Chapter Seven

1848-1852: Prince-President, Coup d'état, and Imperial Dignity

'THE REPUBLIC is dead', Lamartine declared after the June insurrection as both a general commission of enquiry and the foreign affairs committee placed him under investigation. The first draft of the constitution, which had been completed on 19 June, was reworked and presented to the Assembly for debate on 30 August, accepted by an overwhelming majority on 4 November and promulgated at the Place de la Concorde eight days later. A 'democratic, one and indivisible' Republic was to have a president directly elected by the people under universal adult manhood suffrage. The president was to sanction ministerial appointments presented to him and retain the power of veto, but he could neither lead the army nor suspend or dissolve the Assembly. In addition to the traditional 'Liberty, Equality, Fraternity', it added 'Family, Work, Property, Public Order' to its slogan.

By and large these debates, beginning on 4 September, were not bitterly contested. An exception arose over the question of the presidential term of office, as it was during these debates, commencing on 5 October, that Louis Napoleon arrived in Paris as a deputy. Accordingly, an amendment was put forward by François Grévy, a lawyer and deputy hostile to Louis Napoleon, to replace the popular president by a prime minister elected by the Assembly. The motion – clearly contrary to the spirit of a popular republic – was defeated by 643 votes to 158 on 7 October. However, in order to prevent the presidential seat becoming a stepping-stone to empire, the committees of the Assembly agreed that the president should be elected for four years but could not be re-eligible until at least one term of office had been filled by another.

On 9 October, the Assembly proposed another amendment by which members of quondam ruling families should be ineligible. Louis Napoleon then spoke for the first time in the Assembly, carefully combining an inarticulate introduction with a disavowal of his status as Prince-Pretender. The amendment was rejected, and two days later the 1832 law of proscription was abrogated. On the following day, a further amendment postponing the forthcoming presidential election, which had already been fixed, was rejected by 587 votes to 232.

The elections were held on 10 and 11 December. There were six principal candidates: Louis Napoleon representing what had become known as the *Parti de l'ordre*; General Eugène Cavaignac (the effective head of state), Lamartine, and General Nicolas Changarnier, moderate republicanism; Ledru-Rollin, Democratic Socialism; and Vincent Raspail, Pure Socialism. There were 7,449,471 votes cast in Metropolitan France – 75·1 percent of the electorate – and Louis Napoleon polled 5,534,520 of them, or 74·3 percent of the votes cast. Cavaignac gained 1,448,302 and Lamartine 17,914. When the returns for North Africa, Corsica, and the army were assessed, Louis Napoleon's total rose by 38,314, Lamartine's by 3,024, and Cavaignac's by 2,854. Ten days later, Louis Napoleon swore allegiance to the new constitution, and the man who three months earlier had stumbled through his inaugural speech as a deputy for Yonne, enduring chuckles at his peculiar appearance and curious accent, took his seat at the head of the National Constituent Assembly.

The Times (12 December) stated caustically that 'the election of Louis Napoleon Buonaparte to the Presidency of the French Republic, if such be the result of the great contest … may be described in a single phrase – the French people prefer even a spurious Monarchy to a *bonâ fide* Republic'. When the result was finally declared, the

paper (14 December) described it as ‘extraordinary’. The *Observer* (17 December) also thought it ‘extraordinary, to say the least of it’, and could not get over the fact that at the time of the June Days Riots Louis Napoleon had been in the St James’s Theatre with D’Orsay. That he should now be at the head of a country ‘which he scarcely knows’ and a people ‘whose language he cannot speak with anything like propriety or perfection’ it found ‘surpassing wonderful’. These words have since undergone a semantic change; ‘wonderful’ was not then a word of wholehearted approbation but rather closer to our use of ‘bizarre’, while ‘extraordinary’ carried with it a sense of derogatory incomprehension mixed in with the absurd.

The *Illustrated London News*, a Saturday paper advertising itself as a ‘Pictorial Family Newspaper’, first appeared on 14 May 1842. It had been established by Herbert Ingram, a middle-class newsagent in Nottingham and printers’ apprentice who had earned a reputation as a local philanthropist, being returned three times to Parliament as an Independent. He announced that ‘our business will not be with the strife of party, but with … the home life of the empire, with the household gods of the English people and above all of the English poor’. Ingram personally selected his staff, ensuring that his paper’s principles were not abandoned; radically-inclined contributors, such as Mark Lemon who had just begun to edit *Punch*, had to keep strictly within his conception of it as a ‘family’ publication. Louis Napoleon was of course at the time in Ham, and his name did not appear in a main feature, with independent views, until 23 December 1848 when the paper announced that the ‘invasions’ at Strasbourg and Boulogne ‘have ceased to be subjects of ridicule. They are no longer to be considered as the freaks of hare-brained folly, but as the great deeds of a man who was wiser than his time’. A large portrait of Louis Napoleon accompanied a generally favourable two-page analysis of the election result, and the overall sense of the report was one of relief that the establishment of a properly constituted government had at last resolved the turmoil of the previous ten months.

Louis Napoleon’s success had not been unexpected in France, but the ignorance in England as to how and why this seminal political incident had occurred revealed how ill-informed and insular Britain was at a time when its foreign policy went little deeper than ensuring the safeguard of its national interests; Malmesbury could only explain the result by stating that ‘his name has acted like magic on the nation’.[1] During the February Revolution, Charles Greville had thought that ‘all seem to be of opinion they [the French] will have nothing to do with the Bonapartes’;[2] but, by December, he was saying: ‘The result … has astonished the whole world. Everybody thought Louis Napoleon would be elected, but nobody dreamt of such a majority’.[3]

So what had in fact happened? No candidate could have won without the backing of some interested group. Joinville and Blanc, for example, polled just three and two votes in two *arrondissements* and one respectively; not because they were unpopular but because they had no organized group supporting them.

Following Louis Napoleon’s victories in the regional elections, he began to gain the support of the monarchist organization known as the *Comité de la rue de Poitiers*, which had been founded in May by unaffiliated supporters of the concept of strong constitutional monarchy. By July, the group’s leaders realized that their informal frontman, Cavaignac, president of the Council of Ministers, had little chance of success as he had been tainted by his suppression of the June Days Riots as dictatorial minister of war. In September, the party met at their headquarters, the *Académie de médecine* on the rue de Poitiers, and agreed not to have an official candidate from within their ranks. But by December private meetings between Louis Napoleon and significant members ensured for him the support of Achille Baraguay d’Hilliers, a

highly decorated colonel who had helped take Algeria and who was also president of the *Parti de l'ordre*, as the *Comité* was now calling itself. Also behind him were Molé and Thiers, who earlier had been asked to stand against him as a rival candidate in place of Cavaignac. Thiers declined, not because he supported Louis Napoleon's candidature but because as another discredited incumbent he would not stand a chance against him, subsequently giving his ideological opponent qualified support.

The *Parti de l'ordre*, then, unofficially backed Louis Napoleon as the candidate most likely to win, hoping by his victory to be represented in the Assembly under a Republic – it had been they who had promoted the principal of a popular presidency – by a grateful and pliable president whom they could manipulate, and it was largely their money that had funded the campaign and consequently his victory. But Louis Napoleon had been no less clever, and in presenting himself to the Assembly as an oaf, meekly enduring the mockery of the deputies, he had obtained the necessary backing to become elected as a perceived puppet.

If the *Parti de l'ordre* had promoted a candidate from within their own ranks they would have had real power in the Second Republic had that candidate won. But the party knew that few would have voted for anybody they might have selected, while millions were ready to do so for their new chosen figurehead. Hundreds of thousands of moderates and Radicals voted for Louis Napoleon, in addition to most royalists, because as an unknown quantity he potentially represented novelty as much as tradition, Republicanism as much as Imperialism, and an end to instability as much as a possible useful source of it. And much of the reason for this dichotic conviction was precisely because Louis Napoleon had been sitting in the St James's Theatre in June. He had come to France politically pure, untainted by any contact with the previous largely discredited administrations of France. By exiling him, the House of Orleans and the Radicals of the Second Republic had made of him not only their principal but also their most successful opponent.

Louis Napoleon had not merely ridden on his uncle's name, as Malmesbury suggested and many of his detractors would insist. Plon-Plon – an open Republican who even *looked* like Napoleon – attracted just one vote, in the tenth *arrondissement.* On the other hand it would also be absurd to suggest that his family connection had played no part in the 'extraordinary' event. Naturally, it had, and this is what the *Parti de l'ordre* had been counting on. In Bar-le-Duc, the capital of the *département* of Meuse, a bust of Napoleon was paraded about the town on the Sunday of the elections while the procession chanted 'Vive Louis Napoléon!' and 'Vive l'Empereur!' On Tuesday, a soldier unwisely shouted 'Vive Cavaignac!' in front of the Hotel des Invalides, where Napoleon's tomb was being prepared, and he was beaten almost to death by fellow troops shouting 'Vive l'Empereur!' At the same time, on the boulevards des Italiens and Poissonière, Cavaignac propaganda was publicly burned to more imperial invocations.

Republican indignation would later enjoy the sensation of appearing shocked before the world, but it will be seen time and again how every perceptive observer after December 1848 knew the empire was imminent, no matter what their sympathies, or what alleged 'safeguards' the constitution promised. Even Malmesbury prefaced his facile remark with 'this, no doubt, is the first step to the Empire'.[4] The Duc de Broglie put all France in the dock, particularly Thiers, when he wrote: 'We had no right therefore to be surprised, still less to cry "Traitor", when once he had gone along with us at first and handed over our common enemies, we saw that he was evidently aiming at something better than the temporary and limited authority of a republican president'.[5]

Greville reported that at first 'great alarm' had been felt, particularly within the business community who worried that the French economy might collapse. But then:

the funds rise, confidence recovers, and people begin to find out that the new President is a marvellous proper man … And now there is a pretty general opinion that he will be Emperor before long. The ex-Ministers and Legitimists, who were hot for his election, considering him merely as a bridge over which the Bourbons might return to power, begin to think … that such a unanimous expression of public opinion may lead to the restoration of the Bonapartes instead of … the Bourbons.[6]

David Evans, the financial journalist and city correspondent for *The Times* , put this point more cogently a few months afterwards:

As the close of 1848 approached … a feeling of increased confidence sprung up, domestic and foreign politics presenting an ameliorated aspect … the course of policy pursued both by England and France was so unmistakably pacific, even on the elevation of Louis Napoleon Bonaparte … that little apprehension was displayed of affairs in the North of Europe … the public at last seemed inclined to believe … that the stream had once more reached a favourable point, and that prosperous times were not far distant.[7]

Queen Victoria preferred not to think of the future but rather on what Louis Napoleon's victory had ended. On 13 December, before the results were known, she wrote to Uncle Leopold in Belgium: 'I see there is no doubt of Louis Napoleon's election, which I am very glad of, as it is a sign of better times. But that one should have to wish for him is really wonderful'.[8] Six days later, she reiterated her view: 'The success of Louis Napoleon is an extraordinary event, but valuable as a universal condemnation of the Republic since February'.[9] Technically, and properly, Louis Napoleon was simply the new president; but, as Victoria alone made clear, few could envisage his election as just a passing phase in the life of the Second Republic. For Landor this was something to fear:

I inserted in the *Examiner* another [article], deprecating the anxieties which a truly patriotic, and, in my view, a singularly wise man, was about to encounter in accepting the Presidency of France. Necessity will compel him to assume the Imperial power, to which the voice of the army and people will call him. You know … how little I care for station. I may therefore tell you safely that I feel a great interest, a great anxiety, for the welfare of Louis Napoleon. I told him, if ever he were again in prison, I would visit him there; but never, if he were upon a throne, would I come near him. He is the only man living who would adorn one, but thrones are my aversion and abhorrence … God protect the virtuous Louis Napoleon.[10]

Officially, the British Government was pleased. Relations with France had dipped after Palmerston's Tiverton speech, reaching a new low five years later over the 'Spanish marriages'. In 1843, it was decided that a husband was required for the girl-queen Isabella II, and while Metternich pressed for the 'legitimate' heir the Conde de Montemolín, Louis Philippe put forward his fourth son the Duc d'Aumale. This would have potentially unified the crowns of France and Spain in violation of Article II of the Peace-Treaty of Utrecht (1713) that had allayed 'all fears that the Realms of France and Spain might ever be conjoined in one Person', which possibility Britain would not tolerate. Aberdeen supported the British proposal of a Coburg prince as a workable compromise, but whom France opposed and who was quickly withdrawn along with Aumale and Montemolín. However, Palmerston returned to the Foreign Office in July 1846 and pressed for the Duque de Sevilla, a political radical. Louis Philippe and Guizot then engineered a *coup* against Palmerston by showing one of his radical despatches to the conservative *cortes*. He was out-manœuvred and Louis Philippe's fifth son, the Duc de Montpensier, was married to Isabella's younger sister

Luisa while Isabella married another of her cousins, the Duque de Cadiz, giving France the stake in Spain Palmerston had tried to avoid.

The vacillating foreign policy of the Second Republic developed out of the struggle between the moderates under Lamartine and the radicals under Ledru-Rollin, whose hard-line republican followers had opposed Louis Philippe's pacifism. After an initial state of fear in which Europeans identified Jacobin progressive revolutionary interventionism in the Second Republic, Lamartine's regular administration disabused them of such fears. But in April the perceived stability deteriorated, and on May 15 a revolutionary mob attempted a *coup* of its own by storming the Chamber of Deputies in an attempt to hijack the Republic in the alleged name of Poland. At the same time, radical revolutionaries Louis Blanqui and Sigmund Barbès, on two separate occasions, threatened to declare war on Russia and Germany 'should these Governments fail to obey the order' to restore full freedom to Poland.[11]

Insanity of action is a common by-product of social and political instability, and during the June Days and up to Louis Napoleon's election many in England feared that the Republic would complete what O'Connor had proposed to Hoche in 1797, unaware that William O'Brien, co-founder of Young Ireland, had already visited Lamartine to petition him for just that. Ledru-Rollin had supported Lamartine's policy while privately believing in the necessity to return to the interventionism of the First Republic, an ideological belief widely shared by at least one-third of any French administration between February and December 1848.

Lamartine's insistence on maintaining the *entente cordiale* from the moment he took office was not often viewed as credible in Britain. During the 'Spanish marriages', the people on the Channel Island of Alderney began constructing a great defensive breakwater in St Peter Port, rushed to completion in 1848 in order to repel the imminent 'invasion', while Palmerston circulated a Confidential Print paper outlining preparations for this eventuality.[12] It was with relief that the Cabinet acknowledged Louis Napoleon's installation in France. Six months after his victory, Lord Londonderry, now retired from diplomatic service, wrote to Lord John Russell, prime minister since 1846: 'I feel every confidence in his pluck, firmness, and prudence … my firm belief is that the <u>President</u> is <u>now</u> the best instrument to preserve anything like order and tranquillity in France, on which the peace of the world now hangs'.[13]

Louis Napoleon did not forget the *Parti de l'ordre*, and after his victory he agreed to select Odilon Barrot as vice-president and minister of justice. Barrot, a lawyer, had sided with the Bourbons during the Hundred Days and supported the Second Restoration but had become steadily more disillusioned with each subsequent political development before joining the *Comité de la rue de Poitiers*. He did not, however, support Louis Napoleon's candidacy.

This first administration was a coalition of Orleanists and Legitimists led by an anti-Napoleonist: Léon de Malleville (interior), Comte de Falloux (public instruction), Éduard Drouyn de Lhuys (foreign affairs), Léon Faucher (public works), Hippolyte Passy (finance), Jacques Bixio (agriculture and commerce), Joseph Rulhière (war), and Victor Destutt de Tracy (marine). It was taken entirely from the *Parti de l'ordre*; there were no Republicans and no 'Bonapartists'. Faucher ordered a crackdown on socialist clubs; Malleville refused to surrender the files of Strasbourg and Boulogne; the Cabinet was keen to dissolve the Constituent Assembly in order that the president should be at the head of a similarly newly elected body of men; and Thiers believed that the presidential 'lout' could be kept quiet with a succession of lower-class female distractions.

The relief expressed in England, then, had not been the result of anything Louis Napoleon had done; it was only retrospectively that Gronow confidently announced that his victory had been 'a national triumph' that proved to be a 'national benefit'.[14] What Louis Napoleon would be by 1850 he was not in 1848; the order immediately established was due to the composition of the Assembly and not the identity of its president.

It was not at first realized in England what little direct power the president had and therefore the extent of his control over the policies of his administration; unfortunately, this was not understood in France either, which fact would lead to its own conclusion as irresistible met immovable. The difference in 1848 was that Louis Napoleon was wrongly regarded as a figurehead in France, where blind faith had been invested in the constitution and insufficient reckoning taken of the man who had sworn to uphold it. In England, where no such written constitution existed and insufficient reckoning had been taken of Louis Napoleon's object in upholding it, he was wrongly regarded as some form of monarch,.

This attenuated potency when dealing with personal matters may be illustrated by two incidents: the desire to liberate political prisoners of the Second Republic's earlier days, and being confronted in Paris by Lady Blessington and D'Orsay.

On 27 December 1848, Louis Napoleon informed Malleville that there were eighty women imprisoned at St Lazare: 'Tell me whether I have the power to set them at liberty; for, if I have, I shall give orders immediately.[15] He did not have such power, and only after some effort were sixty-three released the following January. According to the economist Nassau Senior, Thiers told him that 'it was with the utmost difficulty that we could prevent his granting indiscriminate amnesties to the most ferocious' of those who had been imprisoned during the June Days.[16] *The Times* (23 January 1849) stated that the French Government's actions – the paper had assumed that Louis Napoleon had acted 'on the recommendation of the Minister of the Interior' instead of conversely – would 'have the effect of placing … the President … in the character of one strong enough to suppress insurrection, yet willing to temper rigour with mercy'. The press in Britain had not understood the situation at all.

In November 1849, Louis Napoleon managed to release 711 male June Days inmates from the prison of Belle-Île. But in order to do this he had been obliged to work through the night, reviewing each of the 1200 cases individually after a blanket pardon had been rejected by his Cabinet, which action they hoped would encourage their president to drop the matter altogether. Their surprise at being presented with 711 analysed files the following day may be imagined. This did Louis Napoleon nothing but harm, however, and within days the prisoners who had not succeeded in being released rioted and killed a prison guard. Naturally enough, instead of being praised for releasing 711 prisoners, Louis Napoleon was blamed for *not* having released the remaining 489.

Lady Blessington had been declared bankrupt and she was obliged to sell Gore House, leaving England in the middle of April 1849, shortly after D'Orsay had had to do the same. Louis Napoleon found that he could do little for them officially, although they found him personally unchanged by his election victory: 'The President has not forgotten old times nor old friendships. He has been unceasing in his kindness ever since our arrival'.[17] Nevertheless, Lady Blessington died in Paris on 4 June supported by charitable donations while D'Orsay, a fine artist but detested by administrators and fellow artists alike, could not be made minister of fine arts until 1852, and he died before being able to take up the appointment.

This misfortune became a hook on which was hung one of the finest jokes ever made at Louis Napoleon's expense. The anecdote, as commonly related, stated that Lady Blessington met him while riding in the Bois de Boulogne. Eager to discover whether he would have to suffer her company on some more intimate occasion, Louis Napoleon enquired, while tipping his hat, 'Ah, MiLady Blessington! Restez-vous longtemps à Paris?' The repartee was as pithy as it was immediate: 'Je ne sais pas; et Vous, Sire?'

Some versions have them meeting on the avenue des Champs-Élysées, or at a ball at the Tuileries – although there were none of these in 1849. Nor in fact was there a 'Sire'. This version appeared in the *Personal Remembrances* (1887) of Sir William Pollock, Victoria's remembrancer, where it was attributed to Harriet Grote, the freethinking republican wife of the historian of Classical Greece. It also appeared in the *Collections and Recollections* (1897) of George Russell, who made his contempt for Louis Napoleon clear, then placed the anecdote more than two years after Lady Blessington's death. The importance of it rests in the conversion of presidential impotence to callousness, moulded to accommodate republican ears.

The personal affability of the Prince-President, who, because he had always believed it, had been singularly unaffected by his 'sudden' rise to primacy if not potency, was not in question. After a brief flirtation with peace, observers in England began to believe the Second Republic might still behave as though it were capable of invasion, irrespective of the identity of the president and its constitutional non-aggressive ideology. But this attitude always existed when divorced from personal contact and often just as readily dissolved when confronted by it. Thackeray's lifelong genial Francophobia, acquired as a student in Paris under Louis Philippe, remained critical. But towards the end of 1849 he wrote that 'a party to Fontainbleu was proposed by whom do you think? By the President himself. I'm going to dine with him today, think of that. I believe I write this for the sole purpose of telling you this'.[18]

It was in fact the duke of Hamilton who had made the invitation, but the point is that the Prince-President was the same man Thackeray had dismissed as looking like a 'courier' eighteen months earlier. Thackeray, who so famously despised snobbery, was himself not altogether immune to the egregious vanity common to those who associate with 'station', as he well knew. Nevertheless, he was no sycophant and a fine example of a non-political man with political opinions who fully justified Gronow's view that Louis Napoleon had 'that peculiar fascination which has subjected and gained over to him so many hostile spirits',[19] but which operated only on personal contact.

Thackeray also demonstrated how often a man could change his opinion of Louis Napoleon by concerning himself with his life and reacting to his behaviour. Landor changed his mind once and remained faithful to his latter conviction, but Thackeray was more complex, perpetually vacillating between extremes, which was the mark of a more sensitive and humane critic who knew how to praise as well as condemn. At the beginning of 1851, for example, his mood was different again, flippant and ironical:

> I went to … the President's soiree at night. To get up to make your bow to the great man, you had to shoulder through a little covered gallery … I met the Ambassador elbowing through the crowd, 'Sir', said I, 'my shoestring is untied. Do you think the President of the Republic will notice it?' At which Lord Normanby said, 'The President will look up at you – not down'.[20]

The Marquis of Normanby, the new ambassador in Paris, thought he had made a clever joke – Thackeray stood six-feet-four in his socks – but in fact he had missed the irony of the remark. There would be many incidents demonstrating the curious immediacy with which Thackeray and others reacted – or over-reacted – to circumstances about which they were not so well informed as they liked to believe.

Normanby's remark revealed one kind of attitude that relied on meeting Louis Napoleon: people anticipated someone with the conventional qualities associated with 'station', and such were their imaginary expectations beforehand that the initial reaction was often one of shock and disbelief mingled with an irresistible urge to invent jokes and anecdotes. Albert Vandam, though a rascal, may be quoted usefully here. Why *An Englishman in Paris* fooled the literary world was because of the observational integrity of culled memories such as these:

> Though I had not the slightest ground for expecting to see a fine man, I did not expect to see so utterly an insignificant one, and badly dressed in the bargain … he wore a brown coat of a peculiar colour, a green plush waistcoat, and a pair of yellowish trousers, the like of which I have never seen on the legs of any one off the stage. And yet Lord Normanby, and a good many more who have said that he looked every inch a king, were not altogether wrong. There was a certain gracefulness about him which owed absolutely nothing either to his tailor, his barber, or his bootmaker … [his] legs seemed to have been an after-thought of his Creator – they were too short for his body, and his head appeared constantly bent down, to supervise their motion; consequently, their owner was always at a disadvantage when compelled to make use of them. But when standing still, or on horseback, there was an indescribable something about the man which at once commanded attention … [he] was leaning in his favourite attitude against the mantelpiece, smoking the scarcely ever absent cigarette, and pulling at the heavy brown moustache, the ends of which in those days were not waxed into points as they were later on … He wore his thin, lank hair much longer than he did afterwards. The most startling features were decidedly the aquiline nose and the eyes; the latter, of a greyish-blue, were comparatively small and somewhat almond-shaped, but, except at rare intervals, there was an impenetrable look, which made it exceedingly difficult, if not impossible, to read their owner's thoughts by them. If they were 'The windows of his soul' their blinds were constantly down.[21]

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There was not one *coup d'état* in Paris in 1851 but two. Neither its opponents nor its supporters disagreed as to the succession of facts and circumstances established between 10 December 1848 and 2 December 1851. Each, however, interpreted them radically differently, resulting in two mutually exclusive constructs. No single event in Louis Napoelon's political life so polarized opinion and invited debate as the *coup d'état*. The acknowledged points of contention were:

1) On the 10 December 1848, Louis Napoleon appointed Barrot to head his first ministry.
2) On 20 December, Louis Napoleon swore to uphold the constitution of the Second Republic 'in the presence of God and before the French people represented by the National Assembly'. He then added, in his own widely publicized words: 'The suffrages of the nation and the oath I have just sworn command my future conduct. My duty lies straight before me, and I shall fulfil it as a man of honour. I shall regard as enemies of the country all who may endeavour by illegal means to change what the whole of France has established'.
3) On 16 April 1849, Barrot announced that French troops were being sent to Italy.
4) The Constituent Assembly dissolved itself in May for its first elections, held on 13 and 14, which returned over 500 seats for the *Parti de l'ordre*.
5) On 2 June, Barrot appointed Jules Dufaure as minister of the interior.

6) On 31 October, Louis Napoleon dismissed the Barrot-Dufaure ministry declaring that he would lead the Assembly himself, appointing the Marquis d'Hautpoul (war), Ferdinand Barrot (interior; Odilon's brother), Achille Fould (public works), Eugène Rouher (justice), Jean Bineau (finance), Jean Dumas (agriculture and commerce), Marie Esquirou de Parieu (without portfolio), and Vicomte de Ducos (foreign affairs).
7) On 10 March 1850, supplementary elections held to fill the seats following the arrest and removal from office of Ledru-Rollin and thirty-four members of *La Montagne* (12 June 1849) for calling on the people to arrest Louis Napoleon, his Cabinet, and most of the deputies over his intervention in Rome, resulted in twenty-one Republicans being returned.
8) On 15 March 1850, the 'Falloux Education Law' was passed, increasing the role of the Catholic Church in the secularized education system of the Republic.
9) On 29 April, another by-election in Paris returned Eugène Sue, a novelist and agitator for social reform who had suddenly announced his conversion to Pure Socialism, with 127,812 votes, almost 10,000 more than his nearest Conservative rival.
10) On 31 May, a law effectively ending universal manhood suffrage was passed by 433 votes to 241. By increasing residency requirements in a commune from six months to three years, provable by evidence of direct taxing or an employer's certificate, almost 3,000,000 of the poorer Frenchmen were disenfranchised – 61% of the electorate in Paris. In Lille, it fell by 10,544; in Amiens, by 11,370; and in Nantes, by 17,540.
11) On 16 July, caution money was reintroduced in the Press with a clause making it illegal to publish unsigned articles, while stamps were reintroduced on small newspapers; two weeks later, censorship in the theatre was re-established along the strict lines of Joseph Fouché under the former Bourbons.
12) On 19 July 1851, Louis Napoleon failed to pass an amendment to the constitution that would have allowed an elected president the right to contest a second term of office. The Assembly voted by 446 to 278 in favour of the proposal, but this was 97 short of the three-fourths majority required by the constitution.
13) On 15 November, Louis Napoleon failed to abrogate the residency law of 31 May 1850, lost by 353 votes to 347.
14) On 6 November, the Assembly was presented, for discussion, with a promulgation for the direct requisition of the armed forces for their protection. The three *Questeurs*, the Vicomte de Panat, Jean Baze, and General Adolphe Le Flô, pushed for the restatement of Article 6 of the Executive Commission's decree of 11 May 1848 – a week after the convocation of Lamartine's Constituent Assembly – that included the delegation of this right, through the head of government, to the *Questeurs* themselves, and which, although never enacted, had never been officially abrogated. Article 32 of the new constitution established the right of the National Assembly to determine the necessity and disposition of military forces for its protection but said nothing about the *Questeurs*. The vote, taken on 17 November, was rejected by 408 votes to 300.

Thus, according to Republicans, Louis Napoleon forswore himself when he took his oath, having already decided to establish an imperial polity with himself as emperor as soon as the appropriate moment arrived or could be contrived. This was proved by eulogistic references to imperial rule in his writings coupled with public

testimonials to the maintenance of the Republic made up to the period immediately preceding the *coup d'état* .

On 21 July 1849, for example, Louis Napoleon visited Ham where, in an address to the mayor, he confessed his error in having perpetrated 'an attack on a regular Government', and that he did not complain of having been imprisoned for his 'temerity against the laws of my country'. Finally, he proposed 'a toast in honour of the men who are determined, notwithstanding their convictions, to respect the institutions of their country'. On 15 August 1850, he visited Lyon, a strong republican city, where he gave a speech to the mayor and 2,000 workers. In a lengthy address devoted to public order and prosperity, he stated: 'Rumours of a *coup d'état* have perhaps reached you, gentlemen … Surprises and usurpations may be the dream of the parties without support in the nation; but the elect of six millions of suffrages executes the will of the people; – he does not betray them'. In the presidential message on 12 November, he said he would 'consider as very culpable those who, through personal ambition, would compromise the little stability which the Constitution guarantees to us'. Even after the *coup d'état* , on 29 March 1852, he said: 'Let us preserve the Republic; it menaces no one, and it may reassure all the world'.

Louis Napoleon's appointment of ministers was calculated to cause irremediable conflict with the Assembly. Odilon Barrot had been on the dynastic Left under Louis Philippe and had not supported Louis Napoleon's presidential candidature, while Barrot's appointment of the anti-Bonapartist Dufaure to the second most important ministerial position remained unopposed. Notwithstanding this, the president and the Barrot-Dufaure Ministry remained largely in accord – proven by the filibustering expedition to Rome.

On 16 April, Barrot carried, by a 2:1 majority, a vote of credit to finance what the Government had described as a monitoring force to protect French interests in Italy and prevent direct Austrian intervention by intimidation. Eight day later, however, General Nicolas Oudinot and 9,000 men reached Civitavecchia, which they invested the following day. On 29 April, they marched on Rome where for three months Mazzini's Republic held out before the Eternal City capitulated on 1 July. On 11 June, Ledru-Rollin's condemnation of the invasion as being unconstitutional was won by 361 votes to 203, following which victory he moved his unsuccessful impeachment and call for popular intervention. This unforeseen accord led Louis Napoleon to arbitrarily dismiss the Ministry and replace it with another hostile to himself. While appearing ostensibly disenchanted with the repressive and legally tenuous measures it introduced, he secretly supported them as supplying him with the excuse to undermine the Assembly, since 1849 largely royalist, with about 230 Republicans. While the election of Eugène Sue and others was encouraging for Republicans, the Assembly was essentially conservative, and publications such as François Romieu's *Le Spectre rouge de 1852,* written on Sue's election, served as excuses to frighten it into becoming regressive with restrictive press and public entertainment laws.

Meanwhile, *La Loi de Falloux* was further proof, with the destruction of the Roman Republic and re-establishment of papal rule, that Louis Napoleon was in collusion with the Church, creating an illiberal quasi-theocracy in exchange for ecclesiastical support. The restrictive law of 31 May was also introduced, albeit surreptitiously, by Louis Napoleon. In March 1850, he appointed Ferdinand Barrot minister in Turin and replaced him with Jules Baroche, a lawyer and earnest supporter of Louis Napoleon, made by him *procureur général* . Baroche detested the Left, and on 3 May convoked a commission of seventeen members of the *Parti de l'ordre* to draw up the new

electoral law, presented by him as a government bill and approved by Louis Napoleon.

La Proposition des Questeurs was a precautionary measure giving the legislative means with which to defend itself should the executive stage a *coup d'état* against it. But, since this in itself would have been used as the precipitating cause of a *coup d'état*, the majority of Republicans also voted against it. Having been openly ready to seize power on 17 November if the vote had gone in favour of the *Questeurs*, when the motion was rejected Louis Napoleon backed down in such a public way as to convince people that, the sole potential cause of intervention having been defused, there would be no need for action by the executive. When the *coup d'état* came, people were surprised and shocked, unable to form a coherent and effective opposition to it, as Louis Napoleon had planned.

So went (and continues to go) the interpretation of undisputed events by the Radical Left.

However, according to 'Bonapartists', if Louis Napoleon had wanted to establish personal imperial rule he would have done so in December 1848. Not only were many expecting it but also suggesting it at a time when the opposition was disoriented by his landslide victory and before he had accrued criticism for any parliamentary actions. Nowhere in Louis Napoleon's works did he suggest the violent or illegal imposition of an imperial polity, only its supremacy. Neither Strasbourg nor Boulogne had been intended as the 'military insurrections' or 'invasions' the July Monarchy and others had claimed. Instead, they had been attempts to implement a plebiscite democratically unattainable under previous administrations. However, the failure of these ventures had demonstrated to Louis Napoleon that change could not be achieved from a position of subordination, and his legal election to the presidency would enable him to promote *idées napoléoniennes* through the Legislative Assembly.

Louis Napoleon did not commit perjury on 20 December 1848. He genuinely believed that his concept of an 'Imperial Republic' – ideologies not mutually exclusive in his political thinking – in which the democracy would be safeguarded by a strong and stable government through an elected president was still possible up to 1851. His speeches were concerned with law and order above all else, as he believed political anarchy and civil strife led to stagnation, or even reversal. After all, the Lyons speech had included the important qualification that 'if culpable designs … threaten to compromise the repose of France, I shall be able to reduce them to impotence, by still invoking the sovereignty of the people, for I recognize in no one more than myself the right to be called their representative'.

Louis Napoleon's ministerial appointments were hampered from the outset because many able and experienced men refused to serve under him, either retiring from active political life in 1848 or joining the official Opposition. He originally asked Thiers to serve as his vice-president, but Thiers refused and it was in fact he who had proposed Barrot. In accepting Barrot, Louis Napoleon demonstrated his political non-alignment, and this also explained his willingness to work with Dufaure. The invasion of Rome will be dealt with elsewhere, but it is enough to state that Republicans claimed that the Assembly suspended military action in Rome for the sake of the elections in May, and that Louis Napoleon personally resumed the attack after the Conservative gains. But the Vicomte de Lesseps was sent to negotiate an amicable settlement following the French defeat of 30 April, and he arrived before the elections had begun. His recall and censure following a settlement that would have allowed the French to enter Rome and re-establish Pio Nono, and Oudinot's orders to recommence the assault, were taken by the new Assembly, not by Louis Napoleon.

An opposition Cabinet did not replace the Barrot-Dufaure Ministry. Bineau, Fould, Rouher, Barrot, and Esquirou de Parieu would serve the empire, while Rouher would replace Persigny as principal Bonapartist in the 1870s. This ministry was in any case reshuffled after the May elections at the insistence of the new Assembly. Alexis de Tocqueville took over the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Victor Lanjuinais, a liberal-Left monarchist and friend of Thiers, was appointed minister of agriculture and commerce. Malleville had been forced to resign after his intransigence over the Strasbourg and Boulogne files, and he was replaced by former censor Léon Faucher, who soon retired. Jacques Bixio had also retired, to be replaced by Louis Buffet, an anti-Bonapartist who had opposed Louis Napoleon's candidacy, voting for Cavaignac.

A second reshuffle occurred in December when Drouyn de Lhuys was drawn in again to replace De Tocqueville, while Pierre Magne, a non-aligned politician, replaced Lanjuinais. The entire ministry was then replaced on 24 January 1851 after Changarnier had been dismissed three weeks earlier for issuing a command instructing the army to obey only those commands issuing from military sources and to disobey those given by civilian authority. A deputation was sent to Louis Napoleon that included Thiers, Molé, the Comte de Montalembert, Broglie, and Odilon Barrot, but he remained unmoved. The *Parti de l'ordre* itself moved a vote of censure and won it by 417 votes to 278, after which the Barrot-Rouher Ministry resigned. It was replaced with an Orleanist one largely composed of minor civil servants. Only Pierre Magne remained, taking the ministry of finance, while his former portfolio was taken by the Le Creusot industrialist Eugène Schneider. Even so, on 1 June, at Dijon Louis Napoleon could state: 'For three years … I have always been seconded by the Assembly when it has been proposed to combat disorder by measure of restriction. But when I have desired to do good, to ameliorate the condition of the people, it has always refused [me]'.

A campaign to present the Assembly with a petition for a revision of the constitution had amassed 1,351,000 signatures by the time of the Dijon speech, and since the essence of Louis Napoleon's imperial idea had always been universal manhood suffrage he opposed any erosion of it on principle. When Baroche first proposed the idea to him he rejected it, only conceding its temporary necessity when it was pointed out to him that *La Montagne* would win over Paris without it. Baroche intended the bill to be exclusively governmental, but Louis Napoleon wished for the *Parti de l'ordre* to propose it, which Thiers would not contemplate.

The resulting commission was a compromise. The *Parti de l'ordre* would appoint the seventeen members of the commission but Baroche would introduce the law as a government bill. Louis Napoleon had wanted the *Parti de l'ordre* alone to be associated with the bill since he had played no part in drafting it, but Thiers wanted him to be equally guilty by association. Among the seventeen commissioners was Thiers himself as well as Broglie, Molé, Montalembert, General de Saint-Priest, Berryer, the Vicomte d'Azy – a Legitimist opponent imprisoned at the *coup d'état* – and Comte Napoléon Daru – a Republican deputy who also would be imprisoned after the *coup d'état*. Antoine de Vatimesnil, the Comte de Sèze, Saint-Priest, Faucher, and Théobald Piscatory were all royalist members of the commission who retired after the *coup d'état*. It was certainly reactionary but hardly Bonapartist, with only two members, the Marquis de Chasseloup-Laubat and Baroche himself identifiable as personal supporters. Louis Napoleon approved of the law, but only after the event as a measure of temporary security. Once its effects had been achieved he moved to have it repealed, but he was denied by Republicans and the *Parti de l'ordre* alike.

It is conveniently overlooked by Louis Napoleon's detractors that the new law effectively disenfranchised the president himself, who of course had a vote, because he had been resident in France just one year and eight months when it was passed. He certainly would not have originated a law that excluded himself from electoral participation to high office.

La Proposition des Questeurs was a royalist complot designed so that a section of the Assembly could stage its own *coup d'état*. Jean Didier Baze, a lawyer and former vice-president of the *Comité de la rue de Poitiers*, was a staunch royalist, while Panat and Le Flô were Republicans and anti-Bonapartists who had served the July Monarchy. The *coup d'état* had been planned for 17 November, but since rumours of it had been rife for the previous three years it cannot have been true that the rejection of the proposition and the standing down of the troops could have lulled republicans into a false sense of security.

Within the *Parti de l'ordre*, Legitimists and Orleanists were often in conflict with each other and also with the Catholics, who were themselves divided between the liberals and ultramontanists. The Comte de Falloux was minister of public instruction under Odilon Barrot when he became part of the commission set up to draft the law, and this commission had been extraparliamentary in order to by-pass the majority Republican composition in the Assembly before May 1849; but he was not in the Cabinet when the law was passed. The commission had included Thiers; the ultramontanist Montalembert; Félix Dupanloup, bishop of Orleans; the politically-liberal philosopher Victor Cousin; the Orleanist academic Saint-Marc Girardin; and Paul Dubois, the director of the *École Normal*, for the Church. But there were also nine university and nine independent members, while the law was opposed by most ultramontanists, such as Louis Veuillot, editor and author of the Catholic clerical journal *L'Univers*. *La Loi Falloux* was one of adjustment not transformation, and while it allowed the Church the right to conduct its own schools – in particular the Jesuits – the Church conceded the state's right to supervise them.

Fear of *La Montagne* was genuine, whether encouraged by the writings of those like Romieu or not. Violent demonstrations in which the *démoc-socs* sang 'The Red Republic, yes, / We will get it, / With our daggers in our fists' were not illusions,[22] and the existing legislature gave France the prospect of two major elections in May 1852, one for the Legislative Assembly and the other for the presidency of the Republic – an office Louis Napoleon would by then have held for six months short of his term. In theory this made possible a clean sweep by any single ideological faction, with genuine accord between president and deputies, possibly leading to an effective dictatorial oligarchy. In practice, however, the *Parti de l'ordre* was certain that such a clean sweep would be achieved by *La Montagne*. Louis Véron's revived liberal-Orleanist paper *Le Constitutionnel* (27 August 1851) spoke of the 'legal danger' of this situation that 'surpassed infinitely' any alternate solution.

But fractious discord between the executive and legislative was equally detrimental to the political health of the country. This was so obvious that Sala's most enduring memory of a brief visit to Paris in November 1849 was that 'the great majority of the people of Paris seemed to be heartily sick of the Republic and of all that was hers'.[23] The November constitution – an acknowledged compromise – was obstructive and unclear, maintaining absolutist and non-republican elements while also pandering to populist ideology. If Louis Napoleon had arrogated increasingly unconstitutional power by 1851, the constitution had by then been so often infringed by the Assembly that it made a mockery of any persistence in referring to this personal violation.

The move towards a *coup d'état* began with the rejection of the amendment to the constitution, after which Louis Napoleon appointed Leroy de Saint-Arnaud commander of the Second Division of the Army of Paris on 15 August, who with Charlemagne de Maupas, prefect of police from 27 October, was to maintain civil order. Persigny, Fleury, and Jean Mocquard, Louis Napoleon's private secretary and *chef du cabinet*, were to deal with internal matters of state, aided by the Duc de Morny and the Comte de Flahault. Flahault, the illegitimate son of Talleyrand and Adélaïde Filleul, illegitimate daughter of Louis XV, was Morny's father by Louis Napoleon's mother.

Whichever interpretation of events is preferred, on the night of Monday 1 December 1851, Parisians retired to bed in an elective presidential Republic; on the following morning, the forty-sixth anniversary of Austerlitz, they awoke in an absolute dictatorship.

*   *   *

The *coup d'état* was the next revolution in the history of France – Louis Napoleon's revolution from above 'led and executed by one chief', although of course this was not strictly true. Whether it would 'turn altogether to the profit of the masses', as he believed, became Britain's principal concern at every level. People from all walks of life, great and small, up and down the country, made their comments and gave their interpretations and predictions for the future.

The Celtic scholar Charlotte Guest wrote: 'The news from Paris … interested everybody today'.[24] Caroline Fox, a diarist and religious translator, wrote that: 'The French world seems quite dazzled by his audacity … How will it end? Shall we have a Cromwell Junior, or will blood flow there again like water? One learns to give thanks for being born in England'.[25] Mary Lloyd, scion of an old Warwickshire family, wrote: 'everyone knew that France had long been as a pent-up volcano, and no one seemed surprised at this outburst … At present Louis Napoleon has the army with him … but how it will end no one can conjecture'.[26] Queen Victoria feared that interference from the royal exiles in Richmond would precipitate another revolution, bringing chaos back to the order she believed had just been established. 'I must write a line to ask what you say to the wonderful proceedings at Paris, which really seem like a story in a book or a play! What is to be the result of it all? … I hope that none of the Orleans Family will move a limb or say a word, but remain perfectly passive'.[27]

This fear of possible lawlessness and therefore the need for authority was widespread in British politics, although not everyone agreed as to the source of it. For Malmesbury, it was the Opposition: 'Generals Changarnier, Cavaignac, Lamoricière, and Charras and M. Thiers have been arrested and taken to Vincennes, the President having discovered that they meant to anticipate him, as he told me when I saw him in April last'.[28] For the earl of Clarendon, lord lieutenant of Ireland, it was the revolutionary masses: 'Louis Napoleon seems likely to stand his ground, and it is impossible not to wish it: however much we may dislike what he has done; for if he had failed, the socialist horrors that have taken place in some departments would have been perpetrated all over France'.[29]

What Louis Napoleon had 'done' to earn Clarendon's dislike was, of course, an action considered by many to be illegal, irrespective of whether or not it was desirable, necessary, or inevitable. The earl of Derby, who had resigned from Peel's ministry in 1846 over the repeal of the Corn Laws, stated the case felt by many who

accepted the necessity of Louis Napoleon's actions but nevertheless were critical of his methods:

> It is certain that the President has openly violated the constitution … [but] I believe that he sincerely endeavoured to make [it] work, and that his *coup d'état* was not resolved upon until the inherent weakness of the constitution itself had brought the machine of government to a deadlock, and the folly and unreasonableness of the contending factions … left no choice but anarchy or despotism. The promptitude of his measures and the adherence of the army have saved France from a sanguinary civil war, and have perhaps for the present suppressed a general European outbreak.[30]

The issue of legality was also the concern of Nomanby, although in his case it was used to mask an attack on a man towards whom he was personally antagonistic. Normanby had been installed as ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary in Paris on 12 August 1846, remaining accredited throughout the troubled year of 1848 and presenting new credentials to Louis Napoleon on 31 January 1849, although he had a very poor command of French. It soon became evident that that there was trouble between ambassador and president, and then very clear that it was Normanby who detested Louis Napoleon. On his final leave of absence, while in London, he met Greville. The diarist asked him 'what he had ever said or done to provoke the enmity of Louis Napoleon'. Realizing that whatever he said might be recorded for posterity, Normanby 'declared that he was not conscious of having done anything whatever … The president had always been as civil and cordial in his manner as ever, and if he had any enmity towards him he must be a great hypocrite, as he never testified any'.[31] Louis Napoleon had been 'civil and cordial in his manner' because he always was, even to those who insulted him.

However, in spite of Normanby's many assertions then and afterwards that his antipathy to Louis Napoleon had been exaggerated, or even invented, he made his feelings clear in dispatches to the Foreign Office. The day before the *coup d'état* he wrote:

> I impute less to him of selfish feeling than I should to anyone else who acted under the same impulses, because among the strange ingredients which make up his peculiar character is a sort of mystic fatalism which convinces him that he is predestined to save France … [but] It is not under the influence of such hallucinations that the serious affairs of great countries in troubled times can be satisfactorily directed.[32]

On the morning of the *coup d'état* , this 'hallucination' had become no less insubstantial: 'Had this step been founded upon any special justification, he would have found his opponents to a certain extent prepared – as yet it has been received with stupefaction … This is all very distressing for the present, and alarming for the future'.[33] Later the same day, distress and alarm had turned to unequivocal contempt:

> Turgit [*sic*. Louis Turgot] called … to explain that the President had been forced to take the step … I said that … he was speaking to an Englishman, with whom respect for the laws was second nature and therefore could only hear of a sudden violation of legality with regret … that he knew what my personal feelings to the President were, how much I had always considered the continuance of his power as the least hope of safety for France.[34]

Technically, Louis Napoleon's actions had indeed been illegal in that he had violated the constitution that he had sworn to uphold. But Normanby ought to have known that French history was littered with such 'illegalities', and if the continuation of this tradition raised certain questions about the mentality of the nation it was no excuse to vilify the perpetrator of what was simply the latest instance of Gallic

instability. Normanby also ought to have known that the constitution had already been violated both in law and spirit so often that what had in fact been usurped was little more than a piece of paper covered in boot prints and creases.

Thackeray, who approved of his new friend as master of France, disagreed with Normanby but did not understand the necessary mechanics that went with such an action. He approved of the *coup d'état* , but not with what followed: 'The firing on the Boulevard is not so awful as the seizure of M. Bocher: the deportation of a thousand enemies, the shooting of 500 in a drunken massacre not so serious as the deliberate strangling of free opinion and kidnapping of Justice'.[35] Even allowing for the different priorities in a literary mind, whose functioning was dependent on the free publication of ideas, common decency would declare Thackeray to be in error. The stifling of elements threatening the outcome of the *coup d'état* was an inevitable part of the process; bloodshed was the single entirely unnecessary and deplorable element in the equation, the 'ball and chain', as Louis Napoleon called it, which he was obliged to carry on his conscience to the end of his life.

Greville summed up the entire episode with the perspicacity of an insular diarist who should have left foreign affairs well alone, in spite of the occasional perceptive remark. On 14 May 1850, he had predicted that Louis Napoleon 'has no chance of perpetuating his own power either as President or Emperor'. But seventeen months later:

The success of Louis Napoleon's *coup d'état* has been complete … The Press in this country has generally inveighed with great indignation against him, very much overdoing the case. Society in general is in a rather neutral state. Few can approve of his very violent measures and arbitrary acts, but on the other hand there was such a general feeling of contempt for the Constitution, and of disgust at the conduct of the Assembly … that nobody lamented their overthrow, or regarded with the slightest interest or compassion the leaders who have been so brutally and ignominiously treated. Everybody rejoices at the misfortunes of Thiers, who is universally regarded as the evil genius of France … Flahault … writes word that he [Louis Napoleon] has saved France … that his measures were rendered necessary by a Socialist plot … an Orleanist plot, and of the violence the Assembly was about to have recourse against him, if he had not anticipated them. These seem to be, and probably are, mere pretences, got up to cover his violence with something plausible … the truth being that he prepared all that he has done with singular boldness, secrecy, adroitness, and success, amusing his enemies with the semblance of negotiations which he never meant sincerely to carry out to an end … he has secured present success, given confidence as to the stability of his Government, raised his own reputation for energy and ability, and in all probability has prevented a great amount of disorder and bloodshed.[36]

When Sala heard the news he took the first available boat to Paris. He was now with Dickens's weekly *Household Words* , founded in March 1850 'to contribute to the entertainment and instruction of all classes of readers, and to help in the discussion of the more important social questions of the time'. Whether Dickens sent Sala officially is unclear, but while there he wrote an article for the journal with the title 'Liberty, Equality, Fraternity', which Dickens thought too approving of the event, adding 'and Musketry' to the end without Sala's knowledge or approval. Dickens also inserted texts by Wellington, critical of Napoleon, that were intended to reflect badly on Louis Napoleon. Sala later forgave Dickens, but he did not alter his view of the *coup d'état* . Although he succumbed to bombastic rhetoric by calling his visit 'the two days' slaughter', he confirmed reports that 'there seemed to exist a feeling of satisfied relief that the National Assembly has been got rid of and that Louis Napoleon had become the dominant power in France'.[37]

Gronow, on the other hand, was already in Paris before the *coup d'état* and he recalled that he went for a walk on the morning after 'totally unsuspicious of what was going forward'. He found 'great agitation' among those who were standing about

reading the various proclamations of the *coup* and the warnings to remain indoors. 'After reconnoitring the principal streets, and seeing nothing remarkable' he went to a barber for a shave. It turned out that the barber was both a Napoleonist and Louis Napoleonist, and Gronow indulged in a political discussion involving some other customers. They were rather more doubtful until they learned that Louis Napoleon was about to pass and went out to see him. 'Upon their return there was a universal opinion expressed, that the Prince-President looked like a noble soldier, and "every inch a king": his gallant bearing had evidently produced a strong impression upon the spectators, the majority of whom from that moment were evidently in favour of the changes that had taken place'.[38] Louis Napoleon had ridden, with an entourage, beyond the confines of the infantry regiments, where he might easily have fallen victim to a musket ball. Some people greeted him with a stony silence, others with cries of 'À bas le Prétendant!' but most greeted him with applause and restrained cheering.

The principal mechanics of the *coup d'état* may have been effected overnight but the work was not completed until the last provincial Republican opposition had been quelled by military action on 10 December. During the period of opposition, there were several critical episodes that unfortunately blighted the act and to which many detractors would point when declaring the take-over both illegal and immoral.

On Wednesday 3 December, about a hundred protestors erected a barricade of carts, carriages, and an omnibus on the rue du Fauberg Saint Antoine near a well-known socialist café where they had previously met. The barricade was approached by three companies of the 19th Regiment of the Line, by which time the protestors had acquired twenty-two muskets. Republican politician Victor Schoelcher led a deputation of six unarmed deputies out to meet them to parley but he was ignored. The soldiers pushed passed the deputation, demanding that the barricade be removed, and a soldier levelled his musket in order to physically push Schoelcher out of his way. Mistaking this for a preparation to shoot, one of the protestors fired into the soldiers – mortally wounding one of them – who then responded with a general volley. Victor Baudin, a Republican deputy for Ain, received three balls in the head and died instantly while an unidentified youth standing with him was also struck and mortally wounded. No further shots were fired and the barricade was dismantled, but about fifteen more deaths occurred in Paris that evening.

Far worse was to come twenty-four hours later when more intense resistance was mounted. Captain William Jesse, an English author on travel and topography, described in detail how he and his wife had been on a balcony on the corner of boulevard and rue Montmartre on Thursday 4 December. They were looking down on a thick line of troops when musket fire at the head of the column caused 'a waving sheet of flame' to course down it as frightened soldiers discharged their weapons, firing indiscriminately at anyone they saw, both on the streets and in the houses. He and his wife only just escaped being hit by stepping back as volley after volley 'struck the ceiling immediately over our heads' and then 'came against the whole front of the house'.[39] Numerous peripheral incidents, including military use of cannon, caused an intense but brief period of panic resulting in excesses committed by both sides in the struggle.

The statistical facts of the *coup d'état*, while appalling, nevertheless reveal it to have been less sanguinary than any political upheaval since 1789, in spite of the contradictory figures. *Le Moniteur universel* (30 August 1852) noted that the 'abrégé officiel' of the Parisian fatalities was 380, which it reckoned was too high. In 1853, Maupas published them at 209 – twenty-six soldiers, 175 insurgents, and eight

onlookers – from a report originally drawn up on 15 December.[40] But ten days later, Maupas had estimated civilian dead alone at 'approximately 215' in a report sent to England to be used by Flahault to counter exaggerated claims.[41] Adolphe Trébuchet, chief of the Bureau of Health and, as it happened, Victor Hugo's cousin, compiled a detailed list of non-military fatalities He put the figure at 191, although thirty-two were abstracted and not analysed.[42] In the provinces there were ten centres of resistance involving something more than a token protest dispersed by the sight of the army: the *départments* of Hérault, Vaucluse, Basses Alpes, Drôme, Gers, Lot-et-Garonne, and Lot in the south and south-east; Haute Savoie, Allier, Nièvre, and Loiret in the mid-region and east. Fatalities there were computed at 171.

The arrests and subsequent expulsions were severe, although prolonged in only a minority of cases. On 2 December, 218 deputies were arrested and sent to the prisons of Mazas, Vincennes, and Mont-Valérian. These were soon set at liberty, but sixty-six members of *La Montaigne* were less fortunate: Hugo, Schoelcher, Vincent Raspail, Désiré Bançel, Jean Charras, Joseph Madier de Montjau, and sixty others were exiled from all French territory on the understanding that if any returned they would be deported. Eighteen moderates – some Republicans but for the most part Orleanists – were given provisional exile until the amnesties of 8 August and 9 December 1852: Emile Girardin, Baze, Thiers, Rémusat, Nicolas Créton, Prosper Duvergier de Hauranne, the Marquis de Lasteyrie, Antony Thouret, Edgar Quinet, Victor Chauffour, Pascal Duprat, Jean Versigny, and François Chambolle. High ranking military *expulsés* included generals Louis de Lamoricière, Marie Bedeau, Changarnier, Le Flô, and Leydet. In addition, five extreme Republicans, Victor Richardet, Jules Miot, Marc Dufraisse (founder-member of the 'Club of Clubs' in March 1848), and two signatories of the 1849 impeachment, Félix Mathé and Louis Greppo, were sentenced to deportation to Cayenne, commuted to provisional exile except in the case of Miot, who was however sent to Algeria.[43]

The total arrested throughout France between 2 and 10 December numbered 26,642, of whom 11,609 were set at liberty almost immediately, with 5,108 put under surveillance. Of those remaining, 915 were charged with criminal offences and dealt with accordingly, leaving 14,118 of whom 6,245 were pardoned, leaving 6,153 condemned by the mixed commission: 173 to Cayenne, 4,042 to Algeria, 614 to provisional exile, and 1,324 imprisoned within France.[44] No prominent Legitimist was arrested, and Cavaignac was released after a brief detainment in a police *poste* by Louis Napoleon due to his poor health.

* * *

The press in England was as one voice in its condemnation of the *coup d'état* , although with very different vocabularies and vocal intonations. *The Times* may have been Louis Napoleon's favourite newspaper but it was also Britain's favourite newspaper, with a London circulation in 1851 of just under 40,000 – approximately half of all the capital's newspaper sales. Now under the proprietorship of John Walter III, leader writers were Thomas Mozley, a tractarian divine, Frederic Rogers, a barrister who was also sympathetic to Tractarianism, and Henry Reeve, head of the legal department of the Privy Council and translator of De Tocqueville's *Démocratie en Amérique* . Reeve had been educated in Paris and maintained a firm friendship with Guizot and Thiers, and consequently he had been moulding the paper's foreign policy since 1840.

Delane's first duty was to his readers and not his personal acquaintances, and there was (3 December) little sympathy for the man he had supported tentatively as an exile:

The step … overleaps the barrier between law and revolution. The future government … rests altogether on the fortune of the moment and the fidelity of the army … Louis Napoleon has burst the legal conditions of his power … the laws and limitations by which he held the highest office in the State are either annihilated by this blow or turned against himself … he stands either amenable, by failure, to the supreme judicature of the country, or becomes by success the popular candidate for unlimited personal power.

However, as a result of the part Thiers had played in 1848, 'it will excite no regret to learn that he, too, has been committed to this new Bastille'. But the principal object was to expose Louis Napoleon's solution to the problems of 1848:

But, though we have long deplored the factious spirit of the Assembly … the circumstances at present known to us are not such as to account for and justify a *coup d'état* which tramples underfoot the whole legal system of the country. The constitution of 1848, however, contained from the first the germ of such a revolution. We conclude that the French people must either be governed by a dictatorial power not seriously controlled by any representative Assembly, or by an Assembly disposing absolutely of the executive authority; and an imperial despotism is at least preferable to anarchy or to the government of a Committee of Public Safety … The humiliation of February 1848 is avenged by the humiliation of December 1851; and France is doomed once more to descend … from the horrors and folly of popular revolution to the stern bondage of military rule.

'We are surprised', the paper went on, 'to find this revolution accomplished thus far without any serious resistance, and hailed, as usual, by popular acclamation'.

The breathing space was there only because resistance was slow in coming to terms with the extraordinary swiftness and effectiveness of the *coup d'état* . Had the extremist minority refrained from direct action the event might have passed off as one reporter in Paris described the morning of 2 December, in the same issue of the paper:

I have entered into conversation with the *Blouses* reading the President's decree, and I have not heard one word of disapprobation by anybody … The general remark of the operatives was 'Ma foi, il a bien fait; maintenant nous voterons puisqu'il a retabli le suffrage universel' … I met the President … he bowed right and left and raised his cocked hat to the crowds … there was some cheering, but no enthusiasm. He was followed by an immense mob shouting 'Vive la République!' which they were permitted to do in full liberty. I can safely say that there was not one cry of 'Vive Napoléon' as long as the *cortège* was within my sight … Everybody was suffered to express himself as he wished without molestation.

The Times became increasingly concerned (4 December) with the future of France:

The idea of right succumbs to the grasp of force; and it signifies but little in principle whether such acts are done by the undisciplined hordes … or by the regular compression of military power … Governments founded on such a basis are … commonly the offspring of fraud as well as of force … the moving force in these events is personal ambition, supported by unscrupulous instruments … it is scarcely possible to conceive the establishment of a permanent or honourable Government on such a basis.

But the paper went on to declare that it would make no 'indiscriminatory remarks' about the new Government, and that it would oppose any interference with events in France:

It rests with the French Nation to resist or to submit … to live as freemen or to crouch before the iron or the leaden idols of despotic power … As long as it remained within the legal bounds of his authority it was certainly the wish of the country to see that authority legally extended … But the claims he may now put forward … are totally distinct from his former claims to the renewal of his office.

On Friday 5 December, *The Times* was of course full of the *massacre des boulevards*, as it was being called, likening it to the swords that had 'drunk so deep of Arab blood' in Algeria in 1844 under Cavaignac. It was now Paris that:

witnessed a renewal of the scenes of carnage we have so often had to record and to deplore. In vain the Minister of War decreed that every person taken in the act of raising barricades … should be instantly shot. The barricades were raised, and they were defended by the indomitable courage of the population.

While admitting that Louis Napoleon 'is profoundly desirous to avoid a sanguinary conflict' and that there had been no alternative to the *coup d'état* due to the conflict the constitution had set up, *The Times* (6 December) blamed him for all the consequences of his action: '50,000 men' inaugurated his rule 'by torrents of bloodshed by that people to whose misplaced confidence he owes whatever he possesses in the world'. He was 'consigning hundreds of victims to death and misery, instead of receiving the incense and homage of an enthusiastic people'.

On 8 December, *The Times* likened the modest fatalities of the *coup d'état* to the murder of over 5,000 Huguenots in Paris by Charles IX and Catherine de Médicis in 1572 and the 420 days under Robespierre in which 20,000 official executions had taken place:

It will never be known at what a cost of life to the citizens of Paris Louis Napoleon found himself master … The army, to use a significant expression, *did its worst* … we affirm that the bloody and treacherous deeds of the 4th December will be remembered with horror in the annals even of that city which witnessed the massacres of St Bartholomew and the Reign of Terror.

The Times was right to point out that the exact number of victims would 'never be known', but this did not prevent it from stating on 28 August 1852 that they numbered '1,200'.

Reaction from weekly publications was often more critical than *The Times*. Robert Rintoul had founded *The Spectator* in 1828 as a non-political paper that soon sided strongly with the Whigs and Reformers. With a Saturday circulation of 25,000, it announced itself as 'peculiarly fit … for the use of respectable families'. On 6 December, it stated:

The reign of Louis Napoleon, if it last, must of necessity be a reign of terror … The prospects of France are frightful … High Treason in its grossest and most criminal form is the crime which Louis Napoleon has perpetrated – the high treason of a low-minded adventurer. Courage is libelled when its name is applied to the heartless audacity of this 'new way to pay old debts' … Even the pretence of imitating 'mon oncle' is but a disguise; the counterfeit Bonaparte covers himself with a shield which would be a cheat even if it bore the bar sinister on its face.

Even the *Illustrated London News*, with a circulation of 140,000, concurred on the same Saturday:

With one effort of his will the President has annihilated the Constitution, and in breaking the highest has broken all the laws at once … Will France quietly succumb and crouch beneath the bayonet? … Or, will she rise against her Dictator, and proclaim that not even the mighty bribe of universal suffrage – not even the admitted and disgraceful intriguing of the General Assembly – will induce her to

sanction an act of violent repudiation of all agreements – all engagements – an act of perfidy to every principle by which her chief was bound, and an act of perjury to every oath to which he swore?

For the *Observer*, the original liberal Sunday paper with a circulation of 9,000, the reaction in its first report (7 December) was almost a summary of the universal attitude in the press:

The Revolution in France … is no less a Revolution because it is initiated by authority, than if it were the work of the most lawless mob … the proceedings of the President of the French Republic … are altogether illegal, unconstitutional, and tyrannical. There is no mincing the matter … It differs not in violence, nor in suddenness, from the most disastrous popular outbreak. It is alike in its beginnings – it remains yet to be seen whether or not it will resemble it in its consequences … Every voice is hushed – every power suppressed, save the power of the sword.

The Examiner, with a circulation of 5,000, had lost Albany Fonblanque through retirement in 1847. Nevertheless, it continued to support the Whig legacy of Lord Melbourne, writing on Sunday 7 December:

Between sun and sun M. Bonaparte, like a thief in the night, stole the liberties of the nation – 'a cutpurse of the empire and the rule'. He was bound by oath to observe the constitution he violated, and by an act of perjury and treason he has possessed himself of supreme power.

The characterization of Louis Napoleon as a 'cutpurse' had originated with *The Times*, here quoted by *The Examiner*. A lie subsequently reached the English press that Louis Napoleon had stormed into the Chambers waving that issue of the paper in the air and ranting about *Albion perfide*. Thackeray was especially affected by this alleged incident, and with good reason:

though I don't go with folks about the *Times* abuse of the President … what we have to do I think is not to chafe him but silently to get ready to fight him. Fancy his going down to his chambers with that article in the *Times* in which he was called cutpurse & his Uncle assassin … saying 'See Gentlemen the language of that perfidious Albion'. Shall we suffer these insults or reply to them by war?[45]

The incident in the Chambers did not actually take place, but Thackeray's sudden outrage may be explained by something other than his belief that it had. The article that *The Times* incorrectly reported Louis Napoleon as having waved in the air and having quoted was, of course, his own anonymous 'review' of *Idées napoléoniennes* from 1839. Even by 1851 few people knew the identity of the author, in spite of its inclusion in Thackeray's *The Paris Sketch Book* (1840). Thackeray's position was extremely embarrassing for him as he was forced to conclude that Louis Napoleon had resurrected the long-dormant *Albion perfide* employing words that he had written a dozen years earlier.

But Thackeray's private feelings over this matter had wider implications for both himself and the satirical journal *Punch, or the London Charivari*, the first issue of which had appeared on 17 July 1841, which Thackeray had joined in 1842. *Punch*, like *Le Charivari*, its French counterpart that had inspired it, was at first a strongly Radical paper founded by a number of men critical of the social and political problems of the day such as Henry Mayhew, Gilbert Abbot à Beckett, Douglas Jerrold, and Joseph Coyne.

By 1849, Thackeray had had enough of their attacks on Palmerston and Prince Albert, likening Jerrold to Robespierre. However, although he refused to read *Punch*, he still contributed to it as a member of staff. The *coup d'état* would change this. On 27 December 1851, *Punch* published a caricature showing Louis Napoleon galloping

wildly into an abyss marked 'To Glory', waving a bloodstained sword as he rode over the bodies of his victims. The caption read: 'A Beggar on Horseback; Or, the Brummagen Bonaparte Out for a Ride'. It appeared in a series of thirty-eight drawings, spread over some weeks, charting the story of the *coup d'état*, drawn by John Leech. For Thackeray this was the last straw, and the following day he explained his reaction: 'But on coming to London the first thing I see is that iniquitous cut against Louis Napoleon which enraged me so that I went in [to the offices of *Punch*] and resigned at once'.[46]

It may be that Thackeray had been looking for an excuse to resign from a publication from which he had become politically estranged, and the 'Brummagen Bonaparte' was as good an excuse as any. Nevertheless, within a few weeks of the *coup d'état*, a reaction against the rather laboured criticisms became apparent as papers continued to reprint or regurgitate their original reports. In a special 'French Revolution' supplement, the *Illustrated London News* noted (13 December) that the *coup d'état* had been 'the act of an army, at the dictatorship of one man', while 'History offers no example of such audacity … or of such ferocity, cold, inflexible, comprehensive, an unpitying' as the *coup d'état*.

As far as the first statement went, there could hardly have been anybody in England who a fortnight after the event did not know this, and a diminishing number of intelligent persons who believed the second. *The Times*, having dusted down its store of abuse from the days of John Walter II and Napoleon, rearranged it to fit the nephew of 'Old Boney'. Many, like Lady Palmerston, were sick and tired of it: 'People in England are really so foolish and absurd in their abuse of the President that one feels quite ashamed of their want of sense and of their letting themselves be so led by *The Times*'.[47]

The economist and moral philosopher Walter Bagehot was in Paris during the *coup d'état*. In seven articles written as *Letters on the French Coup D'État of 1851* for the *Inquirer*, he presented English readers with studied analyses that went a long way towards ameliorating the immediate tension precipitated by the event.

In *Letter I*, *The Dictatorship* (8 January), he dismissed as irrelevant extrinsic acts such as erasing republican slogans from public buildings (over 1000 would be effaced by the end of the month), uprooting the gaudily-dressed 'trees of liberty' (nearly 1200 would be removed, commencing with Louis Blanc's in the *Jardin du Luxembourg*), and moving into the Tuileries. Instead, he drew attention to the distinction between the immediate dictatorship and the extension of it into the realms of abuse:

> [Two] things are not quite enough kept apart – I mean the temporary dictatorship of Louis Napoleon to meet and cope with the expected crisis of '52, and the continuance of that dictatorship hereafter … It is one thing to hold that a military rule is required to meet an urgent and temporary difficulty: another to advocate the continuance of such a system, when so critical a necessity no longer exists … the first point, the temporary dictatorship, is a tolerably clear case: that it is not to be complicated with the perplexing inquiry what form of government will permanently suit the French people.[48]

Louis Napoleon was to make this very point publicly clear in February 1853 in his 'crowning the edifice' speech. 'To those who might regret that larger concessions had not been made to liberty, I would answer: liberty has never helped to found a lasting political edifice; it crowns the edifice when time has consolidated it'. He believed himself the best judge as to when, how, and to what extent the umbilical cord of the *coup d'état* ought to be severed. Nevertheless, Bagehot accepted that the salvation of France had been of paramount importance, 'whether by fair means or foul'.[49]

At this period, Bagehot was known as a financier with Stuckey's Bank who wrote essays on economics favouring the concept of central banking and free-market economy. In *Letter II, The Morality of the Coup d'État* (15 January), it was clear to him that the fear of an economic slump after the *coup d'état* was unjustified. *La Bourse de Paris* improved dramatically after 3 December when speculation became lively and people again began to buy and sell, and of course to manufacture. Bagehot anticipated that his critical support of Louis Napoleon might be ascribed to economic prejudice, a fact he was quick to deny, reckoning '*bonbons* and bracelets to be things less important than common law and Constitutional action'.[50] But he did believe that the production of luxuries enabled people to provide for themselves an economic basis on which to build more substantial lives:

That gorgeous dandies should wear gorgeous studs – that pretty girls should be prettily dressed – that pleasant drawing-rooms should be pleasantly attired – may seem … sad trifling. But … we [must] reflect on the horrid suffering which the sudden cessation of large luxurious consumption would certainly create, if we imagine such a city as Lyons to be, without warning, turned out of work.[51]

Bagehot had once again anticipated the entire social program of the Second Empire, whose imperial 'Napoleonic' policies would be based not on *la gloire de la guerre* but on raising the standard of living at home. Louis Napoleon would have agreed with Bagehot when he wrote that 'the first duty of society is the preservation of society', and 'For this is the odd peculiarity of commercial civilization. The life, the welfare, the existence of thousands depends on their being paid for doing what seems nothing when done'.[52]

This was not a defence of drudgery but of diversity in commerce. There was no greater drudgery than when the workforce of a Ploughshare Republic was entirely engaged in the over-production of agricultural machinery and iron effigies of its rulers. Bagehot was thus able to defend the *coup d'état* and the oath breaking on moral grounds:

But it certainly does not seem to me proved or clear, that a man who has sworn … to see another drown, is therefore quite bound, or even at liberty, to stand placidly on the bank … the keeping of oaths is peculiarly a point of mere science … And supposing … such certainty was the exact position of Louis Napoleon. He saw society … in danger of incurring extreme and perhaps lasting calamities, likely not only to impair the happiness, but moreover to debase the character of the French nation, and these calamities he could prevent. Now who has shown that ethics require of him to have held his hand?[53]

The validity of this judgement depended on whether credence was given to that particular aspect of moral thought known as 'situation ethics'. Clearly Bagehot was taking an almost antinomian position, in that he considered Louis Napoleon to have been genuinely acting out of the best interests for the French people – the 'love' that in this philosophical system justified a Christian's deviation from established moral law. Bagehot even defended the *massacre des boulevards* through invoking that moral presumption by which immorality may be justified if it can be shown to have prevented further and greater immorality. He did not dismiss the deaths in a callous way, and in fact agreed with the general condemnation laid on so thickly in the press, 'But better one *émeute* now than many in May, be it ever remembered'.[54]

Nevertheless, Bagehot was careful not to represent Louis Napoleon 'as a complete standard either of ethical scrupulosity or disinterested devotedness'.[55] On the contrary, he made clear that he believed Louis Napoleon to have acted a great deal in an atmosphere of mendacity, reckoning this to be a Bonaparte characteristic

discernible in the greatest liar of them all – Napoleon. Unlike Bagehot, however, Louis Napoleon never expressed this moral equation respecting the fatalities, but he often employed it when defending his violation of the constitution: 'J'ai sorti de la légalité pour rentre dans le droit'.

In the remaining letters, Bagehot addressed specific aspects of the aftermath of the *coup d'état* : the constitution, the French character, and the French press. The 1852 constitution began by guaranteeing the principles of 1789, and in *Letter III* (20 January) Bagehot refers to it as 'the Constitution of the Consulate *minus* the mind of the man who made it'.[56] Whether it would work without Napoleon only time would tell. *Letter V* (February), contained a post-script in which Bagehot dismissed any suggestion of a direct invasion of England but then confessed that 'there is a contingency which sensible people here … do not seem to regard as at all beyond the limits of rational probability, by which a war between England and France would most likely be superinduced; that is, a French invasion of Belgium'.[57] This fear was very real in some quarters – particularly of course Belgium – but as absurd as the invasion of England. Nevertheless, Bagehot warned the *Inquirer* to 'use your best rhetoric to induce people to put our pleasant country in a state of adequate and tolerable defence'.[58] Britain was not well defended, and perhaps in any case it ought to have been, but even without the benefit of hindsight he should have shelved such a public comment at this critical time.

In *Letter VII* (19 February), Bagehot noted a change in attitude to Louis Napoleon among the French as the period of the 'temporary dictatorship' was openly stated by some to have crossed that thin line into the realm of abuse. He agreed particularly strongly with criticisms of the move by Louis Napoleon to deprive the House of Orleans of all its property rights in France, a 'crime that cries to heaven', as Prince Albert called it.[59] The measure, mockingly referred to in the French press as *le premier vol de l'aigle* , came into effect on 22 January when two decrees were signed dispossessing the Orleans family of all their assets in France, endowing the state with the right to sell them.

The dubious legal cause was that Louis Philippe had made them over to his sons instead of following accepted protocol by allowing them to revert to the state on his abdication. The 30,000,000 francs Louis Napoleon raised went into housing for the poor and pensions for the infirm and not into his pocket, but the move was widely criticized and led to a number of high level resignations he could not afford. In addition, he had been obliged to arrest Éduard Bocher, an Orleanist deputy for Calvados who had been appointed administrator of the properties, in February, for distributing *Faits pour la défense des droits de propriété contre le décret de 22 janvier, 1852* , unstamped and with no printer's name. However, the resignations were not motivated by liberal objections to any arbitrariness on his part, but, on the contrary, from something that smacked of socialism – the state appropriation of private property.

Bagehot ended his series of popular and persuasive essays with the judgement that the volatile and fickle mentality of the French was simply unworthy of parliamentary forms of government, and that Louis Napoleon, the *homme de caractère* , was therefore ideally suited to rule them. This view was strongly echoed a few years later by John Croker, retired Tory Secretary of the Admiralty and confirmed anti-Napoleonist:

> Despotism is the paradise of the infinite majority of the people … The brilliant bubble will burst, but meanwhile 'Vive l'Empereur'; and this is a kind of prosperity that nothing but a despotism can bestow … with all my old prejudices in favour of a constitutional Government, I shall think it a great pity if a

few dozen literary adventurers and *émeutiers* should again get the upper hand, and prevent the vast majority of the French People from enjoying that species of government which, after all, I believe to be the most conducive to their general happiness. Freedom of speech, liberty of the press, habeas corpus, trial by jury, are as essential to government in England as … they are incompatible with any government in France.[60]

* * *

Just as at a private level the *coup d'état* resulted in the resignation of Thackeray from *Punch,* so at a public level it led to the dismissal of Palmerston from the Foreign Office.

Palmerston was often an imprudent defender of foreign revolutionary nationalists. If he was an advocate of constitutional parliamentary monarchy who disliked the Orleans family as much as he disliked Guizot, he was also one who sometimes acted without adhering to the guidelines of his own parliamentary system. The day following the *coup d'état* , Palmerston met Walewski in London and expressed to him in a private conversation what was interpreted by Walewski as his approval of the action taken by his president.

Queen Victoria, who was at Osborne on the Isle of Wight, heard about the *coup d'état* a day late. She immediately informed Lord John Russell that she believed it 'of great importance that Lord Normanby should be instructed to remain entirely passive, and to take no part whatever in what is passing. Any word from him might be misconstrued at such a moment'.[61] Russell replied that same evening saying that this would be done, and that Normanby had asked whether he ought to suspend his diplomatic functions and that he had been told that the Cabinet was unanimous in deciding that he should not. On 5 December, Normanby's position of neutrality was made known to him in Paris through an official despatch at the Foreign Office.

However, Normanby soon realized that there were two 'official' views being simultaneously maintained. Walewski, elated at what he had just been told in private, had already communicated Palmerston's tacit approval to the Marquis de Turgot, minister of foreign affairs since 3 December, who immediately mentioned it to Normanby. It was then read out in the Assembly and made known to all the foreign ambassadors in Paris as though an official reflection of Britain's position on the *coup d'état*. Moreover, two days earlier Palmerston had replied to Normanby's dispatch of 2 December [*ante cit.*] in a private letter in which he put his views in writing:

As to respect for the law and Constitution … that respect belongs to just and equitable laws, framed under a Constitution founded upon reason, and consecrated by its antiquity and by the memory of the long years of happiness which the nation has enjoyed under it. But it is scarcely a proper application … to be directed to the day-before-yesterday tomfoolery, which the scatterbrained heads of Marrast and Tocqueville invented for the torment and perplexity of the French nation; and I must say that that Constitution was more honoured by the breach than the observance. It was high time to get rid of such childish nonsense; and as the Assembly seemed to be resolved that it should not be got rid of quietly, and by deliberate alteration and amendment, I do not wonder that the President determined to get rid of them … If … they meant to strike a sudden blow at him, he was quite right on that ground also to knock them down first.[62]

Normanby, the Orleanist who disliked both Louis Napoleon and Palmerston, and Palmerston, the qualified Louis Napoleonist who disliked Legitimists, Orleanists, and Normanby, had between them created a personality conflict that was unresolvable while the two of them remained in office.

Palmerston defended himself by maintaining that a minister was free to express private opinions to anybody, and that if his had not been treated as such by Walewski

and Turgot that was not his fault. It was a specious argument, excellent on paper but one that revealed little consideration for the sensitivity of his ministerial position and the possible consequences of his actions. On 16 December, Palmerston wrote once again to Normanby, reiterating his views and explaining why he held them and why he did not consider it improper to have expressed them in apparent opposition to the official policy of the Government – only this time he made the grave mistake of doing so in an official dispatch from the Foreign Office:

If your Excellency wishes to know my own opinion on the change which has taken place in France, it is that such a state of antagonism had arisen between the President and the Assembly that it was becoming every day more clear that their coexistence could not be of long duration; and it seemed to me better for the interests of France, and, through them, for the interests of Europe, that the power of the President should prevail, inasmuch as the continuance of his authority might afford a prospect of the maintenance of social order in France, whereas the divisions of opinions and parties in the Assembly appeared to betoken that their victory over the President would only be the starting-point for disastrous civil strife.[63]

Palmerston's problems were complicated by the fact that Lady Normanby had been feeding her brother-in-law, Charles Phipps, private secretary to Prince Albert, with letters injurious to both Palmerston and Louis Napoleon. In April 1850, Louis Napoleon told Malmesbury that 'Your Ambassador is intriguing against me … I believe [he] carries on a private correspondence with Prince Albert to my detriment'.[64] Normanby could not have written directly to Albert if he wanted to keep his position, but his wife could write to Albert's private secretary, who then passed her jaded criticisms on to the royal couple.

Palmerston's problems were further compounded by the fact that neither Queen Victoria nor Lord John Russell entertained any particular regard for him at a personal level, while Prince Albert loathed him. In fact, Russell was keen to use the incident to remove him from office. 'I cannot stand any more of these *tracasseries*', he wrote on 15 December. 'But I hope to have some explanation from Palmerston tomorrow'.[65] Having discovered that Palmerston had written to Normanby again, officially, he informed Victoria who then ordered Palmerston to show her the dispatch before he sent it off.

Palmerston was now acutely embarrassed, because of course it was too late. Copies were sent to Victoria and Russell, but the original had already gone to Normanby in Paris. Furious at this usurpation of constitutional etiquette, Victoria asked Russell to deal severely with him. Russell, writing on 17 December, was indignant:

The question is not whether the President has been justified in dissolving the Assembly and annulling the constitution; but whether you were justified, as the Queen's Secretary of State, in expressing an opinion upon the subject … I am therefore most reluctantly compelled to come to the conclusion that the conduct of foreign affairs can no longer be left in your hands with advantages to the country.[66]

On the same day, Palmerston wrote to Russell explaining the nature of his private conversation with Walewski, in which he also agreed to give up the seals of the Foreign Office when a successor had been found. Nevertheless, he continued to defend an opinion he considered entirely his own: 'I am satisfied it was well founded; and I think the expression of it was conducive to the maintenance of a good understanding with the French Government and thereby to the interests of the country'.[67]

Lord John Russell wrote to Queen Victoria the following day explaining that he thought the explanation 'was quite unsatisfactory'.[68] On 19 December, Palmerston received his dismissal: 'No other course is open to me than … to ask her Majesty to

appoint a successor to you at the Foreign Office'.[69] On Monday 22, Russell held a Cabinet council to announce the decision and four days later Palmerston officially resigned.

Although the entire Cabinet approved the resignation after the fact, it caused a sensation in the political world. Palmerston was easily the ablest man in Russell's Government and the entire country knew it. Victoria, of course, was delighted, and Russell considered that he had done what was right, if not what was pleasant. But few outside Government agreed: 'The success of [Louis] Napoleon seems to have given Johnny [Russell] a taste for *coup d'états* ',[70] mocked Disraeli, who claimed Palmerston had told him 'I was not turned out; I was kicked out'.[71] Prince Albert was ecstatic:

> And now the year is ending with the lucky circumstance for us that the man who has been embittering our whole lives by setting us the shameful alternatives of endorsing his misdeeds throughout Europe, or of raising the Radical party here to power under his leadership … has cut his own throat.[72]

It was clear too that there had been more to this dismissal than Palmerston's irresponsible behaviour. *The Times* (28 December 1851) brushed aside rumours that it had resulted from pressure by foreign powers, and Malmesbury observed that it was 'evident there has been some intrigue besides'.[73] According to Lady Palmerston, Prince Albert wanted her husband out because his designated successor 'would be pliable … and let Albert manage the Foreign Affairs which is what he has always wanted'.[74]

Lady Palmerston and Malmesbury were right, and the intrigue had been not French but English, and particularly Russell's. It later transpired that the prime minister himself had approved of certain aspects of the *coup d'état* to Walewski on two occasions – the day after Palmerston had done so and then at a dinner at Russell's house on 6 December at which other ministers had been present. Obviously, since a foreign secretary's opinion was more likely to weigh in favour of substantiating foreign policy, only Palmerston's approval was relayed by name to Turgot and then to everyone else. Ironically, Walewski claimed to have transmitted that opinion only after hearing about Lord John Russell's first 'confirmation'.

Lord John Russell, when later presented with this embarrassing revelation, denied that he had given his approval to the *coup d'état* as a whole, claiming that Louis Napoleon's action had meant a victory for law and order and that he had approved of little else about it. It was a poor explanation, because Palmerston had of course also maintained that his first conversation with Walewski had been misunderstood. Russell therefore knew that he could not dismiss Palmerston for doing what he himself had just done (but something that remained unknown to the wider public until much later) and so he contrived successfully to have him dismissed on the technicality of an infringement of Court and Cabinet etiquette. Palmerston himself was at first none the wiser. Although he was fully aware of his technical transgression, as late as 26 December he confessed to his brother-in-law that 'The specific ground therefore of my removal is that in conversation with Ct Walewsky when he told me the last news from Paris, I expressed the opinions I have stated above'.[75]

On 3 February 1852, the Commons assembled after the winter recess and Russell explained Palmerston's dismissal to the House. Palmerston now knew about Russell's conversations with Walewski, but because both Queen Victoria and Prince Albert were for dismissing him, he refused to defend his actions: by doing so he would have had to put himself in the position of having to oppose the wishes of his sovereign queen. Russell, of course, made no mention of his own stated views on the *coup d'état*, and the wretched Palmerston was nothing short of humiliated.

However, on 16 February, Russell attempted to introduce his major contribution of the session into the Commons: the Militia Bill. This provided for the creation of a rural force for the protection of the provinces in the event of 'foreign' – in other words French – 'invasion'. Palmerston saw his opportunity, moving an amendment for the centralization of such a militia, pointing out the serious flaws in advocating a loose confederation of county units. Apparently this had not been considered before then, or had been rejected by interested groups outside the House as too costly, and the idea suddenly appealed to a majority in the Commons. On 20 February, the Government opposed the amendment and lost by thirteen votes to what became known as 'Palmerston's Revenge'. It was a narrow defeat but enough for Russell to recognize it as a vote of no confidence in his administration. The following day he tendered his resignation to the queen.

Victoria immediately invited Lord Derby to form a Government. Palmerston was approached and asked to join as chancellor of the exchequer, but he refused office, considering himself too old. And so Derby's purely Conservative administration pulled in, for the first time, two of Louis Napoleon's friends: Disraeli as chancellor of the exchequer and Malmesbury as foreign secretary. Palmerston remained on the opposition benches, but he supported the administration that he had helped to bring in. For Louis Napoleon these happy consequences of the shabby chicanery in British political life were of the utmost importance in helping to smooth his transition from president to emperor and beyond.

But this was not all. Before his resignation, on 18 December, Palmerston had written to Russell taking a last opportunity to express his dissatisfaction with Normanby in Paris:

> When the President was first elected … he and Normanby were on the most friendly terms; but in course of time his feelings towards Normanby materially altered. He disliked what he considered an ostentatious display in public by Normanby of the footing on which they were, and his enemies took advantage of this to represent him as under the tutorship of the British Ambassador … then Normanby's social habits led him much among persons who gradually arrayed themselves in hostility to the President … latterly the dissatisfaction of the President has increased, and a representation was very lately conveyed to me on his behalf as to the hostility of Normanby's language and bearing towards him. The tenor of Normanby's despatches convinced me that there was ground for the representation, and I foresaw that if these things were to go on as they were, we should have an application for his recall which under all circumstances would be a great embarrassment whether conceded or refused … My anticipations have proved well founded; for since I wrote to Normanby I have received a private communication from the President intimating his wish to make a formal request that some other person might be chosen to be the Queen's representative in Paris … I think the request will not now be made, but the President evidently considers Normanby as an enemy, and if Normanby does not alter his bearing towards the President, you will probably ere long have to deal with such an application.[76]

Palmerston's replacement at the Foreign Office was Earl Granville, son of the former British ambassador in Paris. Russell wrote him: 'on the whole I am disposed to say to him [Normanby] that he has stayed at Paris too long, and that I wish he would place his resignation in my hands'.[77] The pragmatic Granville, no admirer of Louis Napoleon, accepted the Government's more progressive line on foreign affairs as outlined to him after Palmerston's departure. He wrote Normanby in the New Year: 'Still, I think our policy is to be well with the President, as long as he retains the immense power which he now wields, without committing ourselves to any approval of his late acts'.[78] Nothing could have better indicated to Normanby how at odds he was with British policy.

Although no formal application for Normanby's removal was in fact made, Granville now lost little time in recalling him. On 3 February, the day Palmerston was holding his head in his hands in the House of Commons, Normanby was officially recalled from Paris. At that time, however, he was on leave in London – officially from 9 January to 12 February – having rearranged facts for the benefit of Greville, and so there was some question as to whether he would, or could, return to do anything more than clear his desk. On 27 January, Flahault, then also in London, wrote to Morny: 'Talking of Lord Normanby, I think it is unlikely that he will return to Paris'.[79] Flahault was right. Normanby remained in London and formally resigned from his post on 21 February.

The new ambassador in Paris was Baron Cowley, accredited on the day of Normanby's recall, who arrived on 17 February. Cowley, a nephew of Wellington with experience as attaché at Vienna, minister in Switzerland, and ambassador to the Germanic confederation, immediately succumbed to Louis Napoleon's extraordinary personal charm just as Louis Napoleon yielded to a man who better represented the qualities inherent in the professional diplomat then emerging in England. Cowley would be the crucial figure in Anglo-French diplomacy under the Second Empire, the key to the *entente cordiale* , and a loyal, if at times understandably confused, friend to the imperial family.

It was perhaps another vindication of the Napoleonic 'star' that the *coup d'état* had removed some of Louis Napoleon's enemies and replaced them with friends. As he prepared to have himself declared Napoleon III, three of the four key positions necessary for the maintenance of Anglo-French relations were occupied by sympathetic ministers or diplomats. Moreover, although Lord Derby was no great friend to Louis Napoleon, he was very far from the enemy Louis Napoleon had once found in Lord Aberdeen.

* * *

From Sunday 21 to Monday 22 December 1851, a plebiscite was held in France asking the voting population of almost 10,000,000 to either reject or approve the *coup d'état*. The voting was free and by secret ballot, but of course no opposition group was permitted to campaign. Even so, the result was a vindication of 2 December, with 7,439,216 approving of it as against 677,557, with only much of the Brest peninsula and the *départment* of Bouches du Rhône in the southeast casting a majority of negative votes. There were, however, almost two million abstentions. On 29 February 1852, the elections to the Legislative Assembly took place and Louis Napoleon's official party – constructed out of his *coup d'état* colleagues and some of the now cowering members of the old *Parti de l'Ordre* – won 64 of the 89 *départments* into which France was organized.

Article 5 Titre III of the constitution of 14 January 1852 gave the Prince-President the perpetual right of appeal to the French people on any issue prior to its invocation. Thus Louis Napoleon moved (7 November) to establish the empire by asking the Senate to approve that the nation affirm the proposition that 'the people wish the re-establishment of the imperial dignity in the person of Louis Napoleon Bonaparte with heredity in his direct descendants, legitimate and adoptive, and give him the right to regulate the order of succession to the throne in the Bonaparte family'. Two weeks later, voting took place and exactly one year after the *coup d'état* the result of this second plebiscite was conveyed to Louis Napoleon at Saint Cloud. He learned that 7,824,189 Frenchmen had said 'oui' and 253,145 'non'. Although more that 2,000,000 had said 'Je m'en moque pas mal', it was clear that the vast majority

desired it. The Senate duly modified the constitution, which was then promulgated on Christmas Day. The Prince-President became emperor of the French and what was left of the Second Republic became the Second Empire.

This move was so well anticipated that it caused hardly any interest in England. At a Presidential Ball at the Tuileries, on 25 February 1852, Cowley observed that 'the same etiquette was observed towards the President as would be towards royalty … I saw no difference between his treatment and that of a Sovereign'.[80] The issue was not concerned with the fact of empire, but how to address the new emperor and how the new empire ought to be recognized. As early as 1 December, Walewski had notified Malmesbury that Louis Napoleon would style himself 'the Third' of his dynasty out of respect for the Duc de Reichstadt, although of course Napoleon's son had never officially ruled.

This was a genuine sentiment, but that Louis Napoleon would gain considerably from the implications inherent in the higher number led to some amusing but preposterous stories being circulated. Malmesbury noted on 29 December 1852 that Cowley had told him of the story that Louis Napoleon had given instructions to the Prefect of Bourges that the people 'were to shout "Vive Napoléon!" but he wrote "Vive Napoléon!!!" The people took the three notes of interjection as a numeral … When the whole thing was explained the President … said "Je ne savais pas que j'avais un Préfet Machiavelliste"'.[81]

Lord Frederic Hamilton, eldest son of the marquis of Abercorn to whom Louis Napoleon had played squire at Eglinton, heard the same story but put rather differently:

> After his *coup d'état,* Louis Napoleon issued a proclamation to the French people, ending 'Vive Napoléon!!!'. The printer, mistaking the three notes of exclamation for the numeral III, set up 'Vive Napoléon III'. The proclamation appeared in this form, and Louis Napoleon, at once recognizing the advantages of it, adhered to the style. Whether this is true or not I cannot say.[82]

But Hamilton should have been able to 'say' because he ought to have known better. The proclamations that had appeared in the streets on Tuesday morning in fact had been signed 'Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte', with no imperial affectation and no exclamation marks whatever.

This implication of legitimacy – particularly what it retrospectively implied in the case of the Duc de Reichstadt – angered Austria, Prussia, and Russia. Cowley too at first objected as it would also retrospectively make illegitimate the First and Second Bourbon Restorations. Perhaps someone pointed out to him that Louis XVIII had taken a higher number than he ought to have, since the Bourbons assumed that their 'Louis XVII' had reigned as a boy for two years from 1793, by which move they had retrospectively erased the First Empire. At any rate, Cowley soon dropped his objection, but he asked that Louis Napoleon give assurance that the imperial leap would not incur a violation of the statutes laid down by the Congress of Vienna. This he could not do, formally, but he assured Cowley that the move 'would make no difference in his relations with England'.[83]

Louis Napoleon resided at the Hôtel du Rhin until 1849, at the Palais d'Élysée until December 1851, and at the Palais de Tuileries from January 1852 to September 1870.

His brief period at the Tuileries before the imperial leap gave rise to the second most amusing anecdote at his expense. At that time, the palace was entered through a triumphal triple arch on the Place du Carrousel (Place de la Concord), and it was said that as a mark of 'la volonté du peuple' a facsimile of the Imperial Crown had been suspended from the central arch on a long rope so that when Louis Napoleon rode

through his head would pass directly under it. On the apex of the arch the words 'Il l'a bien mérité' had been written in large letters. However, at the last minute the crown had to be removed, for some reason, just before Louis Napoleon arrived. There was no time to replace it – but the dangling rope and the slogan remained! The story is historically unverifiable, but as a particularly fine example of *Galgenhumor* at the outset of the Second Empire it perfectly underscored what many saw as its tragi-comic nature. The joke owed its transmission to England, in October 1852, to Cowley who passed it on to Queen Victoria.

The objections to the imperial move were so slight that on 3 December, the day following the proclamation in Paris, the British Government confirmed to Walewski that it wholeheartedly accepted it – no Palmerstonian muddles here. On the following day, Malmesbury wrote Cowley: 'You may assure the Emperor that we hail with sincere satisfaction the language which he and his Ministers have held to us, both as regards the title he has assumed and his future policy, and the Queen expressed herself much pleased at his speech to the legislative bodies'.[84] Thus Britain, the one nation never to have recognized either the First Empire or Napoleon I as emperor of the French, became the first to recognize both the Second Empire and the imperial dignity invested in the title Napoleon III, emperor of the French.

On 4 December, Queen Victoria wrote her first letter to Louis Napoleon confirming, according to protocol, Cowley's continued appointment on that day in the new empire:

> Sir, My Brother, – being desirous to maintain uninterrupted the union and good understanding which happily subsist between Great Britain and France, I have made choice of Lord Cowley … to reside at your Imperial Majesty's Court in the character of my Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary. The long experience which I have had of his talents and zeal for my service assures me that the choice … will be perfectly agreeable to your Imperial Majesty, and that he will prove himself worthy of this new mark of my confidence. I request that your Imperial Majesty will give entire credence to all that Lord Cowley shall communicate to you on my part, more especially when he shall assure you Imperial Majesty of my invariable attachment and esteem, and shall express to you those sentiments of sincere friendship and regard with which I am, Sir, my Brother, your Imperial Majesty's good Sister, Victoria R.[85]

It must be left to the wayward fringes of human imagination to fully appreciate how Louis Napoleon must have felt to read such a letter after nearly four decades of believing without a shred of uncertainty that one day he would receive it. He knew that it was formulaic, of course, a standard protocol that would have read the same had it been sent to any enemy of the queen of equal rank, but the point is that no measure of political acceptance can be as acute as the style of address by another monarch. Within one month of the imperial leap the whole of Europe had followed England's lead. Significantly for the future, however, Tsar Nikolai of Russia refused to address Louis Napoleon as anything other than 'mon cher ami', in spite of the fact that he had been obliged to recognize *de facto* the Second Empire. No number of cordial missives from the Foreign Office, and no number of private assurances from friends, can equal in historical effect the official view as sanctioned by a head of state.

Louis Napoleon had originally intended to be crowned emperor by the pope in the cathedral of Notre Dame, but Austrian indignation prevented any such emulation of Napoleon's coronation by Pius VII, which had also taken place on 2 December. Instead, a great *Te Deum* was sung at the cathedral on December 1 – the same one by Le Sueur that Napoleon had commissioned after the battle of Austerlitz – the imperial insignia were restored by decree and Louis Napoleon moved back into the Tuileries as emperor. One eyewitness was Thackeray's daughter:

[In] front of a Regiment his Royal Highness … on a prancing horse with a red velvet saddle and golden bridles, and I forget what coat … but he had a fine red ribbon across his body. They cried 'Vive l'Empereur!' a little, not very much. Grannie says she counted twelve, but I assure you there were more. The only way the Champs Elysées were adorned was by a piece of calico stretched across the Rond Point, which was not half long enough to reach from one side to the other. I think I am a Napoleonist, for he has done so many good-natured things; all the poor who have pawned their mattresses and any other things within four days may take them back for nothing, and all debtors under I don't know what, are let out of prison, – the warnings to the newspapers are taken away, and all crimes are forgiven, and the soldiers got an extra day's pay. Yesterday we saw him, but as I couldn't see his face I didn't know who it was, till a little man rushed up to Grannie and said 'C'est l'Empereur!' 'Phuiff!' says Grannie, and walks on.[86]

There is no doubt that the absence of a dignified coronation affected public reaction to the proclamation of the empire. Robert Seton, an American-born future archbishop, saw a subdued tentacle of the event from the balcony of the Hotel de la Poste in Pau, describing the crowd as 'well-behaved' and remembering that when a colonel on horseback 'drew his sword, stood up in his stirrups and shouted "Vive l'Empereur!"' he fell off 'in a fit'.[87] On 10 May, Louis Napoleon performed the Napoleonic theatrical act known as the Distribution of the Eagle Standards to the army and National Guard on the Champs de Mars. This was seen by Austin Henry Layard, the great archaeologist-adventurer who was also under-secretary for foreign affairs, who said that although the review had been 'grand' and the ball 'the finest thing', there had been 'no enthusiasm for Louis Napoleon' and the fireworks display had been 'a failure'.[88]

Anne Thackeray and Seton were under sixteen at the time of the proclamation, but their combination of girlish sentimental naivety and puerile facetiousness reflected the condition of events more accurately than any subsequent official description. However, the lack of conspicuous co-ordination was a healthy sign. What many found so amusing concealed a serious point: clockwork perfection in public ceremony, which in its most oiled state of precision is the traditional hallmark of totalitarian regimes that abuse their citizens, was never required to become an established fact in the Second Empire in order for it to justify itself. After all, it believed that it had an unimpeachable mandate.

NOTES and REFERENCES to Chapter Seven

[1] *Malmesbury* ii 237.
[2] *Greville* n.d. *c.* March 1848 (Wilson).
[3] Ibid. 20 Dec. 1848 (Reeve).
[4] *Malmesbury* ii 237.
[5] *Thomson* 37.
[6] *Greville* 20 Dec. 1848 (Reeve).
[7] *Evans* 126-7.
[8] QVL I ii 205-6.
[9] Ibid. 206.
[10] *Jerrold* ii 376-7, Landor to Lady Blessington 9.1.1849.
[11] *Namier* 51.
[12] Until 1986, this was held at the Public Record Office (FO 881/114), but it now cannot be found.
[13] *Russell* i 302.
[14] *Gronow II* 154.
[15] *Jerrold* iii 62.
[16] *Ridley N&E* 237.
[17] *Sadleir* 347.
[18] *Ray* ii 593, Thackeray to Jane Brookfield 13 Sep. 1849.
[19] *Gronow I* 297-8.
[20] *Ray* iv 427, Thackeray to Jane Brookfield February 1851.
[21] *Vandam* ii 7-8.
[22] *Price* 135-6.
[23] *Sala* i 253.
[24] *Bessborough* 284.
[25] *Pym* 270, *Journal* 3 Dec. 1851.
[26] *Fox* 88 *Journal* 8 Dec. 1851.
[27] QVL I ii 334. This letter crossed one from King Leopold written on 5 December in which he stated: 'As yet one cannot form an opinion, but I am inclined to think that Louis Bonaparte will succeed. The country is tired and wish quiet, and if they get it by this *coup d'état* they will have no objection' [Ibid. 335].
[28] *Malmesbury* i 289. In April 1850, he had told Malmesbury: 'But although I am here I know nobody; the friends I have I don't know, and they don't know me, even by sight … I have tried to consolidate all political parties, but I can conciliate none; there is now a conspiracy to seize me and send me to Vincennes, and … Changarnier and Thiers are at its head. The Chamber is unmanageable. I stand perfectly alone, but the army and the people are with me, and I don't despair. Yet every day may see me a prisoner' [Ibid. 259].
[29] *Villiers* 200, Clarendon to George Cornewall Lewis December 1851.
[30] *Croker* 232, Derby to Croker 22 Dec. 1851.
[31] *Greville* 13 Jan. 1852 (Reeve).
[32] *Simpson: Rise* 178, Normanby to Palmerston 1 Dec. 1851.
[33] PRO FO 27/905 (360), Normanby to Palmerston 2 Dec. 1851.
[34] Ibid. (361).
[35] *Ray* iii 16, Thackeray to Mrs Henry Carmichael-Smyth 26 Feb. 1852.
[36] *Greville* 14 Dec. 1851 (Reeve).
[37] *Sala* i 305.
[38] *Gronow II* 165-8.
[39] *The Times* Saturday 13 Dec. 1851.
[40] *Jerrold* iii *Appendix IV* 461-2.
[41] *Kerry* 156-7.
[42] *Ténot* 215, 253-4.
[43] *La Gorce* i 15-16.
[44] *Papiers et correspondence* liv 216-17.
[45] *Ray* ii 814.
[46] Ibid. ii 823 & iii 432, Thackeray to Lady Augusta Bruce 28 Dec. 1851.
[47] *Kerry* 199, Lady Palmerston to Madame de Flahault 21 Jan. 1852.
[48] *Bagehot* i 310.
[49] Ibid. 313.
[50] Ibid. 314-15.

[51] Ibid. 315.
[52] Ibid. loc.cit.
[53] Ibid. 316.
[54] Ibid. loc.cit.
[55] Ibid. 316-17.
[56] Ibid. 323.
[57] Ibid. 345.
[58] Ibid. 346.
[59] *Jagow* 181, Albert to Prince Wilhelm of Prussia 27 Jan. 1852.
[60] *Croker* 266-7, Croker to Henry Brougham 13 Jun. 1857.
[61] QVL I ii 334.
[62] *Jerrold* iii 306-7.
[63] Ibid. loc.cit.
[64] *Malmesbury* i 259.
[65] *Russell* ii 92.
[66] *Walpole: Russell* ii 139.
[67] Ibid. 140.
[68] QVL I ii 341.
[69] *Walpole: Russell* ii 141.
[70] *Disraelii: Letters* v 505 (2214), Disraeli to Lady Londonderry 28 Dec. 1851.
[71] *Disraeli M&B* iii 339.
[72] *Jagow* 180, Albert to Ernst II 29 Dec. 1851.
[73] *Malmesbury* i 293-4.
[74] *Lever* 323, Lady Palmerston to Lord Beauvale 8 Jan. 1852.
[75] *Bourne* 299, Palmerston to Laurence Sulivan 26 Dec. 1851.
[76] *Russell* ii 92-3.
[77] *Fitzmaurice* i 54, Russell to Granville 28 Dec. 1851.
[78] Ibid. 55, Granville to Normanby 6 Jan. 1852.
[79] *Kerry* 206.
[80] *Wellesley* 8.
[81] *Malmesbury* i 379.
[82] *Hamilton* 38-9.
[83] *Wellesley* 11.
[84] *Malmesbury* i 373.
[85] QVL I ii 407.
[86] *Ray* iii 140-1, Anne Thackeray to W.M. Thackeray 4 Dec. 1852.
[87] *Seton* 70.
[88] *Bessborough* 297, Charlotte Guest *journal* 15 May 1852.