

ter-pot. Therefore are we driven to a rhetorical figure which has no name, but whose apparent contradiction only makes it the more striking. Have we not assaulted this petty Sebastopol? What say you to our canons of criticism? If the hero were alive, would he not exclaim, 'Thank you, my friend; consider your hand shaken.' But he is dead. Peace to his ashes! And herewith we take our leave of ENSIGN ODOHERTY, late of the Ninety-ninth, or King's Own Tipperary Regiment.

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THE HISTORY OF NAPOLEON BONAPARTE. By JOHN S. C. ABBOTT. With Maps and Illustrations. In two volumes: pp. 1277. New-York: HARPER AND BROTHERS.

Do you remember, reader, the review given in the pages of '*The Bunkum Flag-Staff and Independent Echo*,' by that profound and accurate observer and clear-headed critic, the editor of that journal, Mr. WAGSTAFF—the review, we mean, of Sir WALTER SCOTT BART'S '*LIFE OF NAPOLEON BONAPARTE*'? It was a model criticism in its kind; and one passage thereof was to the following purport: 'Mr. BART has done a good service to the cause of letters by these vollums, which have now been published some years. It does us good to review the work. NAPOLEON BONAPARTE was a man of talents, which subsequent events prove. We think he will yet find his level, and posterity may live to thank us for what we have here said. We have one bone to pick with him, however, which we should have had we have met him among the Simplons or the Twilleries. He hadn't ought, on the score of congenial affection, for to have divorced his wife, if she *was* a colored woman; and if we had a-met her before he done the deed, we would have said to her: 'JOSEPHINE, stand to your woman's rights!' While we're about it, we may as well say we got another bone to pick with Mr. BART. He don't do justice to that poor creetur shut up onto Saintelena, where Mr. CIPRIANA couldn't get fire-wood to warm him, nor any good ile to put into his lamp, nor mutton which was wuth a cuss, nor half water enough for his bath nor half wine enough for his water; and what wine he had was made of sour grapes and sugar-of-lead, giving the poor captyve a stomach-ache every day; and yet BART wants to make out that the overseer gin the old hero a good deal more than he deserved. But Mr. BART is an Englishman, and an Englishman is a hectoring bully, wherever you find him; and he is n't any thing else.'

Mr. ABBOTT is quite of the same opinion with Mr. WAGSTAFF, in relation to the treatment which NAPOLEON received at the hands of the English people. In his preface, which is extremely well-written and candid, and outspoken to the last degree, he avows his deep admiration for the subject of his history, and asks only that his *facts*, which he claims to be authentic, shall claim only the consideration to which they are fairly entitled. In justice to Mr. ABBOTT, who has certainly been belabored without stint in various quarters for the alleged too partial picture which he has drawn of the 'Great

Captain,' it must be conceded that he evinces a good deal of magnanimity and forbearance in his treatment of his assailants.

'The world has been bewildered by the contradictory views which have been presented of NAPOLEON. Hostile historians have stigmatized him as a usurper, while admitting that the suffrages of the nation placed him on the throne; they have denounced him a tyrant inexorable as Nero, while admitting that he won the adoring love of his subjects; he is called a bloodthirsty monster, delighting in war, yet it is confessed that he was, in almost every conflict, struggling in self-defence and imploring peace; it is said that his insatiable ambition led him to trample remorselessly upon the rights of other nations, while it is confessed that Europe was astonished by his moderation and generosity in every treaty which he made with his vanquished foes; he is described as a human butcher, reckless of suffering, who regarded his soldiers merely as food for powder, and yet, on the same page, we are told that he wept over the carnage of the battle-field, tenderly pressed the hand of the dying, and won from those soldiers who laid down their lives in his service a fervor of love which earth has never seen paralleled; it is recorded that France at last became weary of him and drove him from the throne, and in the next paragraph we are informed that, as soon as the bayonets of the Allies had disappeared from France, the whole nation rose to call him back from his exile, with unanimity so unprecedented, that without the shedding of one drop of blood he traversed the whole of France, entered Paris, and reascended the throne; it is affirmed that a second time France, weary of his despotism, expelled him, and yet it is at the same time recorded that this same France demanded of his executioners his beloved remains, received them with national enthusiasm, consigned them to a tomb in the very bosom of its capital, and has reared over them such a mausoleum as honors the grave of no other mortal. Such is NAPOLEON as described by his enemies.

The judgment which the reader will form of the Emperor will depend upon the answer he gives to the three following questions:

1. Did NAPOLEON *usurp* the sovereignty of France?
2. Having attained the supreme power, was he a tyrant, devoting that power to the promotion of his own selfish aggrandizement?
3. Were the wars in which he was incessantly engaged provoked by his arrogance?

These are the questions to be settled; and documentary evidence is so strong upon these points, that even the blindest prejudice must struggle with desperation to resist the truth. The reason is obvious why the character of NAPOLEON should have been maligned. He was regarded justly as the foe of *aristocratic privilege*. The English oligarchy was determined to crush him. After deluging Europe in blood and woe, during nearly a quarter of a century, for the accomplishment of this end, it became necessary to prove to the world, and especially to the British people, who were tottering beneath the burden of taxes which these wars engendered, that NAPOLEON was a tyrant, threatening the liberties of the world, and that he deserved to be crushed. All the Allies who were accomplices in this iniquitous crusade were alike interested in consigning to the world's execration the name of their victim; and even in France, the reinstated BOURBONS, sustained upon the throne by the bayonets of the Allies, silenced every voice which would speak in favor of the monarch of the people, and rewarded with smiles, and opulence, and honor all who would pour contempt upon his name. Thus we have the unprecedented spectacle of all the monarchies of Europe most deeply interested in calumniating one single man, and that man deprived of the possibility of reply. The writer surely does not expect that he can thus speak in behalf of the Emperor and not draw upon himself the most vehement assaults. Claiming the privilege of expressing his own views freely, he cheerfully grants that privilege to others. It is even pleasant to share the reproach of one who is unjustly assailed.

It would, indeed, be a bitter disappointment to the author of this work should it not prove to be a powerful advocate of the cause of peace. It is impossible to frame a more impressive argument against the folly of war than the details of the crimes and woes of these awful wars waged by the Allies against the independence of France. All who engaged in them alike suffered. Multitudes which cannot be numbered perished in every form of mutilation and agony upon the field of battle. From millions of homes a wail of anguish was extorted from the hearts of widows and orphans louder than the thunders of Marengo or of Waterloo. All Europe was impoverished. Brutal armies swept, like demons of destruction, over meadows and hill-sides, trampling the harvest of the husbandman, burning villages, bombarding cities, and throwing shot and shells into thronged streets, into galleries of art, and into nurseries where mothers, and maidens, and infants covered in an agony of terror.

War is the science of destruction. Millions were absolutely beggared. Every nation was, in turn, humiliated and weakened. England, the soul of this conflict, the unrelenting inciter of these wars, protected by her navy and by her insular position,

succeeded, by the aid of enormous bribes, in inducing other nations to attack France in the rear, and thus to draw the armies of the Emperor from the shores of Britain. Thus the hour of her punishment was postponed. But the day of retribution is at hand. England now groans beneath the burden of four thousand million dollars of debt. This weighs upon her children with a crushing pressure which is daily becoming more insupportable.

The plan of this book is very simple. It is a plain narrative of what NAPOLEON did, with the explanations which he gave of his conduct, and with the record of such well-authenticated anecdotes and remarkable sayings as illustrate his character. The writer believes that every incident here recorded, and every remark attributed to NAPOLEON, are well authenticated. He is not aware of any well-established incident or remark which would cast a different shade upon his character that has been omitted. The historian is peculiarly liable to the charge of plagiarism. He can only record facts and describe scenes which he gleans from public documents and from the descriptions of others. There is no fact, incident, or conversation narrated in these pages which may not be found elsewhere; and it is impossible to narrate events already penned by the ablest writers, and to avoid all similarity of expression.

These volumes are *very* profusely illustrated with good engravings, including two excellent portraits of the earlier and later BONAPARTE.

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PEG WOFFINGTON: a Novel. By CHAS. READ, Author of 'CHRISTIE JOHNSTONE.' 18mo: pp. 303. Boston: TICKNOR & FIELD. 1855.

WE have here a very readable book in which are combined harmoniously the apparent opposites of sparkling wit and humor, and soul-moving, tear-forcing pathos. We have antithetically set before us the corroding cares of an unsuccessful theatrical career, and the brilliant though evanescent triumphs of a favorite of fortune in the same race. PEG WOFFINGTON is a remarkable character, developing traits worthy of all admiration. In the course of the work the author introduces his readers to a peep behind the scenes in the good old days of COLLEY CIBBER, MRS. BRACEGIRDLE, etc., etc. PEG WOFFINGTON has no preface, for which we devoutly thank its author. It needs none; it tells its own story graphically and with infinite unction.

Here is a description of one of the accessories to the plot. 'The man was TRIPLET, scene-painter, actor, and writer of sanguinary plays, in which what ought to be, namely, truth, plot, situation, and dialogue, were not; and what ought not to be, were, to wit: small talk, big talk, fops, ruffians, and ghosts. His three mediocrities fell so short of one talent, that he was sometimes in want of food.' Our author is too fond of using foreign words and quotations. We think our mother-tongue sufficient for all common purposes of expression, and hate to see an English work interlarded with Latin words and French quotations. There is much sly humor in the following recipe for writing well.

'First, think in as homely a way as you can, shove your pen under the thought and lift it up by polly-syllables to the tune of fiction: (when done, find a publisher, if you can.) This,' said TRIPLET, 'insures common-sense to your ideas, which does pretty well for a basis, and elegance to the dress they wear.' Then casting his eyes round in search of such actual circumstances as could be incorporated on this plan with fiction, TRIPLET began to work thus: