

CAPTIVITY

After final defeat at Waterloo and in transit to exile on St. Helena:

I hereby solemnly protest, in the face of Heaven and of men, against the violence done me, and against the violation of my most sacred rights, in forcibly disposing of my person and my liberty.

I came voluntarily on board the *Bellerophon*; I am not a prisoner - I am the guest of England. I came on board at the instigation of the captain, who told me he had orders from the government to receive me and my suite, and conduct me to England, if agreeable to me. I presented myself with good faith, to put myself under the protection of the English laws. As soon as I was on board the *Bellerophon*, I was under the shelter of the British people. If the government, in giving orders to the captain of the *Bellerophon* to receive me as well as my suite, only intended to lay a snare for me, it has forfeited its honour, and disgraced its flag. If this act be consummated, the English will in vain boast to Europe of their integrity, their laws and their liberty. British good faith will be lost in the hospitality of the *Bellerophon*. I appeal to history; it will say that an enemy, who for twenty years waged war against the English people, came voluntarily, in his misfortunes, to seek asylum under their laws. What more brilliant proof could he give of his esteem and his confidence? But what return did England make for so much magnanimity? - They feigned to stretch forth a friendly hand to that enemy; and when he delivered himself up in good faith, they sacrificed him.

(Signed) NAPOLEON

"On board *H.M.S. Bellerophon*,
4th August, 1815."