who stood apart, and was disliked and shunned by the rest. Now it was to *him* that they looked for orders, and a word from *him* made them glow with pleasure. For fourteen happy days the siege went on, sometimes one party getting the better and sometimes the other, the faults on both sides being pointed out clearly by Bonaparte himself. At the end of that time the snow had wasted, and the snowballs had a way

of getting mixed with the small stones of the courtyard, so that the wounds were no longer imaginary. Then the principal of the college stepped in, and commanded the fort to be dismantled.

After this the young cadets looked on Napoleon with different eyes. As to the professors, they had long ago made up their minds about him, and their opinion agreed in most points with that of M. de Kéralio, who came to inspect the school in 1784. The inspector found that he was backward in Latin, in all foreign languages, and wanting in grace of manner, but that he was distinguished in mathematics, and fond of geography and history, especially of Plutarch. In conduct he was obedient and well-behaved, except when his temper got the better of him. In fact, that he would make an excellent sailor! But Napoleon did *not* make a sailor; indeed, except on his voyages to Corsica, Egypt, and St. Helena, he never went to sea. Instead, one day he climbed to the top of a heavy lumbering old coach, and travelled slowly to the great military school in Paris, to which he had a nomination as 'King's Cadet.' The school was a beautiful building in the Champs Elysées, and had been founded by Louis XV. for the sons of the nobles. Everything was on the grandest scale, and the cost was enormous. An immense number of servants were attached to the institution, besides a quantity of grooms to attend to the horses in the large stables. There was a private hospital on the premises, with doctors, surgeons, and four nursing sisters, and a staff of seven servants. The food was abundant, and consisted, even on fast days, of soup, two kinds of vegetables, eggs, fish, and three sorts of fruit for dessert. Two suits of uniform were allowed the cadets in the year, and these were put on punctually on the first of May and on the first of November, while their linen was changed three times a week. Of course, officials of all sorts were necessary to superintend these departments, and they were legion. The overseer of the kitchen, with its seven cooks and numerous scullions, was called 'the controller of the mouth,' and seven porters kept the seven doors. In all, counting the priests, who said mass daily at half-past six in the morning and prayers at a quarter to nine at night, a hundred and eleven people were employed about the school, and this without reckoning any of the professors. For there were, of course, professors for everything—riding, fenc-

ing, dancing, gunnery, mathematics, artillery, languages, history, geography, fortification, drawing, and many other things, besides a professor for special training in all that was then considered essential to good manners, which included being able to write a well-expressed letter and to move in society without awkwardness.

At the time that Napoleon Bonaparte entered the Ecole Militaire by far the greater number of the cadets were young nobles belonging to rich families, whose reckless waste of money was one of the causes of the coming Revolution. The luxury of the school was to them a necessary part of life, but it bore hardly on the King's Cadets—Elèves du Roi—who, like Napoleon, were all poor. Soon after his arrival he wrote to M. Berton, the head of the school at Brienne, describing the state of things he had found in Paris, and the indignation he felt on the subject. 'It is specially harmful,' he says, 'to the King's Cadets, who have no money, and, in order to foster their vanity and be on the same footing as their rich comrades, run into debt, besides rendering them discontented with their homes. It would be far better only to give them all a dinner of two courses, and to teach them to wait on themselves, to brush their clothes, to clean their boots, and to groom their horses.' And when, years after, he founded his military school at Fontainebleau, the ideas he had held at sixteen were carried out to the letter. As for his companions, the effect of the life of luxury was less harmful than he thought. After the Revolution, now so soon to break out, almost all of them became *emigrés*, to avoid the vengeance of the Republican leaders on the whole class of the nobility. Numbers fled to England, having lost everything they possessed, and we all know with what splendid courage and gaiety they bore the worst hardships and supported themselves by teaching their own language and the dances they had learned in the Ecole Militaire. It is strange that out of the hundreds of youths who were Napoleon's comrades in Paris only one was destined to fight by his side, and this was a boy whom he hardly knew by sight, so recently had he come—Davoust, the future Duke of Auerstädt.

Stern and solitary, yet outspoken when he was strongly moved, Napoleon was no more a favourite in Paris than he had been at Brienne, yet the cadets, as well as the greater part of the professors, felt that in some way or other he stood apart. The director of studies, Valfort, was struck by the weighty words and keen insight of this boy of sixteen when he thought it worth his while to speak, which was not often. 'His style is granite melted in a volcano,' says the professor of grammar about his exercises, and the phrase may be applied to his life-long character. M. de l'Esguille, on reading his historical essays on Plutarch, Cæsar, Rousseau, Tacitus, Voltaire, and a score of other famous writers, declared that he had a great future before him if he was helped by circumstances—perhaps not seeing that men like Napoleon fashion their circumstances for themselves. 'He is the best mathematician in the school,' replies a student to a question of the German professor, driven to despair by the dense stupidity of Napoleon over the language; for, as we have said, neither then nor later could he ever make himself understood in any foreign tongue; neither could he learn to dance, although he took lessons. But when he was not at his classes, or engaged in working for them, the boy might have been found in the great library, forgetful of cold or hunger, poring over the histories of the past. It may have been there that he first dreamed the dream of his life—that some day he too, like Alexander, would march across the desert at the head of an army, and, entering India on the back of an elephant, would restore the broken French Empire in the East.

It was the custom of the cadets to remain for three or even four years in the Ecole Militaire, but Napoleon had only been there ten months before he passed for the artillery, and was given a commission in the regiment of La Fère, then quartered in the town of Valence, with pay amounting to 45*l.* a year. He left Paris at the end of October, the only Corsican who had ever been admitted to the great military school, and, accompanied by his friend Des Mazis, arrived at Valence on one of the early days of November. Here lodgings had been found for him in the house of a certain Madame Bou, who looked after him and made him comfortable. The pale sad-looking youth was grateful for her kindness, and fifteen years later, when he passed through the town on his way

from Egypt, he sent a message that he wished to see her, and gave her a beautiful Indian shawl that a queen might have envied, and a silver compass that still may be seen in the Museum at Valence.

Madame Bou's house was the only home he had known for nine years, and while there he grew for a time younger and happier in the society of some of her friends. Not that his work gave him much leisure. For three months he studied hard, for he had to learn drill and to study gunnery and fortifications. His ardour and quick mastery of all that was most difficult drew attention and praise from his commanding officers, but from his equals, as usual, he held aloof. For one thing, he had no money to enable him to share their pleasures, though he was too proud to confess it; and for another, his interests and ambitions were widely different from theirs. To the end he remained the 'Spartan' that the boys at Brienne had called him. The pomp and glory of his later life was only put on for purposes of state—an ill-fitting garment, in which he never felt at ease.

Having once satisfied his colonel as to his knowledge of drill, Napoleon applied for leave in order to see after the affairs of his family in Corsica. Charles Bonaparte had died in France of a most painful illness about six months earlier, and had left behind him many debts, not large in themselves, but more than Laetitia could pay, and Joseph, who had been with his father, does not seem to have been able to help her. So in September, shortly after his seventeenth birthday, Napoleon crossed the sea once more, and remained in Corsica, with only a short interval, till 1788. He found many changes in the home that he had left eight years before: Louis, who had then been a tiny baby, was now a big boy, and there were besides Paoletta, Nunziata (afterwards known as Caroline) and Jerome, the youngest of them all. Joseph was still his friend and companion, with whom everything was discussed, for their mother had become poorer than ever, and was obliged to look closely after everything, and it was no easy matter to provide such a family with food. She was heartily glad to see her son again, though like a true Corsican she said little about it; but was a little disappointed that he had almost forgotten his Italian, and had become, in everyone's opinion, 'so *very*

Frenchified.' How the cadets of the Ecole Militaire would have laughed if they had heard it! Bonaparte, who could never learn to dance, or to bow, or to turn a graceful compliment! But though Joseph was perhaps pleasanter, and more popular, and made more friends, there was something about Napoleon which gave his mother rest. She felt that whatever he undertook would be done, and done thoroughly.

Meanwhile Napoleon began for the first time to enjoy games, even though his playfellows were only his little brothers and sisters. Paoletta, or, as he called her, Paulette, was very pretty, with little coaxing ways, strange indeed to find in Corsica, and when he was not talking seriously with Joseph of the disturbed state of the island, he was generally to be seen with Paulette on one side and Louis on the other. For from the first he was very fond of Louis, and all the time he was at home he taught him regularly part of every day. He had some books with him that he bought by denying himself things that most young men would have thought necessaries. Among them were mathematical treatises, Corneille's and Racine's plays, which told stories of old Rome and her heroes, the Gallic wars of Cæsar, translated, of course, or Napoleon could not have read it, and Rousseau's 'Social Contract'; but Louis was as yet too young for that, being only eight. In his spare moments Napoleon studied politics and made notes about the history of Corsica, hoping some day to make them into a book, and chattered French to the little ones, who picked it up much more easily than their teacher had done. It seems strange that he should have been allowed to remain at home for nearly two years, but in France events were rapidly marching towards the Revolution, and rules were in many cases relaxed. Anyhow, it was not till June 1788 that he returned to his regiment, then quartered at Auxonne. His superior officers, especially Baron du Teil, all interested themselves in the young man for whom no work was too hard as long as it bore on military subjects, and encouraged him in every possible way. His men liked him, and felt the same confidence in him that his mother had done; but from his own comrades he still held aloof, and the walks that he took round the city, pondering how best it could be attacked or defended, were always solitary ones. In general he was left pretty much alone—there was a feeling among them that he

was not a safe person to meddle with; but sometimes their high spirits got the better of them, and when he was trying to puzzle out a problem in mathematics that had baffled him for days, his thoughts would be put to flight by a sudden blast of trumpets and roar of drums directly under his window. Then Napoleon would spring up with a fierce burst of anger, but before he could get outside the culprits were nowhere to be seen.

As time went on, and the Revolution drew nearer, Napoleon's thoughts turned more and more towards Corsica, and when, in July 1789, the taking of the great prison of the Bastille seemed to let loose the fury of the mob all over France, he felt that he must play his part in the liberation of his native island. So in September he applied for leave and sailed for Ajaccio. On his arrival he at once began to take measures for enabling the people to gain the independence which he hoped would be formally granted them by the National Assembly in Paris. The White Cockade, the Bourbon ensign, was to disappear from men's hats; a guard must be enrolled; a club, composed of all who wished for a new order of things, must be founded. Even when the French governor puts a stop to these proceedings, Napoleon is not to be beaten, but turns his attention to something else, taking care always to keep his men well in hand and to enforce discipline.

In this way passed the winter and spring, and in 1790 the exiled Paoli was, by virtue of decree of the National Assembly, allowed, after twenty-two years, to return to the island. From Napoleon's childhood Paoli had been his hero of modern days, as Hannibal was of ancient times; but when they actually came face to face Napoleon's boyish impatience chafed bitterly against the caution of the older man. It was their first difference, which time only widened.

When Napoleon went back to Auxonne in February 1791 he was accompanied by Louis, then thirteen years old. They travelled through a very different France from that which Napoleon had beheld in 1778. Then all was quiet on the surface, and it seemed as if nothing would ever change; now, women as well as men met together in large numbers and talked excitedly, ready at a moment's notice to break out into

some deed of violence. Everywhere the tricolour was to be seen, the 'Marseillaise' to be heard. Napoleon's eyes brightened as he listened to the song, and Louis watched and wondered. But not yet had the poor profited by the wealth of the rich. Napoleon's lodging, which he shared with Louis, was as bare as before; his food was even plainer, for now two had to eat it. Masters were costly and not to be thought of, so Napoleon set lessons to be learned during the day, and to be repeated at night when military duties are over. And Louis was as eager for knowledge as Napoleon himself had been. 'He learns to write and read French,' writes the young lieutenant to his brother Joseph. 'I teach him mathematics and geography and history. The ladies are all devoted to him' (probably the wives and daughters of the officers), 'and he has become quite French in his manners, as if he were thirty. As for his judgment, he might be forty. He will do better than any of us, but then none of us had so good an education.' So wrote Napoleon; and Louis on his side was deeply grateful for the pains and care bestowed on him. 'After Napoleone, you are the one I love most,' he says in a letter to Joseph, whose tact and good nature made him everybody's favourite, though his stronger brother always looked down on him a little. Louis was a good boy, with generous feelings and a strong sense of duty, which in after-years, when he was King of Holland, brought him into strife with Napoleon. But in 1791 that was a long time off, and soon after this letter he writes another to Joseph, in which he says, 'I make you a present of my two cravats that Napoleone gave me.' Did he keep any for himself, one wonders?

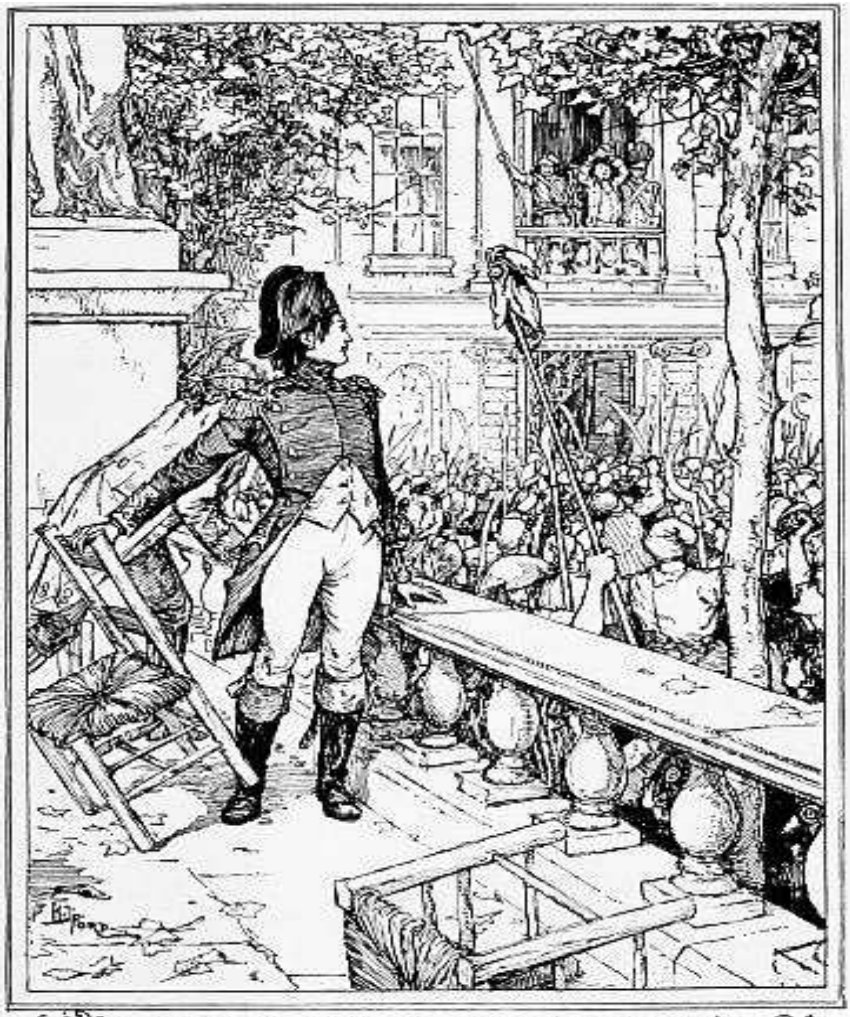


Deeply though he loved his military duties, Napoleon could not rest away from Corsica, and in the autumn he again asked for leave from his long-suffering colonel. He found the island in even a worse condition than when he had last left it, for parties were more numerous and hatred fiercer. More than once Napoleon narrowly escaped with his life, which, by all the laws of war, he had really forfeited as a deserter by long outstaying his leave. But this did not trouble Napoleon. With France upset, with 'Paris in convulsions,' and with the war with the al-

lied Powers on the point of breaking out, no one was likely to inquire closely into the conduct of an unimportant young soldier. Besides, rumours had reached the island that the school of St. Cyr would shortly be closed, and his mother was anxious about Marianna, who was still a pupil there. Clearly his best plan was to go to Paris, and to Paris he went in May 1792, hoping to be allowed quietly to take his old place in the regiment. Scarcely had he arrived when, walking in the street, watching all that passed and saying nothing, he came upon his old friend Bourrienne, from whom he had parted eight years before. The young men were delighted to meet, and spent their time making plans for the future. 'He had even less money than I,' writes Bourrienne, 'and that was little enough! We formed a scheme for taking some houses that were being built, and subletting them at a higher rate. But the owners asked too much, and we were forced to give it up. Every day he went to seek employment from the Minister of War, and I from the Foreign Office.'

Towards the end of June they both visited Marianna at St. Cyr, and from her Napoleon learned that the school was almost certain to be closed or totally changed in its institutions, and the girls returned to their relations without the present of 3,000 francs (120*l.*) usually given to them when they left. It is curious to think that at that time, when girls grew up so early and married so young, they were expected to remain at St. Cyr till they were twenty. Marianna was at this time sixteen, 'but,' says Napoleon in a letter to Joseph at Ajaccio, 'not at all advanced for her age, less so, indeed, than Paoletta. It would be impossible to marry her without having her at home for six or eight months first, but if you see any distant prospect of finding her a suitable husband, tell me, and I will bring her over. If not, she had better stay where she is till we see how things turn out. Still, I cannot help feeling that if she remains at St. Cyr for another four years she will be too old to adapt herself to life in Corsica, while now she will glide into its ways almost without noticing them.' In the end St. Cyr was closed, and Marianna threw off the white cap which the girls so hated because its fashion dated back to the time of the foundress, Madame de Maintenon, and set out with her brother for Corsica. She was a dull and rather dis-

agreeable young lady, with a great notion of her own importance, and a bad temper. Some of the new ideas, especially those of the superiority of women over men, had reached her ears in a confused way, and had readily been adopted by her. She spent hours in talking over these with Lucien, her next brother, a youth of rather peculiar disposition, who did not get on with the rest.



'Why did they ever let these beasts enter?'

But all this happened in the autumn, and meanwhile Napoleon stayed in Paris, observing the course of events and roaming the streets

with Bourrienne. One day they saw collected near the Palais Royal a crowd of five or six thousand men, dirty, ragged, evil-faced, and with tongues as evil. In their hands were guns, swords, knives, axes, or whatever they could seize upon, and, shouting, screaming, and gesticulating, they made their way towards the Tuileries. 'Let us follow those brutes,' said Bonaparte, and, taking a short cut, they reached the garden terrace which overlooks the Seine, and from there they watched terrible scenes. 'I could hardly describe the surprise and horror they excited in him,' writes Bourrienne, 'and when at length the King appeared at a window, wearing the Red Cap of Liberty which had been thrust on his head by one of the mob, a cry broke from Napoleon:

'Why did they ever let these beasts enter?' he exclaimed, heedless of who might hear him. 'They should have mown down five hundred of them with the guns, and the rest would have run away.' 'They don't know what they are doing,' he said to Bourrienne a few hours after when they were sitting at dinner in a cheap restaurant. 'It is fatal to allow such things to pass unpunished, and they will rue it bitterly.' And so they did; for the 10th of August was soon to come, and after that the September massacres of nobles and great ladies.

With feelings like these—feelings often quite different from the doctrines which he held—Napoleon must have had hard work to keep his sword in its sheath on that very 10th of August when the Tuileries was attacked and the Swiss Guards so nobly died at their post. He was standing at a shop window in a side street, and his soul sickened at the sight of the struggle. At last he could bear it no longer, and, dashing into the midst of the fray, he dragged out a wounded man from the swords of the rabble, who by this time were drunk with blood. 'If Louis XVI. had only shown himself on horseback,' he writes to Joseph that same evening, 'the victory would have been his.' But, alas! Louis never did the thing that was wisest to do. Eager as he was to get away, Napoleon had to linger on amidst the horrors of the September massacres till he gained permission to take his sister back to Corsica. Here the state of affairs seemed almost as desperate as in France, and no man could trust his neighbour. Napoleon now fought openly against Paoli, whom the

execution of Louis XVI. threw into the arms of England, and fierce battles and sieges were the consequence. Once he was imprisoned in a house, and sentinels were placed before the door, but he contrived to escape through a side window, and hurried back to Ajaccio. Here his arrest was ordered, but warned by his friends Napoleon hid himself all day in a grotto, in the garden of one of his Ramolino cousins. Still, as it was clear that Ajaccio was no longer safe for him, he got on board a boat and rejoined Joseph at Bastia.

Furious at his having slipped through their hands, the partisans of Paoli turned their wrath upon Laetitia and her children. With the high courage she had shown all her life 'Madame Mère' wished to stay and defend her house, but was at last persuaded to fly, taking with her Louis, Marianna, and Paoletta, with her brother Fesch to guard them, leaving the two youngest children with her mother. Hardly had she gone when her house was pillaged and almost destroyed. It would have been burned to the ground but for fear of setting fire to the houses of the Paolistes. It was only on June 11, after perils by land and perils by sea, that the fugitives, now joined by Napoleon, set sail for Toulon. The voyage lasted two days, and as soon as they touched land Napoleon's first care was to find a lodging for his mother and the children, where they might rest in peace till he could decide what was best to be done. He then made his way to Nice, where a battery of artillery was quartered, and found that by great good luck the brother of his old general Baron du Teil was in command. In happier times he would most likely have been put under arrest at once, before being shot as a deserter; but, as in earlier days, the Republic was in need of every man it could get, and he was at once employed to inspect the defences along the coast and to collect guns and ammunition. In all this the warfare he had carried on in Corsica stood him in good stead. It had taught him how to deal with men, and his eye had learned to discover the strong and weak points of a position, while his mind had grown rich in resource. As in the case of many of the greatest men, he had been trained for victory by defeat. It was at the siege of Toulon he gained the name at which for eleven years 'the world grew pale.' Revolted by the cruelties of the Convention in Paris, the town, like others in different parts of France,

had declared for Louis XVIII. A friendly fleet of English and Spanish ships had cast anchor in the bay, and the French army which besieged the city was undisciplined and ill commanded. All that it had in the way of artillery was in so bad a condition as to be useless, the powder and shot were exhausted, Dommartin, the artillery officer, was wounded, and there was no man to take his place.

'Send for young Bonaparte,' said Salicetti, one of the commissioners of the Convention, who had known him elsewhere; and from that moment the tide began to turn. Messengers were despatched at once to bring in horses from miles round, while an arsenal was built on one of the surrounding hills. Day and night the men kept at work, and before a week had passed fourteen big guns and four mortars were ready, and a large quantity of provisions stored up. Day and night the men laboured, and day and night Bonaparte was to be found beside them, directing, encouraging, praising. When he could no longer stand, he wrapped himself in his cloak and lay down beside them, present to guide them in any difficulty, to repair any blunder. And the representatives of the Convention noted it all, and one morning handed him his brevet of general of battalion. Armed with this authority Napoleon's task became easier. He had aides-de-camp to send where he would, and forthwith one rode along the coast to bring up cannon from the army of Italy, and another set out for Lyons to gather horses and food. But whatever he did, his eyes were fixed on the key of the city—the Fort Mulgrave which, it was plain to all, must be the first object of attack. Close underneath the fort a French battery was erected and manned—only to be swept clear by the guns from the English ships. Another set of volunteers slipped out from the ranks, and fell dead beside their comrades. For the third time Bonaparte gave the word of command, but there was silence. 'Call it the Battery of the Fearless,' he said, and in an instant every man had sprung forward. The battery was never without its gunner till the fort was taken.



BONAPARTE IN THE BATTERY OF THE FEARLESS

With the fall of Toulon we must bid farewell to Napoleon, whose youth was over and whose manhood was now begun. You all know the story which ended at last in Waterloo, and there is no need to repeat it. 'He was not a gentleman,' is said by many. Well, perhaps he was not *always* a gentleman, but the hold he obtained on France, and particularly on the men who followed him, was true and deep and lasting, for it endures even to this day. Listen to a soldier standing in the Invalides, where his body was laid when it was brought from St. Helena, with his hat and his sword placed beside him.

'Ah! c'est Lui! c'est son chapeau! c'est son épée!' he cries, the glorious memories of the past rushing over him, till he too feels that he has fought at Austerlitz and at Marengo.

And when they asked for rights, he made reply
'Ye have my glory.' And so, drawing round them
His ample purple, glorified and bound them
In an embrace that seemed identity.
'He ruled them like a tyrant.' True. But none
Were ruled like slaves. Each felt Napoleon.