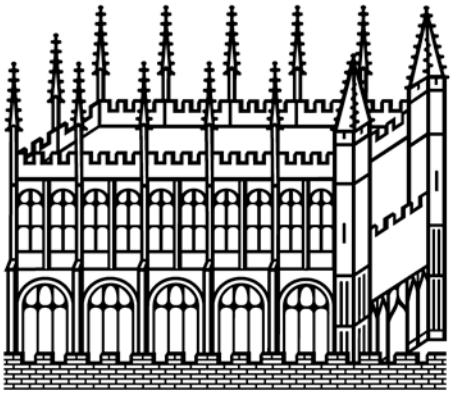

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8° BS.
L. 264

LETTERS

ON

SOME OF THE EVENTS

OF THE

Revolutionary War.

——— Ille etiam cæcos instare tumultus
Sæpe monet, fraudémque et operta tumescere bella.

VIRG. GEOR. i. 464.

The change of empires often he declares,
Fierce tumults, hidden treasons, murders, wars.

DRYDEN.

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TO

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE, Esq. M.P.

THESE LETTERS

ARE

(WITH PERMISSION)

MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,

WITH SENTIMENTS OF THE HIGHEST ESTEEM,

BY HIS

MOST OBEDIENT SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

THE following Letters happening to fall into the hands of a friend for whom the Author entertains the highest respect, and whose literary labours have met with the approbation of the Public, he was pleased to express so urgent a wish for their publication, that it was impossible not to comply with his suggestion.

They are therefore submitted to the perusal of the Public, without having undergone any material alteration; as although the Author, in what he has here collected, is sensible that only a faint outline is presented of the great Events of the Revolutionary War, yet he is conscious of his inability to complete the picture.

This important subject will, without doubt, be discussed by many writers

with more precision, and in more voluminous and expensive publications; those, however, who enter into minute details, must be conscious of ability to recommend their productions. A great book has been emphatically called a great evil, and if a subject be not treated of in a satisfactory manner, brevity at least may be a recommendation.

To the animadversions of the critical reader, the Author, conscious of the imperfections of his work, (although he trusts no well founded objections can be urged against its principles,) must submit in silence; whilst to those who may seem to treat with undue severity a publication, which is far from professing *great things*, he would reply with *Boileau*—" *Une livre vous deplaît, qui vous force à lire.*"

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LETTERS

ON

SOME OF THE EVENTS

OF

The Revolutionary War.

LETTER I.

THE very acceptable Letter which I have just had the pleasure of receiving from you, my dear friend, calls for my most grateful acknowledgments; and I cannot but express my entire coincidence with the reflections you have made, as to the probable consequences of the facts, to which you allude.

The events of the last twenty-five or thirty years are unquestionably without any parallel in History, and form a new era in the annals of mankind. During that period we have been hurried on from the contemplation of one wonder to another,

whilst our minds were so little prepared to anticipate the events which thus passed in rapid succession before them, that we could not at the moment reflect on them with that *seriousness* which their magnitude required.

To guide the vessel of the state securely amidst the accumulated dangers by which she was menaced, during a storm of such tremendous violence, and of such long duration, required the utmost skill and energy. Our existence as a nation was rendered almost doubtful; our principles as men were threatened by the contagion of the most fatal sophistry: we were not less menaced from without than from within; and, instead of contending, as on former occasions, for the dignity and glory of our empire, we had, during the late unexampled contest, to oppose a *new* and most destructive *intellectual mania,* which emanating from revolutionized France, successively pervaded the several states of Europe, contaminating with its morbid influence every principle which should have been held sacred, and spreading wide around the rage of experimental innovation.

During such a period, whilst "*the madness of the people*" had, throughout a large proportion of Europe, laid prostrate those institutions and establishments, which were either respectable in themselves, or venerable from their antiquity; and whilst *the work of destruction* was preferred to a *gradual* and *temperate* reform of any existing abuses, ours was indeed a most critical and perilous situation. Britain, like Cæsar, had often contended for victory, but like him at *Munda*, she had now to contend for life.

Yes—she had indeed to contend for every thing that could render her respectable as a nation. But having only in a remote degree experienced those evils by which the rest of Europe was convulsed, Britain, less culpable than the surrounding states, although *chastened*, (and I trust *corrected*,) was not cast down, being reserved for the distinguished destiny of preserving, unimpaired, *the true germ of liberty*, until its value might be justly appreciated, and was, by the favour of Providence, permitted to exhibit to an astonished world the most signal instance of rectitude, perseverance, and magnanimity, that is any

where to be met with in the annals of nations.

Having now providentially escaped from our perilous situation, and being conducted into *still waters,* we may naturally assist each other, during the present season of tranquillity, in inquiring into the probable causes which produced those violent agitations in the current by which we were impelled, but which lately were too impetuous to admit of speculation.

Ancient history may perhaps afford us instances of *political revolutions,* as extraordinary as *some of those* which we have lately witnessed. The rise, progress, and declension, of the four great empires, which have respectively been the arbiters of the fate of all inferior and contemporary sovereignties, may present to our minds occurrences as remarkable as those which have lately affected most of the ancient dynasties of Europe. But what will ever distinguish the History of *the French Revolution,* from *any revolution* of which we possess the records—is—The extraordinary and unparalleled *attempt* by which it was accompanied—*to overturn the Christian Religion*—

to obliterate from the human mind all belief in revelation, and at the same time to render men both traitors to their legitimate sovereigns, and blasphemers of their God.

Long indeed had this *anti-christian conspiracy* been carried on in secret, before its promoters found themselves sufficiently established in iniquity, and confirmed in profligacy *(as it was necessary they should be)*, to proclaim to the world the whole deformity of their machinations. The demoralized state of many of the European nations, however, encouraged them to proceed; for, to use the words of TACITUS, "*Isque habitus animorum fuit, ut pessimum facinus auderent pauci, plures vellent, omnes paterentur.*" 'Such was the disposition of their minds, that few only ventured to plan so horrible a treason; but many wished it success, and all seemed content to suffer its perpetration.'

The extreme malignity of the French and German *philosophers*, (for so many of their most infamous writers have been commonly denominated,) kept them perpetually at variance with each other; and, had the tendency to innovation been but a little less

prevalent in Europe, their *plans* would have probably been unsuccessful, if indeed their wild theories deserve that name. And

" If shape it may be called, that shape has none
Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb.——"

Destruction was, however, to be the characteristic of this nondescript and spurious philosophy;—that *anarchy* might be eventually produced, *infidelity* was sedulously inculcated;—and, to level all existing authority, it was first necessary to remove as much as possible that *fear of God*, by which men "render to all their due," submit to every salutary restraint, and respect those powers which have been providentially placed over them.

To procure a *rational degree* of popular enfranchisement, or to advance those interests which should ever be valued by civilized nations, were objects overlooked by those who now sought to level at once things sacred and profane; to obliterate altogether the institutions of consecutive ages; and, without any actual plan of renovation, to pull down all existing establishments. Atchievements, such as these,

seemed alone worthy of *modern infidelity*, which, whilst to the reflecting mind its chimeras were evidently absurd, yet were they of such a nature, as to impose but too successfully on the unenlightened classes of society; and menacing, as they did, both the extinction of religion, and of social order, they were naturally calculated to alarm all those, who either believed the sublime doctrines of revelation, or were convinced that the salutary restraints of a properly constituted authority were necessary to the present happiness of man.

The state of apathy into which many persons had fallen, with respect to their *best interests*, and the encouragement extended by others, to every thing which tended to bring religion into disrepute, seemed, long before the actual explosion of infidelity took place, to portend some signal and extraordinary convulsion. Some *awful instance* of the divine displeasure seemed necessary to recal mankind from the extreme profligacy into which they had fallen; and the temporary triumph of infidelity was permitted by the Almighty, that the folly, the extravagance, and the imprac-

ticability of the modern philosophy might be the more signally displayed to its weak and wicked votaries; and that, after a long and portentous struggle, the sacred precepts of religion might dispel by their effulgence the boasted light of human wisdom.

That nation, which having been long tainted with infidelity, lately exhibited to the astonished world the terrific spectacle of a people, *once christian,* having totally renounced all religion, and living professedly "*without God in the world,*" was destined by the Almighty to be the signal instrument of his vengeance amongst the other apostate nations; and, whilst they afflicted others, they were made themselves to drink *deeply* of the cup of misery.

Whilst Britain, which although it merited some share of the judgments thus manifestly brought upon the earth, was yet confessedly less profligate than the continental states; was, after a season of trial and difficulty, permitted to restore to rival nations those blessings which it had so happily preserved; and whilst her armies contended for the liberties of Europe, the

din of war was but indistinctly heard on her favoured shores.

I think you will agree with me in the idea, that there was a *peculiar fitness in the French nation,* thus to become the instruments of successively ravaging and disorganizing most of the countries of Europe. The adaptation of existing means to the great objects of his providence, and the conversion of all things, to work in due season for his good pleasure, plainly point out to us, during the late memorable events, that the divine agency was *peculiarly* employed in the world.—For so unlooked for were many of the occurrences of late years; so repeatedly were the speculations of the wisest politicians disappointed; and so signal were the vicissitudes which every day exhibited, that it cannot rationally be supposed, after what we have *ourselves witnessed,* that any amongst us will yet be found presumptuous enough to doubt the operations of that providence thus signally manifested, or will any longer attempt to exclude the divine agency from that world, which was created by the fiat of Omnipotence.

The geographical position of France must necessarily place her amongst the principal powers of the world, as being one of the most favoured as to soil, climate, and the internal facilities of commerce; whilst her ports lying severally on the Atlantic, the Mediterranean, and the British Channel, afford every possible advantage of external communication.

Nor are the French themselves less calculated to excite our attention than the country they inhabit. Quick, volatile, and ingenious, they pass with rapidity from one extreme to another; and thus do not often allow themselves that reflection, which is essential to the completion of any great design. To sift things to the bottom *(approfondisser les choses)* is a task little congenial to the majority of Frenchmen, although they readily receive an impulse; and whilst many inventions of acknowledged utility are originally to be attributed to French ingenuity, it must be at the same time admitted, that for their completion and extension, the world is principally indebted to English perseverance, which has often given *sterling utility* to that

which once exhibited only a *tinsel appearance.*

Acting thus with greater impetuosity, and being more liable to the force of sudden impressions than any of the continental nations, the French seemed the people of all others best calculated to brandish the torch of discord amongst them with the surest and most fatal effect.

But the *principles* of revolutionary France proved not less successful than the *prowess of her arms,* in subverting the ancient sovereignties of Europe; and extensive conquests requiring a numerous military establishment, a victorious general was enabled (like the military emperors of Rome) to found a *throne,* on the wreck of ill-formed schemes of liberty, and to bestow those tributary crowns, which, when the *republican fasces* had lost their authority in France, superseded them also in the several states which were forced to follow the fortunes of *the Great Nation.*

On the accession of Buonaparte to the throne of the *Capets,* we were confidently assured, that *a fifth great empire* had commenced, and that the *new Sovereign of*

the West was destined to subvert all the independent states of Europe. The fall, however, of a power which had forged such massy fetters for her tributary confederates, as seemed to promise a longer duration of existence than was finally allotted her, astonished beyond example the surrounding states, who were slow (after the repeated reverses they had experienced) in withdrawing themselves from a yoke which, although of the most galling description, had been so forcibly imposed, as to render its removal rather a matter of distant hope than of present probability.

Nor were speculative individuals less astonished than collective nations, at the sudden fall of that ephemeral empire, which had arisen out of the ruins of jacobinical democracy, and in its fall involved in one common destruction unnumbered schemes, fancies, and speculations.

The temporary resumption by Buonaparte of his abdicated throne, and the momentary re-establishment of that *Western Empire*, upon the duration of which so many calculations were founded, seemed to give fresh confidence to the speculative,

only to prove to them with redoubled force —the shortsightedness even of the wisest and most reflecting persons, and the utter impossibility that the unaided efforts of *human ingenuity* can search out those dispensations of Providence, which have not been adapted to our finite comprehensions.

Humility, submission, and gratitude to the Great Disposer of all events are indeed most forcibly inculcated on our minds, by the wonderful magnitude of the judgments with which He has visited the earth, and by the extension of abundant mercy and forbearance towards us.

These are the sentiments which I should wish to see more generally encouraged and entertained amongst us ; and from the cultivation of these we might confidently look for many practical advantages, and for many extensively beneficial results.

That the events of the French Revolution, and the general effects produced thereby throughout the world, were *providentially ordered,* and tend to the furtherance of still more important results than any we have hitherto witnessed, no candid mind can for a moment doubt.

But whilst the divine agency is thus extensively engaged in doing things indeed "*marvellous in our eyes,*" let us not, under pretence of inquiring into the "*signs of the times,*" venture to pry incautiously or irreverently into "the hidden counsels of God;" nor devote that attention which is sufficiently called for, in the age in which we live, to keep us from falling into evil ways, and in endeavouring to practise those duties which are clearly enjoined us, to the construction of *theories* which must assuredly prove futile, when they are not founded on that *revelation* which can alone give them stability.

From these sentiments I am confident you will not withhold your concurrence, and I have only to entreat your pardon, for having detailed them at such length, and to assure you how sincerely I remain,

Yours, &c.

LETTER II.

ALTHOUGH I feel highly flattered by the wish which you express, that I should put together all the information which I may have been able to collect, as well as any circumstances relating to the French Revolution, which I might have learnt during my visit to the Continent, with a view of eventually employing myself in compiling the history of those deplorable events, which have so long interrupted alike the repose of individuals and of nations; yet I feel fully sensible of my own inadequacy for a task, the due performance of which will probably be the work of some distant period.—For justly to describe the scenes which have been passing in the great political world, and effectually to trace the changes which the late events have produced in a religious and moral point of view, would indeed call for a degree of talent

and discrimination, which are rarely united in the same individual.

——— " Neque enim quivis horrentia pilis
Agmina, nec fractâ pereuntes cuspide Gallos,
Aut labentis equis describere vulnere Parthi."

But whilst I must decline an undertaking for the due performance of which I am fully satisfied of my want of ability, I shall endeavour *so far* to comply with your request, as to lay before you *a General Outline* of the principal Events which have distinguished and disgraced the late sanguinary contest, noticing them, as nearly as possible, in the order in which they have occurred, but dwelling on them rather according to the impressions they have created in my own mind, than perhaps with a due regard to their actual importance.

The moral atmosphere of France had long been obscured and contaminated by the dark and lowering clouds, of which we have witnessed the tremendous explosion, before they discharged their contents on that ill-fated country; and having there committed the most horrible devastation,

passed successively over almost the whole of Europe, being every where marked by the same melancholy effects. The day of affliction has been succeeded by a season of tranquillity; the tempest which lately disturbed (and let us also hope purified) our horizon, has subsided; peace is again restored to a long agitated world; and Britain may well rejoice that she was selected as the favoured instrument by which these great results were to be accomplished. It was indeed the prediction of the illustrious Pitt (a prediction which he was not, however, destined to see fulfilled) that "Britain having saved herself by her perseverance, would ultimately contribute to save the world by her assistance and example."

The independence of the United States of America had not been long acknowledged by the powers of Europe, and England had not as yet altogether recovered the fatal effects of a long and devastating war, which had added one hundred and thirty millions to her national debt, and reduced so considerably her territorial possessions, when a new storm seemed arising, from the in-

fluence of which it was not to be expected she could possibly escape, both from her proximity to France, and from the interest she must necessarily feel in all the revolutions of a rival nation.

Many persons have conjectured that it was from America that the first principles of revolution were introduced into France. That the increased intimacy necessarily arising from the assistance afforded by the French Government to the Americans in their contest with England, may have contributed to render that people desirous of asserting their claim to a greater portion of that liberty, for which they saw the Americans so enthusiastic, I do not mean to deny: but at the same time I must confess, that many things in France, previously to that period, seemed to me indicative of an approaching change; and in the writings of many eminent Frenchmen (long before her revolutionary authors had commenced their labours) we may clearly trace a presentiment, that their country would, at no distant period, be convulsed by intestine struggles, and engaged in new modelling the government to which it had been so long obedient.

Indeed as a people so constituted as the French, advanced in intellectual knowledge, and became more conversant with the institutions of other countries, it was but natural to imagine they should wish for a larger share of liberty than was allowed them under their ancient government; and we are more at a loss to conceive why they so long deferred the assertion of that *just claim*, than to discover the motives which induced them so long to submit contentedly to a *total exclusion from all political power*.

Their object seemed *at first* both natural and commendable: those who themselves enjoyed the blessings of a *free constitution*, were pleased with the prospect which seemed opening upon them, of the same advantages being extended to other nations; and the commencement of the French Revolution excited as powerfully the favourable interest of mankind in general, as its progress and completion did their detestation and abhorrence.

Having become sensible of the advantages of liberty, and considering that in no country were its advantages better under-

stood, or more happily reduced to practice than in England; *our invaluable constitution* became the model of that fabric, which *the first French reformers* endeavoured to rear in their own country.

They do not, however, appear to have sufficiently considered that, to render any change either permanent or beneficial, its progress should have been gradual and progressive; they were not sufficiently aware of the dissonance between their national character and ours; and, in the fervour of their zeal, they sought *at once* to unite in their new government, the undivided benefits of the British constitution, without reflecting that it was by *slow degrees,* and by the combined wisdom of ages, that our system of government was planned, matured, and consolidated.

The French *extreme* in most things else were extreme also in their *zeal for freedom,* and almost brought that invaluable blessing into disrepute and ridicule, by the absurd manner in which they sought to attain it, and by the strange ideas they were led to entertain concerning it.

Moderate but for a short period, they

soon fell into the most barbarous excesses ever recorded of any people. The boasted civilization of France seemed to have vanished as a dream, before the sad reality of horror which that country soon exhibited. The gratification of legitimate demands only served to stimulate them to look for fresh changes clearly incompatible with the existence of a free constitution. They ran headlong *far beyond that goal,* which should have terminated their course, and beyond it found only *anarchy, desolation,* and despotism—" *Vestigia nulla retrorsum.*" No consideration—no retreat, was the cry of those demagogues, whose interest it was to delude and to deceive this frivolous and volatile people, and their cry was but too readily re-echoed throughout France.—*The dance of death* was led on by demons more horrible than any of those represented by the pencil of *Holbein.* Society was shaken to its basis; and those " orders and degrees," which long experience has proved " jar not with liberty, but well consist," were swept away by the mania of innovation, together with most things else which

should have been esteemed sacred, and preserved inviolable.

Under such circumstances, then, may I not venture to assert, that notwithstanding the palpable defects in the ancient government of France, still, its subjects would have better consulted their own happiness, by submitting to abuses of which they were aware, than by suffering themselves to be degraded and demoralized by the inconceivable excesses into which they were led by their abandoned and inconsiderate leaders, in the pursuit of *that Utopian system,* which was held out to them as the final reward of all their exertions; but which, like another *Proteus,* perpetually assumed that appearance most congenial to the reformer of the day? And as the interests of the factious forbade them to allow the people time for deliberation, so they continually assured the multitude that they had *not yet* within their grasp that *ideal good,* from the public *pursuit of which* they derived their own political importance.

The grave and considerate are slowly moved to action; but no force is required

to set those in motion whose characteristic is *volubility*.—And, were the results less calamitous than they have unfortunately proved, we should find it difficult to repress a smile, at the various *ridiculous conceits*, which were employed to engage the attention of the French populace. That plan which had the least foundation in any acknowledged truth, was the most enthusiastically received, and the most eagerly pursued; and that demagogue, who wished most effectually to triumph over his competitors for popular applause, had only to rack his imagination for some scheme, which, by its *absurdity*, should eclipse any by which it had been preceded. Accordingly we find the orators of the *Palais Royal*, and of *the Champ de Mars*, lost no opportunity of working on the feelings of the populace, and attributed to them the spirit of their harangues, with not less complacency than *Martial*, when he exclaimed,

> "Si quid est in libellis meis quod
> Placeat, dictavit auditor.———"

As that *flattery* has in all ages proved the

most acceptable, which renders men the best satisfied with themselves; so no pains were omitted to apply it to the Parisians with diligence and assiduity. They were thus, every day, more and more deluded, and betrayed every "*sans culotte,*" being convinced, "*par raison demonstratif,*" of his talents as a reformer; and every *tinker* (contrary to the idea of Soame Jenyns) preferring to mend the constitution of his country *without reward,* rather than receive six-pence for repairing a damaged kettle.

Such was the posture of affairs, when the depressed state of his public revenue, exhausted by previous wars, and the expenses of a luxurious court, induced Louis XVI. to diminish much of that external parade which had hitherto distinguished the Court of Versailles; and which, although perhaps unnecessary to uphold the throne of a *limited monarch,* whose interests are blended with the prosperity of his subjects, is yet indispensable to the support of an *arbitrary sovereign,* whose interest, commonly distinct from that of those whom he commands, requires the pomp and eternal splendour of a numerous establishment,

which may at once dazzle with its magnificence, and attach many to his government by the various ties of vanity, interest, or affection.

The determination of Louis, therefore, although proceeding from the most praiseworthy motives, yet unfortunately contributed not a little to lessen him in the good opinion of his subjects, who did not possess sufficient candour to discern the true motives by which his conduct was influenced; but comparing this retrenchment with the former splendour of the French court, which had both flattered the vanity of the nation, and concealed from them the real necessities of the state, they felt wounded in a *tender point;* their respect for their Sovereign was diminished; whilst a nearer inspection of the financial difficulties of the state served only to foment the popular apprehensions, and to increase their dissatisfaction and indignation against a government, which, by acknowledging its inability to maintain former appearances, seemed no longer worthy of the allegiance of Frenchmen.

Nor was Louis XVI. possessed of qua-

lities well calculated to secure him the personal attachment of a vain and fickle people, however much they might seem to merit the respect of those who took a fairer estimate of characters, and judged with less precipitancy than his own subjects. He has been described (and probably with truth) as a man of *solid* rather than of *shining parts*. His affection to his people was unquestionable; but his want of *political decision* rendered him unable to stem the gathering torrent of popular commotion; and with the best intentions to act with uprightness and integrity, he was but too liable to yield with facility to the suggestions of interested courtiers; and was perpetually distressed (although himself unexpensive) by the repeated demands made upon his liberality by the Queen and the Count d'Artois, whose profusion was unbounded.

The character and conduct of the Queen of France is thought by many to have hastened the explosion of the Revolution, in a still greater degree than that of her royal consort. The first years of her residence in France were distinguished by

the general adulation of all classes; and the energetic mind of Burke had recourse to all that genius and imagination could suggest, when he pourtrayed the youthful Dauphiness, in the most glowing tints, and dwelt with admiration on the graces of her person, and the fascination of her discourse. A career commenced under such flattering auspices, although it could not reasonably be expected to continue altogether without alloy, yet surely it did not forebode so tragical a sequel. And we are astonished, after a few short years, at finding that Queen, who had formerly engaged all hearts, loaded with obloquy for her levity and prodigality (which, great as they unquestionably were, had, at one time, rather obtained for her the applause than the reprehension of the Parisians), accused of abusing her influence over the King, and, in short, censured as the cause of every embarrassing, or unpopular event.

The Brothers of the King were not calculated to act any distinguished part in the political world: but *the Duke of Orleans* (whose name will be for ever held up to the detestation of mankind), although

farther removed from the throne, and by no means possessed of shining abilities, yet appeared foremost in stimulating those excesses, by which he appears to have expected ultimately to obtain the inheritance of the elder branches of his family.

Such was the state of the Royal Family, and such the disposition of the nation, when death deprived the King of the able services of *M. Vegennes,* who had for eight years filled the first place in his counsels, and who in this, at least, was happy that he did not survive to witness the misfortunes of his country, which he probably could not have averted. His successor, *M. Calonne,* (whose administration continued but a few weeks,) suggested to the King the assembling of the "*Notables;*" but they were found both incompetent and averse to remedy the accumulated distempers of the state.

The plans of *the Archbishop of Toulouse* (who succeeded to the control of the finances) not being attended with the expected advantages, and the popular voice loudly calling for the assembling of the *States-General* of the kingdom, as the

only probable means of relieving France from the impending evils of bankruptcy and ruin, the King determined on complying with what appeared to be the general wish, and issued his orders for the convocation of that assembly.

Believe me to remain, &c.

LETTER III.

We are now called to the consideration of events, which, although for the most part they may not be obliterated from your recollection, are yet sufficiently important to be briefly recapitulated, that thus the progress of a revolution, unparalleled in history, may be traced in a sufficiently satisfactory manner.

The opening of the *States-General* on the 5th of May, 1789, may be considered as the commencement of that new era, to the singular changes of which we have proposed to direct our attention.

To the French this was confessedly a *novel spectacle:* they had long been excluded from any political authority, and were permitted to assert their claim to legislation, at a time when the unsettled state of affairs, and the fluctuations of popular opinion, rendered it peculiarly difficult for them to

act beneficially for their country. Thus suddenly called to participate in that authority, heretofore solely vested in their kings, we shall not be astonished to find them dazzled by the novelty of their situation, and overpowered by the accumulated weight of business which claimed their superintendence and attention.

With this weight, however, they were not long perplexed; for, stimulated by the popular voice, they soon directed their ingenuity, rather to *new model* the government, than to remove those obstructions which perplexed its movements; and being dismayed by the magnitude of those labours which they were called on to undertake, they thoughtlessly directed the impetuous torrent of democratic zeal to the *immediate* removal of those abuses, which, as they had been of long accumulation, should have been of gradual removal, and rather called for the temperate deliberation of a discreet assembly, than for the violence of popular interference.

The French deputies had recourse to the expedient of Hercules, without possessing his ability: like him they directed a *torrent*

against those evils which they were desirous of removing; but were themselves borne along by its irresistible force.

Sanguine indeed were the expectations formed by the French nation of the advantages that would result from the convocation of the States-General; and *Marmontel* (who had assisted at their opening) tells us that, "hope seemed to precede their march, and the approbation of the nation to attend them; but in the midst of the parade of patriotism and loyalty, the dull and hollow murmurs, which precede popular commotions, fell indistinctly on the ear."

At a moment of such importance, whilst the fate of his crown seemed trembling in the balance, the irresolute conduct of the King was but ill calculated to allay the rising storm with which France was menaced. Naturally timid, he would probably have yielded to the menaces of those who successively encroached on his authority, until resistance was no longer in his power, had he not been stimulated by the influence of the Queen, and other casual advisers, occasionally to oppose the popular clamour, whilst his opposition served only

to deprive him of any merit he had obtained by his former concessions, and called forth the rancour of his enemies, who came forward with new demands, to which they thought he would not venture to refuse his sanction.

The very first measure which followed the opening of the States-General, foreboded no advantage to the royal cause. The re-union of the three estates of which that body was composed (the clergy, nobility, and popular deputies) was at first forbidden by the King; but afterwards recommended by him, when he discovered the jealousy, which already seemed to actuate that powerful body. The popular deputies being (according to the advice of Neckar, who is supposed to have had in view some of the Swiss governments) far more numerous than the other orders, thus became possessed of almost the whole authority of the state, and, upon the suggestion of the *Abbé Seyes,* assumed the title of *the National Assembly.*

Their contests with the King were now frequent; his Majesty appeared openly to regret the measures he had adopted, and to

mistrust his new advisers, as he surrounded his capital with troops, dismissed Neckar from his counsels, and determined on the formation of a new cabinet.

The middle of July was remarkable for the first open acts of hostility between the King's forces and the populace. A *national guard* (distinguished by the green cockade) was now established as a counterpoise to the royal army. The arms of the *Garde Meuble,* and the *Invalides,* were seized on for their equipment; and the *Bastile,* that fortress so formidable to the apprehensions of the Parisians, opposed but a feeble resistance to the energy of their attack. Its walls were found to contain but few prisoners; but its capture freed the lawless mob of Paris from all fears of coercion, and encouraged them to still further aggressions.

Great, indeed, was the alarm of the court when the intelligence of these outrages reached Versailles. The King immediately repaired to the National Assembly, rather as a suppliant than as a sovereign, and informed them he had commanded the removal of the forces which surrounded

Paris and Versailles, professing his anxiety to give every proof of his deference to the wishes of his subjects, as well as his determination to trust to the exertions of the Assembly for the restoration of order and tranquillity.

To this declaration (although evidently extorted by fear) the Assembly returned a gracious and loyal answer; but they continued without relaxation to issue decrees without obtaining the previous concurrence of the King. They recalled M. Neckar—they abolished privileges, courts leet, and tithes.—They decreed the removal of such church plate, as was not in actual use, to the public mint—the liberty of the press—the rights of man—the freedom of religious opinions.—They regulated the election of the national representatives, from the eighty-three departments into which France was now divided.—They decreed that *the deputies of the nation only* should form the National Assembly, and that their sittings should be *permanent*—whilst, to reconcile the King to these extensive inovations, they pronounced the inviolability of the royal person.

These decrees, and the results which they were calculated to produce, were of themselves sufficient to increase the general agitation; but a *famine*, the effects of which were at the same time felt at Paris, raised the turbulent spirit of the populace almost to desperation, and rendered them the willing instruments of the factious and disloyal.

The triumph of the revolutionists required to be marked by a *signal outrage against royalty*.—This was indeed easily obtained; and the King, having given up as fruitless any idea of resisting the innovating spirit of the times, was (after narrowly escaping assassination, and submitting to numberless indignities) conducted in triumph from Versailles to Paris, by a mob of desperadoes, and compelled to fix the residence of his family in a city which was no longer obedient to his authority.

Louis XIV. would probably have preferred death to submission on such an occasion; but his descendant was not possessed of equal intrepidity. He shrunk with horror from the prospect of a civil war, and despairing of maintaining his former

authority, determined to be content with the limited portion he might hope eventually to retain.

After thus submitting to popular violence (and that too on an occasion when he might most conscientiously have resisted), the King could no longer be considered as a *free agent*. He seems indeed, by receiving the national cockade from the mayor of Paris, to have received the kingly dignity by a new tenure, and to have from that period held his crown, during the pleasure of the Parisian mob, by the *base service* of complying with their exactions, and tolerating their atrocities. That he was sensible of his degraded situation is evident from his reply to a domestic who encouraged him not to despair of his personal safety :— "*Henri IV. valoit mieux que moi; et cependant on l'a assassiné.*"

The removal of the National Assembly to Paris (which immediately followed that of the King) deprived that body of the small portion of independence they enjoyed at Versailles, and rendered them no less the slaves of the factious than their sovereign. Accordingly we find their decrees becoming

only the *echoes* of a jacobinical mob.—All *degrees* and titular distinctions were now abolished by a formal decree, having indeed long since ceased to exist in point of fact. The ancient parliaments of France were dissolved; the property both of the *regular* and of the *secular* clergy was confiscated; the game laws, and feudal rights were annulled; and a new *civic oath* was instituted (which conferred on all persons taking it, without distinction, and without exception, the rights of French citizens); this was taken by the King in February 1791, and afterwards by the deputies of the National Assembly, and by the nation in general. Thus rapid were the strides of *revolutionary zeal*, and thus quickly was that *reign of terror* established, which for a time triumphed in the downfall, of every honourable, social, and religious feeling.

Emigration hourly increased; and the surrounding states were thronged with the most distinguished personages of France, who no longer considered themselves in safety, unless beyond the limits of their unhappy country.

A few of the *noblesse*, more resolute

than the rest, assembled together in this critical conjuncture, animated with the hope of being able, in some degree, to arrest the operations of the factious, who rejoiced to see those whom a sense of duty should have kept at their posts, withdrawing themselves from the kingdom, and leaving a wide field for the work of revolution. These respectable persons wished to restore to religion its salutary influence, to the laws their due authority, and to the King that power which is essential to the discharge of the executive authority.

They did not, however, meet with that co-operation, without which, in a season of such difficulty, they could not expect to make any effectual stand against the *Hydra* which desolated France. The King would not sanction measures which were likely to be attended with the effusion of the blood, even of his rebellious subjects; and without his authority their efforts would have been unavailing. The intentions of Louis were no doubt amiable, but (as might be easily foreseen from the characters of those with whom he had to deal) they wholly failed of

producing the anticipated effect, and incalculable numbers of his loyal subjects were finally involved in one common destruction with their irresolute sovereign.

Meanwhile the Duke of Orleans (now known by the name of *Philippe Egalité*) seemed to rejoice in the astonishingly rapid progress of that revolution, to which his *intrigues* had so much contributed, and to exult "*o'er all his wide dominion of the dead.*" For neither the united powers of *La Fayette*, to whom was assigned the command of the National Guard, nor of *Bailli*, the Mayor of Paris, could effectually restrain the atrocious violence of a populace, "whose feet were swift to shed blood,"—and who almost daily perpetrated atrocities, not inferior to any which we find recorded of the most barbarous nations.

The heads of the unfortunate victims of popular fury were continually carried in procession through the blood-stained streets of Paris; and the revolution thus accomplished on the banks of the Seine, was, from the preponderating influence of *Parisian example*, (every detail of which was quickly

circulated by a licentious press,) both applauded and imitated throughout the most distant provinces of France.

Loyalty, that former characteristic of the French, seemed every where to have "hidden her diminished head," and the Queen in particular, was singled out as the object of every possible calumny and insult. It will scarcely be credited by posterity that her Majesty with difficulty escaped assassination in the palace of Versailles, and that acts of greater ferocity than any related of the Turkish janizaries, were perpetrated without remorse, by a people hitherto esteemed one of the most polite in Europe, and this at the close of the eighteenth century.

M. Neckar, whose ability was too limited to enable him to maintain his ground in the midst of those revolutions of opinion, which distinguished the fickle populace of France, now solicited, and obtained permission to retire from public life. The financial difficulties of France being increased, the Convention endeavoured to prevent the forging of the *assignats*, with which the country was overwhelmed, by declaring it a capital offence.

Irreligion was openly professed, and boasted of even in the hall of the Convention. Honours were decreed to the memories of the most celebrated atheists. The Pope was burned in effigy in the Palais Royal, and a national and elective clergy were for a time constituted and taken into the pay of the nation. They were, however, soon found to be useless and expensive appendages to a people, who, now openly adhering to the maxims of Voltaire and Rousseau, of D'Alembert and Diderot, defaced the churches which their christian ancestors had erected, collected together a few of the tombs from St. Denis and other cathedrals, which were formed into "*the Museum of National Monuments:*" where the busts of the avowed enemies of revelation were placed in triumph, and over the entrance of which was engraven, "*Death is a perpetual sleep.*" This inscription has been removed; but I was sorry to find, during my stay at Paris, that these memorials of the dead had not been restored to their proper situations, but were still permitted to remain where they had been sacrilegiously collected.

The delirium into which the French had now fallen, and the multiplied insults they had offered the Royal Family, induced them to attempt, if possible, to withdraw from a scene, which daily became more and more intolerable. They accordingly quitted Paris on the 21st of June, 1791, but were arrested the day following by means of M. Drouët, post-master of St. Menhould, at Varennes, when they had nearly reached the frontiers of France. The royal fugitives were escorted into Paris on the 26th by thirty thousand of the National Guards, and received (according to official directions) in *silence* by the populace. Decrees were now enacted against all emigrants, and particularly against the Prince of Condé, who had assembled a numerous army on the French frontiers, which were also threatened by the Austrian forces.

On the 20th of July, 1791, was said to be signed, the famous *Convention of Pilnitz*, between the Emperor Leopold, and the King of Prussia. Its ostensible object was the reduction of the territories of France, by dividing the conquests of Louis XIV.

amongst the neighbouring states. The partition of Poland was also resolved on, and proved more easy of execution than that of France. This treaty has been often quoted as a curious specimen of diplomatic chicanery; whilst others have denied its existence, or treated it as a jacobinical forgery.

A continental war now seemed inevitable, and its approach no doubt contributed to hasten the completion of the *new constitution of France,* which was presented on the 3rd of September, by a deputation of the National Assemby to the King, who on the 14th signed his acceptance of it, and took an oath to maintain its inviolability. This event was distinguished by extraordinary fêtes, and the tree of liberty was planted on the site of the Bastile. The *Constituent Assembly of France* now finally terminated their sittings; and on the 1st of October, the new *Legislative Assembly,* being elected according to the prescribed forms, assumed the exercise of its authority, and decreed the confiscation of the property of all emigrants who did not immediately return home: this, however,

few had courage to do; but the King declined for a time sanctioning a decree, which proscribed most of the princes of his family.

The insufficiency of the new constitution was proved by the disturbed state of Paris. *Fraternal Societies and Clubs* were instituted, and proved powerful engines, in the hands of the designing, to work upon the passions of the populace.

The utmost animosity existed between the members of these different societies; and the club of the *Moderates*, or *Feuillans* (so named from a vacant convent where they assembled), was completely dissolved by the violence of the *Jacobin Club* (which also derived its name from a dissolved convent, formerly belonging to the Jacobins), the principal object of which was said to be the dissemination of political knowledge amongst the people. — The system upon which this society was formed rendered it peculiarly formidable, and it became possessed of a control over the National Assembly, although itself influenced by the fluctuating applause or censure, manifested by those who attended the debates of its own members.

The manifesto of *Condorcet*, which being drawn up in that pompous phraseology now first become familiar to the world, excited much attention, appeared towards the close of the year 1791. But as I have already exceeded the limits within which my Letter should be comprised, I shall not quote the ardent wishes for peace which it expressed, nor dwell on the ridicule it bestowed on those, who considered the internal divisions of France an evidence of the weakness of that country.

Yours, &c.

LETTER IV.

OUR attention is now to be directed to the melancholy termination of the reign of Louis XVI. for which the preceding events must have prepared our minds.

The constitution of France had been so radically altered, and the royal authority rendered so complete a phantom, that it was not to be expected that they, who had so entirely debased the regal power, would long submit to treat it even with a nominal deference; but, having possessed themselves of the whole power of the state, would soon abolish, as useless, an office which they had virtually rendered so.

The sudden death of the Emperor Leopold, early in 1792, appears to have accelerated, rather than retarded, the impending war between France and Austria. The new Emperor (Francis II.) fully adopted the political principles of his predecessor,

(in a manifesto published soon after his accession by Prince Kaunitz;) and, after some correspondence between the French and Austrian governments, war was formally declared by the former on the 20th of April, and on the 28th the French army entered the Austrian Netherlands.

The assassination of Gustavus III. King of Sweden, which immediately followed the *sudden death* of the Emperor Leopold, excited a considerable sensation in Europe, and many attributed the death of those sovereigns to the machinations of the Jacobins.

But the general indignation of all reflecting persons was now excited in a peculiar manner, by the infamous conduct of the Russian, Austrian, and Prussian governments towards the unhappy Poles, whose doom appears to have been long since determined on. In London the wealthy inhabitants (with that liberality for which they have been long conspicuous, and which is not appealed to in vain by real distress,) came forward with a subscription for the assistance of the King and people of Poland, who appeared to have

been singled out for destruction by their powerful neighbours—and who were abandoned by those powers, whose *true policy* (were justice and humanity out of the question, as they too frequently are, in political combinations) should have induced them to prevent the dismemberment of a kingdom containing above ten millions of inhabitants, and which, under a more suitable government, would have had considerable weight in regulating the balance of political power in Europe.

The bounty of the British nation was also extended with still greater liberality, to relieve the suffering clergy and refugees of France, who had in vast numbers, sought abroad for that protection, which was no longer afforded them in their native country.

In July 1792, the King of Prussia recalled his ministers from Paris, and declared that his engagements with the Emperor would no longer admit of his remaining neutral.

On the 25th of the same month, *the Duke of Brunswick issued* (from the head quarters of the allied Austrian, Prussian,

and emigrant armies at Coblentz) *his famous declaration.*

In this the French are informed that the cause of his entering their country with his army, arises from their having invaded the rights and possessions of the German princes in Alsace and Lorraine; from their having overthrown all lawful government in the interior of their own country, and used the most violent measures against their Royal Family; from their unjust declaration of war, and invasion of the Austrian Netherlands; and from a determination, on the part of the allied sovereigns, to terminate the reign of anarchy in France, to restore to religion its supremacy, and to the King that legitimate power and liberty, of which he had been deprived. The Emperor and King further express their conviction, that the respectable part of the nation detest the excesses of a faction which has enslaved them, will readily join in co-operating against their oppressors, and will return without delay into the paths of justice, order, and peace. The Duke, in the name of the allied courts, then proceeds to disclaim—

1. Any view to *conquest*, or any other object than the welfare of France.

2. Any wish to interfere with the *internal government* of that country, but simply proposing to restore the Royal Family to *free agency*.

3. He promises that the army he commands shall respect all places and persons submitting to the King, and assist in promoting good order.

4. The National Guards are called on to preserve tranquillity, and those who may be taken fighting against the two allied courts to be treated as *rebels* to their King, and disturbers of the public peace.

5. The officers and soldiers of the regular French troops are equally called upon to *submit immediately* to their King.

6. Members of departments, districts, &c. are declared *responsible* for all crimes they shall suffer to take place, &c.

7. Such inhabitants as shall *resist* the allied forces are liable to *martial law*.

8. The city of Paris is called on to submit without delay to the King, and to ensure the Royal Family that respect, and inviolability due to them, both by the laws

of nature and of nations, whilst signal vengeance is threatened to be inflicted on the perpetrators of any further outrages, &c.

On the 3rd of August the King of the French (as he was now styled) addressed a letter to the President of the National Assembly, in which, alluding to the above declaration, he asserts his determination not to compromise the glory or the interests of the nation, and not to receive laws from foreigners, or from a party, as he owed himself to the nation, and was one and the same with her. They who *injure* are said to be the *slowest to forgive;* and the National Assembly, conscious of the severity with which they had treated the King, not only refused to give credit to his assertions, but declared his letter to be *a tissue of falsehoods.* The envoys of Paris now *demanded that the King should be excluded from the throne,* and the management of affairs be entrusted to responsible ministers, until *the election of a new King,* in a National Convention. Some of the sections of Paris also loudly demanded that the King should be *dethroned,* and declared

their determination to renounce their allegiance to him.

On the 6th, the King, aware of the danger by which his life was threatened, made an attempt to escape from the Thuilleries, in the disguise of a peasant, but was unfortunately discovered and obliged to return. On the following day he addressed a proclamation to the nation, but it produced no favourable effect; and the Parisians, irritated at the acquittal of M. La Fayette, were determined to carry the question for "*the King's deposition,*" which stood for the 9th. At midnight the *alarm bells* sounded in every quarter of Paris, the *generale* was beat, and the National Assembly was surrounded by an immense multitude of armed persons, threatening destruction to those who might venture to oppose their wishes.

The *Jacobins* (who had declared the sittings of their club to be *permanent),* being incensed at the dismissal of some of their members from the ministry, *now resolved to make a final effort against royalty;* and the fauxbourgs *St. Antoine* and *Marceau* furnished them with nu-

merous and desperate partisans, ready to attempt any outrage.

The *attack on the Thuilleries* (which took place on the 10th of August) had been so long in agitation, that the King, being aware of it, had collected together about one thousand three hundred gentlemen and others for his defence, besides about seven hundred Swiss guards. The National Guards, and Gendarmerie, were not much relied on, although very numerous, and hitherto well conducted.

The necessity of opposing force to force seemed now inevitable; the dreadful Rubicon had been passed, and no hope of returning harmony or peace remained.

Whilst his palace was thus surrounded by a force of above twenty thousand well armed assailants, M. Rœderer entered the King's presence, and declaring that "no person should interfere between the King and the Department," entreated his Majesty to abandon all thoughts of defence, and to repair to the National Assembly, where alone he could be in safety.

The Queen, who suspected a conspiracy, and whose force of mind rather disposed

her to resistance than submission, strongly opposed this proposition; but the King determined to comply with the counsel of M. Rœderer, although he had soon reason to regret the resolution, to which he was impelled by the treachery, or timidity of that magistrate. His Majesty, accompanied with his Queen, sister, and children, accordingly proceeded to the Assembly, where, having seated himself by the side of the President, he said, "I am come hither to prevent a great crime; among you, gentlemen, I believe myself in safety." The *presence of the King* being objected to as unconstitutional, he was placed with his family in a small box, which had been appropriated to the editors of a newspaper, in which confined situation they remained for fourteen hours.

It is to be regretted that the King, on quitting the *Thuilleries*, did not command those whom he had assembled within its walls to capitulate. Much bloodshed would thus have, in all probability, been avoided, and the event might even have proved favourable to the King, who, in conse-

quence of this neglect, was charged with duplicity—in wishing to secure the restoration of his former authority, should the party within the palace prove victorious—and with preserving his own life, at all events, should things take an unfavourable turn, by throwing himself on the protection of the National Assembly. At such a crisis the most malignant imputations obtained a ready circulation and belief;—posterity will, however, judge more candidly of the King's conduct, and make allowance for his want of judgment, in the agitating circumstances in which he was placed.

Dreadful indeed was the carnage of this memorable day. The retreat of the King was fatal to the defence of the palace, and only five hundred of those employed in its defence escaped. The contest lay chiefly between the *Marsellois* and the *Swiss*, whose intrepidity did not recommend them to their merciless and infuriate assailants, who even extended their vengeance to private individuals of that nation. The ancient palace of the Bourbons was completely pillaged, no vestige of its

splendid decorations remained, and its spacious apartments were defiled with the blood of above two thousand persons.

Whilst these terrific scenes were carrying on, the *National Assembly* still proceeded, in its own phrase, "*to deliberate:*" but its deliberations were no longer free; the same lawless spirit, which had driven the King from his palace, overawed them by their threatenings from without; and even their galleries were filled with clamorous and hired partisans. The stoutest hearts were appalled; and, in compliance with the demands of the "*architects of ruin,*" (as the mob were truly called—they having already proceeded to acts which proved no ties could bind them,) *the Executive Power* was declared to be suspended, and the *Royal Authority,* given by the constitution to Louis XVI. revoked. The people were invited to meet in primary assemblies, and to form a *National Convention,* to be held in the ensuing month.

All *statues of kings* were ordered to be *demolished,* together with those of *La Fayette, Neckar,* and *Mirabeau.*

The unfortunate Louis might now ex-

claim with *Cicero*, "*I know whom to fly from, but not whom to fly to.*" To escape was now, however, become impossible; for the Royal Family, after repeated insults, were *confined as hostages* in the tower of *the Temple.* And no authority any longer restraining the infuriate rabble, they proceeded to break open the prisons of Paris, and to murder all those whom they considered as *suspected persons;*—between two and three thousand victims seemed scarcely to satisfy those blood-thirsty wretches, known by the title of *Septemberizers.*

The head of the unfortunate Princess of Lamballe, the friend of the Queen, was, by a refinement on cruelty, carried into the presence of the Royal Family, by a deputation of those assassins, whose hands were yet stained with the purest blood of France.

The *National Convention,* having assembled on the 21st of September, decreed "*the abolition of royalty;*"—that all public acts should be dated on "*the first year of the French Republic;*" and that *the trial of the King should be proceeded on.* The advance of the Duke of Brunswick's army redoubled the activity of the preparations

before commenced for the defence of Paris, whilst war was announced as having been declared against France, by the Russian, Spanish, and Sardinian governments.

The *Convention*, which had at first disclaimed all ideas of conquest, and professed only to aim at the internal regulation of their own country, and the expulsion of foreign armies from France, being encouraged by unlooked for success, declared its determination by a resolution on the 1st of November—" To grant fellowship and assistance to *every nation* that wishes to recover its liberty; and charged the executive power to give to the generals the necessary orders to carry assistance to such nations, and to defend the citizens who have been, or may be, molested in the cause of liberty."

This extraordinary determination gave just offence to all legitimate governments, but tended to promote the victories of the French armies; for so powerful was the delusion created by *jacobinical principles*, that but too many nations were desirous of participating in the proffered *fraternity of France*, to the baneful influence of

which, we may apply the poetical description of the ivy, which is represented as *" killing by its cold embrace."*

The *Belgians,* from their proximity to France, were the first invited *to establish the sovereignty of the people,* and by renouncing their subjection to despots, to become the friends and allies of the French. It were tedious to enumerate the various battles, sieges, interviews, and negociations, and to attempt to recount every circumstance of the war, which now raged with the fiercest animosity along the whole extended frontier of France.

The vacillating policy of the King of Prussia, however, rendered it necessary for the Duke of Brunswick to *retreat,* without accomplishing any great achievement.

The French army under *General Custine,* now captured several cities on the Rhine; whilst that under *Dumourier,* obtained a signal victory over the allies at Jemappe (which retrieved the depression into which the French had fallen after the battle of Longwy); in this engagement from ten to twenty thousand men fell on either side; but it was followed by the submission to the

French of Brussels, Liege, and the most considerable cities of the Netherlands, the fortifications of which were inadequate to resist an invading army.

The success of the French, on the side of Italy, was not less decided; and the Convention, now disclaiming those principles of moderation which they had originally professed, decreed that *Savoy* should be for ever incorporated with France, and formed into an eighty-fourth department, by the designation of *Mont Blanc.*

But divided as it was into hostile factions, the Convention soon proved its incapacity to legislate either with dignity or impartiality. Of this sufficient evidence is afforded by their treatment of their generals, particularly of *Luckner,* and *La Fayette;* by their decrees against *reputed emigrants;* and by their offer of assisting all nations resisting their actual governments.

The first constitution, established in 1789-90, was indeed rather a *reform* than a *revolution;* it was accomplished without bloodshed, and appeared to be received with unanimity. Several causes, however,

contributed to its overthrow — amongst these may be enumerated the *misconduct* of the Constituent Assembly, in subverting those principles on which the *rights of property* are founded ; in abolishing those *orders* and *degrees* which are essential to the existence of civilized society ; and in their intemperate conduct towards the ecclesiastical body in particular, by which they wished to prove their superiority to what were designated *religious prejudices :* but these self-sufficient philosophers had soon reason to discover that it was easier to remove *the great stay* which preserves men within the bounds of duty, than to provide them with any other motive, at all sufficient to guide them with integrity through life.

We have before had occasion to notice the ascendency of the *Jacobins* over the *Feuillans* (or *Moderates);* a *new faction,* that of the *Gironde,* or *Brissotines* (to whose agency the bloodshed of the 10th of August is imputed) now acquired considerable political importance, but were powerfully opposed by the *Mountain party* (or *Anarchists),* the promoters of the mas-

sacres in September, whose manners and harangues were peculiarly suited to the savage temper of the times; of these the noted Robespierre was the leader.

It has been generally observed by historians, that a long interval seldom elapses between the deposition and the death of kings. The fate of Louis affords a melancholy instance of the truth of that remark, and was undoubtedly accelerated by the exasperation of the contending factions. The *Gironde party*, either from principle or policy, were desirous of saving the King; and had they been consistent and unanimous, they might possibly have succeeded: but accustomed to intrigue and *finesse*, they knew not how to act with manliness and candour. And whilst the *Mountain party* were daily pressing the trial of the King (which they were encouraged to do by the sanguinary disposition of the populace, who were incited to call loudly for revenge on the King, as the cause of the sad events of the 10th of August), the *Girondists* contended generally for *delay*, for *banishment*, or for *imprisonment*, without bringing forward any specific motion.

The trial of the King was accelerated by the discovery of an iron chest containing some of his private papers, which were thought to furnish proof of the crimes of which he was accused. This proceeding was, indeed, conducted in the most scandalous manner—the Convention (acting with less *form* than the English regicides, who, when determined to the counsels of traitors to execute their sovereign, appointed a court expressly for his trial), themselves confounding together the characters of *judges, jury,* and *accusers.* Every exertion was made in behalf of Louis by his counsel, particularly by *M. Lamoignon-Malesherbes* (whose life has been published and is highly interesting). The King of Spain also made an ineffectual appeal to the Convention, in favour of the King, who conducted himself with the greatest resolution during the whole discussion, which was fatally closed on the 16th of January, 1793, and after a sitting of thirty-eight hours, the punishment of *death* was pronounced by a small majority.—For out of seven hundred and twenty-one votes, *three hundred and sixty-six* were for *death;*

—three hundred and nineteen for *imprisonment during the war ;—two* for perpetual imprisonment ;—*eight* for a suspension of the sentence till the expulsion of the Bourbons ;—twenty-three were for not putting him to death unless France was invaded ;—whilst *one* was for death, but with commutation of punishment.

The law, by which *at least two-thirds of the voices* are required to constitute a definitive judgment, was here disregarded, and even *a respite of three days only* was *rejected* by *three hundred and eighty* against *three hundred and ten* votes. On the morning of the 21st of January, the King was conducted to the scaffold, and met his fate with firmness : but the malice of his enemies would not even permit his addressing a few words, for the last time, to the deluded populace ; and they affected to attribute the courage displayed by the unfortunate Prince, in his last moments, to a hope of being *rescued* by his friends. Such an expectation he certainly could not have entertained, from the preponderating influence of those who condemned him to death, and hastened the execution of the

sentence. There were few characters more misrepresented than that of the King of France; but, notwithstanding the calumnies of his persecutors, (who were willing to detract, as much as possible, from those *good qualities,* which, even in the worst of times, must receive that *tribute* which *vice* is ever constrained to pay to *virtue,)* we have abundant evidence that the intrepidity and resignation, which he is *admitted to have displayed* on this awful occasion, were attributable to *that* which can alone support a man in the extreme of adversity—*the hopes and consolations of religion.*

Thus died *Louis XVI.* whose fate, however much it elated the faction of the day, is (as far as my observations extended when in France) *regretted* by all respectable Frenchmen, who consider him as having been a man unquestionably "more sinned against, than sinning."

I shall conclude my brief detail of this melancholy narrative with the words of a most emphatic writer:—

"As if every incident of this tragedy had been intended to display the strange vicissitudes of human fortune; as if every

scene were meant to point a moral; the remains of the King were conveyed to the church of St. Madelaine, where were also deposited the bodies of those who were crushed to death on the marriage of the King, and of those who had fallen before the castle of the Thuilleries on the 10th of August. The grave was filled with quick lime, and the ground carefully levelled, that no remains might be found of that spot, to which, shrouded by the doubtful gloom of twilight, ancient loyalty might have repaired and poured a tear, or religion breathed its ritual for the departed spirit."

LETTER V.

HAVING in my last Letter recorded the triumph of rebellion and the death of its ill-fated victim, I would now wish, for a short time, to withdraw your attention from the contemplation of those internal excesses to which France had become a prey, in order that we may take a cursory view of the sad effects produced throughout Europe by the *revolutionary spirit*, for its delirium was not long confined within the limits of France, and we may truly say—

"Iliacos intra muros peccatur, et extra."

That the revolution, considered as affecting the French people, instead of realizing their sanguine expectations, and raising them in the scale of nations to that eminence upon which they sought to stand, only degraded them as moral agents, and seemed to surround them with a darkness as great as that which prevailed in the

fabled cave of *Epimenides*, where no ray of heavenly light could enter, will not, I think, be denied by any impartial observer.

But it were impossible to suppose, that the disease by which so powerful a nation was convulsed, should not extend itself amongst the neighbouring states; and we cannot conceive France a prey to *anarchy* and *irreligion*, without trembling for the repose of Europe.

The fraternizing decrees of the Convention proved that they were but too well disposed to give universal currency to the most dangerous and delusive principles; and that under pretence of *rendering happier* the subjects of other governments, they were really spreading every where the flames of revolt, and planning a system of anarchy, which tended to dissolve all civilized society.

When the views of *a conqueror* are discovered they commonly cease to be formidable, by the resistance which they experience; but errors so fatal as those engendered by the *revolutionary philosophy*, were calculated to produce worse consequences than *any tyranny* hitherto

witnessed in the world. The *success* which attended the movements of those who promoted the French Revolution, greatly contributed to its *popularity;* the inhabitants of other countries were encouraged to put in practice a scheme which appeared so easy of execution; and were but too attentive, when invited in that *specious phraseology,* so convincing to the *uninformed mind,* (which often readily admits the deductions of that reasoning which it can neither confute nor comprehend,) to be no longer *slaves,* by which, in the language of this *anti-social* confederacy, all those were included who submitted to every *legitimate* ordinance of man, for the Lord's sake.

That these *new-fangled doctrines* should find many advocates, amongst those who felt the severity of a *despotic yoke,* can be a matter of little astonishment; but that they should find promoters amongst the subjects of the mildest and best constituted government which ever had existence, was indeed truly alarming.

If the good sense and sound judgment, which had hitherto characterized the British nation, were now to be laid aside or over-

thrown, well might the friends of order and morality, in other countries, tremble for the consequences; and their hopes of being eventually triumphant could not but be faint, were the influence of England even to be neutralized.

From the conclusion of the American war in 1783, until the commencement of the French Revolution, (or rather till that period, when the diffusion of its principles seemed to threaten the subversion of all existing governments,) England had been gradually reviving from the exhaustion of war. The recovery of a beloved King from a most alarming malady called forth the loyal expressions of his grateful subjects. And if the period, which affords but scanty materials to the historian, (whose pages are chiefly occupied by the wars and dissensions, the crimes and the calamities of nations,) be considered as the happiest and most favourable for a people—England was now silently enjoying those blessings, together with the respect of the most distant states; for her *tranquillity* did not border upon *inaction*, (as was proved by her opposition to the schemes of aggrandisement,

proposed by the Empress Catherine of Russia,) but she was ever ready to preserve her just ascendency in Europe, as well as to maintain a due balance amongst its powers.

This period of tranquillity was now, however, to be ruffled by incipient discontents. From having been well wishers to the *temperate endeavours,* which at first distinguished the French in their pursuit of liberty, several of our countrymen seemed disposed to adopt, without sufficient consideration, the principles of *modern philosophy ;* and whilst many respectable Frenchmen, deceived and disgusted by their demagogues, were ready to exclaim of *liberty,* as Brutus did of *virtue,* "we reverenced thee as a thing sacred, but thou art an empty name,"—still the specious advantages of revolution were blazoned forth at a distance, whilst its real horrors were causing France to bleed at every pore.

Seditious and *corresponding societies* were now formed throughout Europe, for the dissemination of the most alarming principles. In England they had increased to a formidable degree ; the press teemed

with *seditious* publications, and the courts were engaged with the trials of numbers who were charged with treasonable practices.

Happily indeed for England, and not less so for the world at large, we then possessed a minister distinguished for his firmness and energy, whose administration succeeding, as it did, those fleeting cabinets which had harrassed the country with perpetual changes of system, seemed calculated for durability, and promised to add fresh lustre to the respected name of *Pitt*. A new era had now commenced; the easy task of conducting a tranquil state had ceased; the most decisive measures were called for; and it became necessary, for a time, (in order effectually to detect the machinations of the disloyal,) to diminish the personal liberty both of *aliens* and *natives*, in order that the substantial freedom of England might rather be eclipsed for a time, than obscured for ever.

It would lead me far beyond those limits within which, as well for your sake as for my own, I am desirous of confining myself, were I to enter upon the consideration of

the long agitated question, " Whether the war of 1793 is to be attributed chiefly to the French, or to the British government ?" Volumes have been written on the subject, and manifestoes have been sent forth, contending, as well in *prolixity of style*, as respecting *matters of fact*. But the able work of my respected friend, *Professor Marsh*, (whose abilities as a politician are not less eminent than his talents as a divine, and whose acquaintance you also enjoyed during your residence at Cambridge,) proves to my judgment, as it has done to that of many others, in the extensive circulation it has had throughout Europe, and that in the most satisfactory manner, that the odium of having forced his country into so destructive a war does not rest with Mr. Pitt*.

The correspondence between the two governments was, indeed, from the peculiar circumstances of the times, conducted with-

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Since writing the above, the author has heard, with much pleasure, of the advancement of the Lady Margaret's Professor of Divinity to the See of Landaff.

out much temper. But from the professed encouragement held out by the French, to all *insubordination*, it became necessary for our government to consult its own safety, by preventing an unrestrained intercourse with a people thus at once morally and politically dangerous.

On the 24th of January, *M. Chauvelin*, whose authority being derived from Louis XVI. consequently terminated with the life of that Prince, was (on the receipt of the intelligence of his melancholy death) required to quit England within three days. And in a memorial now presented to the Dutch government, His Britannic Majesty declared, " that the annals of mankind could not present a period in which, during so short a time, so many crimes had been committed, so many misfortunes produced, and so many tears shed.—That during all this time, His Majesty, surrounded by his people, who, under the favour of Providence, enjoyed a prosperity without example, could not behold the misfortunes of others, without the strongest emotions of pity and indignation ; but, that faithful to his principles, His Majesty had never per-

mitted himself to interfere in the internal affairs of a foreign nation, nor departed from that system of neutrality which he had adopted;—that for several months back projects of ambition and aggrandisement, dangerous to the tranquillity and security of Europe, had been openly avowed; attempts had been made to spread throughout England and Holland, maxims subversive of all social order; and that they had not scrupled to give to these detestable attempts, the name of *Revolutionary Power*. Ancient and solemn treaties had been infringed, and the rights and territory of the republic had been violated. His Majesty had therefore, in his wisdom, made preparations proportioned to the nature of the circumstances—and that they had been received with the lively approbation of his people, who abhor anarchy and irreligion, who loved their King, and would maintain their constitution.—That His Majesty is persuaded he shall continue to experience on the part of their High Mightinesses, a perfect conformity of principles and conduct, as such conformity could alone give to the united efforts of both countries the energy

necessary to their common defence, and oppose a barrier to those evils with which Europe was menaced," &c.

From such sentiments as these we cannot withhold our approbation; and it were to be wished, that all rancorous expressions had been excluded from the language of *modern diplomacy*. If decorum be once laid aside between nations, as between individuals, the worst consequences ensue; and a collection of the *state papers, declarations*, &c. &c. to which the *revolutionary war* has given rise, would be a truly curious assemblage of all that is ambiguous, inflammatory, and extravagant in language.

War was declared by the National Convention against England and Holland, on the 1st of February, 1793. But, as *Burke* observed, the two nations were in fact previously in a state of hostility. The *opening of the Scheldt* was undoubtedly a violation, by the French, of an existing treaty, but perhaps not one of sufficient magnitude as to be an adequate ground for war. If, however, it should appear, that by the early commencement of hostilities between France

and England, and the consequent cessation of all intercourse between the two countries, we were the more effectually secured from the contagion of revolutionary principles, and thus enabled to hand down unimpaired to our posterity that excellent constitution which we had received from our ancestors, the contest, dreadful as it was, will hardly afford matter for regret.

At all events, having our lot cast in a time of unexampled difficulty and danger, we shall find abundant reason for gratitude to Providence, that our sufferings were *comparatively light,* and that we were ultimately instrumental in restoring to other nations the blessings of good order and peace.

The din of war now resounded from one extremity of Europe to the other; but although its leading powers were leagued together against revolutionary France, they were not yet united on such a *solid basis,* as was necessary to enable interests so various to contend with effect against a nation possessing such a powerful combination of advantages as France. Each of the allied powers (England always excepted)

seemed to fear, lest, by an *over-exertion*, they might place themselves in the power of their rivals; and being afraid of doing *more* than they had mutually stipulated for, they were generally *found wanting*, at that precise period, when their utmost exertions were requisite. The liberality with which England subsidized the continental powers may also have operated in retarding, instead of hastening, the end intended to be accomplished. And it was not until France had repeatedly triumphed over them individually, and that they severely felt the miseries of anarchy and subjection, *that Europe at last witnessed the formation of a coalition*, which, *being founded on mutual necessity rather than ambition*, and arising from the sad experience of former disasters instead of from sordid motives, was at length enabled to restore the ancient balance of European power, that graduated system of political attraction and repulsion, by which the smaller states preserve their independence, and which deters the great powers from committing any such flagrant acts of rapacity, injustice, or aggression, as might call

for the vengeance, or excite the jealousy of their neighbours.

The retreat of the Duke of Brunswick, and the subsequent success which had attended the French armies, had raised the public exultation in that country to so high a pitch, that its inhabitants were by no means prepared to receive any unfavourable intelligence either with fortitude or composure.—Paris was consequently thrown into the utmost alarm, by the defeat of the French army at *Neerwinden;* and the *black flag,* the signal of the country's being in danger, was hoisted on the towers of Notre Dame. Internal commotions were frequent; and multitudes were every day arrested by the *domiciliary visits* decreed by the Convention. *Committees of public safety,* invested with extraordinary powers, were also formed; and many cities represented to the Convention that they were a prey to all the horrors of famine, and the plots of *counter-revolutionists.* In *La Vendée* the people raised the *white cockade,* and declared for the *young king;* whilst in *Jourraine,* above thirty thousand men collected together, under the name of the

christian army, and declared against the government of *the Convention.*

The situation of France was rendered still more alarming by the *defection* of *General Dumouriez* (whose army was now dispersed and disheartened). Commissioners were deputed to arrest him; but, instead of submitting to their authority, he sent them to the Prince of Cobourg, as hostages for the safety of the Royal Family of France; and the prince being requested to treat them with the respect due to the representatives of a great nation, replied, "*Assure yourselves I will treat you with all the respect due to the assassins of your king.*" The Convention now arrested several Germans of distinction (having votes in the diet) to answer for the safety of their commissioners, and condemned all the members of the *Bourbon family* (excepting those confined in the Temple) to detention at Marseilles.

I have never seen any detailed statement of the negotiations between *Dumouriez* and the *allied generals;* but he appears to have lost the confidence of his own countrymen, without acquiring that of the coalesced

powers. A considerable British army, under the command of His Royal Highness the Duke of York, was now employed in co-operating with the allies in Flanders: the hard fought battles of *St. Amand* and *Famars* were followed by the siege of *Valenciennes*,—which city was obliged to yield to the valour of the British troops, and to the persevering exertions of the Duke of York, who took possession of that important fortress on the 26th of July, 1793, in the name of the Emperor of Germany. After this success, it was proposed to undertake the siege of Dunkirk, but this it was afterwards judged expedient to abandon; and the British army (whose excellent discipline justly obtained for them the applause of the Belgians) therefore proceeded with their illustrious commander to co-operate generally with the forces of their German allies, in effecting the expulsion of the French from the surrounding provinces.

LETTER VI.

LET me again conduct you "*in medias res,*" and recal your attention to scenes hitherto without parallel in the civilized world. They are not, however, of a nature which invite us to dwell on them longer than is absolutely necessary to preserve the integrity of our narration; for their simple recital cannot fail sufficiently to awaken every feeling of indignant nature, and of outraged humanity within our breasts.

The French, apparently becoming every day more and more involved in the "*inextricable error,*" the pathless maze of anarchy, now constituted a *revolutionary tribunal,* to take cognizance of *every enterprise, plot,* and *attempt,* against the liberty and sovereignty of the people, and the unity, indivisibility, and external, as well as internal safety of the republic, and of every plan tending to establish royalty, &c.; a

tribunal this, which achieved the greatest number of *legal murders* ever before recorded. The *guillotines,* and the *noyades* (or vessels fixed in rivers for drowning the victims of the terrorists) were kept in perpetual requisition against those who had not imbibed the new notions of philosophy and government; and the spirit of party had arrived at that deplorable excess, when the conduct of the people is no longer the result of reason and deliberation, but of the wildest phrenzy and misplaced enthusiasm.

The assassination of the celebrated *Marat,* the leader of the *Mountain faction,* by *Charlotte Cordé,* is but one amongst a variety of instances that might be adduced of the vitiated state of society in France.—Even in the Convention, all regard to decorum was laid aside, and the terms of *incendiary, assassin, villain, &c.* resounded throughout the assembly. The Parisians were also at this period in a state of perpetual insurrection and alarm, whilst the decree, that "*the armed force of Paris is in perpetual requisition,*" seemed in a manner to sanction the conduct of the mob.

The decrees of the Convention were

indeed so many additional proofs of the degradation into which the legislature of a country may decline; their proclamations to the armies and departments, and their declaration of the *rights of man* (consisting of thirty-five articles) were productions below any mediocrity, and almost unintelligible to common understandings. Nor was their conduct to those who had upholden their authority calculated to ensure its permanency; and whatever credit may be attached to the charges brought against *General Custine*, his eminent services should have procured for him, at least some trifling indulgence; but the Parisians, now accustomed to deeds of horror, beheld the sacrifice of their former defender with indifference, if not with exultation.

The *trial* and *condemnation* (now almost become synonimous terms) of *the Queen*, followed that of the general; and it is not probable that any line of conduct she might have pursued would have preserved her from the fury of her enemies. On the 16th of October, subsequent to the death of the King, this unfortunate Princess suffered on the same scaffold where her con-

sort had been executed. She heard the sentence, which was to terminate her miserable existence, without betraying any emotion; and there is every reason to believe (whatever may have been the errors, follies, or vices, which disgraced her early years) that she finally became a sincere penitent; rendered her present sufferings conducive to her future happiness; and experienced in the *consolations of religion,* a comfort which the world could by no means afford, and of which the malice of her persecutors could never deprive her.

It seemed, indeed, the wish of the Convention to deprive their victims (as far as it was practicable for them to do so) of *that consolation* which can alone enable human nature to maintain itself unmoved amidst the severest trials. The ancient and respectable clergy of France were proscribed, whilst a spurious and revolutionary priesthood were permitted to subsist, as it would appear, for the purpose of ridiculing the ordinances of religion. From the converse of a body so constituted, no *external* comfort could be derived; but the *internal* consolations of religion were, it is hoped,

experienced by many persons in the hour of adversity, as well as by the venerable *Malesherbes*, the conscientious defender of his King, and consequently the victim of traitors.

The surrender of *Toulon* to the British forces, and of *Lyons* to the revolutionary army, next engaged the public attention; but the conduct of the Convention to the latter city is too atrocious, and too well remembered to require any comment.

The tide of success now generally inclined to the cause of republicanism. The *Vendéans* were completely defeated in several regular engagements; but this singular people (who inhabit a district of about one hundred and fifty miles square, at the mouth, and on the southern bank of the Loire, and whose history is related in a most interesting manner, by "Madame la Marquise de la Roche Jaquelin, in her Memoirs;" a work which, in point of interest, may be well classed along with the Memoirs of Colonel Hutchinson) still continued to carry on a desultory warfare, and lost no opportunity of opposing a system which they detested.—So difficult (not to say

impossible) is it to subdue, either by severity or forbearance, the rooted prejudices or opinions of a people. Had the Bourbons but a few more subjects equally loyal, dispersed throughout France, their cause would not have been so long forgotten, or remained so long trembling in a balance, which was to be at last decided by foreign interposition.

The English, who had at one time been the models from whom the friends of liberty in France delighted to copy, from their opposition to the extremes into which the French had fallen, now became the objects of their utmost virulence and rancour. Every Frenchman, placing money in the British funds, was declared a traitor; and Mr. Pitt was, by a public decree, pronounced to be "*the enemy of the human race.*" About the same time, the fertile genius of *Barrere* proposed that celebrated decree, by which the whole population of France were exhorted to rise in a mass, and expel their invaders from their territory. To the enthusiasm produced by this appeal to the people may be traced the commencement of that *military energy*, which after-

wards subjugated almost the whole of Europe to the power of France, and which will afford an ample field for the reflections of the future historian.

The conclusion of the *second campaign* against France was by this decree rendered as unsuccessful to the allied armies, as had been the preceding one: but the advantages of the French were confined to the adjoining states; for even at this early period of the war, many of their colonies had fallen before the valour of our fleets and armies.

The commencement of the year 1794 presents to us the continuance of those prescriptions, confiscations, and party feuds, which had so long disgraced France; the affairs of that unhappy country being now guided with the most despotic sway, by the infamous and sanguinary Robespierre. Under his auspices, every vestige of those ancient institutions, which had hitherto escaped the rude hand of innovation, were now removed. Republicans could not even consent to compute their *time, weights,* or *measures,* as they had been established under a monarchical

government; and *they* were the *most applauded* in these melancholy times, who appeared to be

"The oldest in the newest kind of ways."

The armies of France (or of Robespierre, as that tyrant delighted to hear them called) now amounted to not less than six hundred thousand men; and new levies, including fifty thousand cavalry, were ordered, with a view to extended offensive operations.

The following letter, addressed to the Convention, from *La Rochelle*, thus describes the general situation of that revolutionized country.—"Louis Capet, fallen under the sword of the nation—the *liberticide* faction annihilated — La Vendée ravaged, and smoking in ruins — Marseilles reduced — Lyons conquered — the pride of Bourdeaux humbled—Toulon reconquered—Dunkirk, Landau, and Maubeuge, victorious—our territory freed—the Prussians put to flight—the republicans running on the banks of the Rhine, to terrify the Germanic eagle—our *august senate* occupying itself incessantly with

the interests of the people.—Such is the picture which triumphant and regenerated France now exhibits;—and could we in such a state of things accede to proposals of peace?"

On the 13th of March, the King of Prussia published a declaration on his *secession from the allied cause.* In this, he enumerated the various services he had performed; and stated that, as all hope of receiving that *aid,* without which he was unable to continue his exertions, had ceased, he renounced his former views, and had determined to retire with his army (excepting twenty thousand auxiliaries he was bound by treaties to furnish) into his own dominions. The war was, notwithstanding, carried on with unabated exertions during the spring of 1794; and a line of armies, extending nearly from the Rhine to the British Channel, were engaged almost at the same moment. The loss on both sides, in the various actions of this campaign, was very considerable. The battle of *Jurcoing* will be remembered, from the difficulty with which His Royal Highness the Duke of York escaped being

taken by the enemy; as having, with his characteristic bravery, advanced beyond his own corps, he was at one time in extreme danger. The Convention now decreed that *no quarter* should be given to the English or Hanoverian soldiers; and continuing their sanguinary proceedings at home, sentenced to death the sister of the late King, as well as many other respectable and lamented persons.

The work of death seemed almost too familiar, any longer to amuse the Parisians. *Festivals,* so essential to their contentment, were therefore instituted by the provident government of France; an enumeration of these would be a needless waste of time, as you are sufficiently aware that the republican calendar exhibited a strange compound of *ancient mythology* and *modern absurdity.*

The 1st of *June* was distinguished for the signal victory obtained by the British fleet under the command of Lord Howe, over that of France, off Ushant: our fleet consisted of twenty-five, and that of the enemy, of twenty-six sail of the line; of which force, above a third were captured, one ship was sunk, and all disabled.

In July the Corsicans acknowledged the King of Great Britain as their Sovereign; but that island being of little importance to England, and its occupation being attended both with expense and difficulty, it was abandoned in the year 1796. In the same month the cause of outraged humanity was in some degree avenged, by the downfall of Robespierre, whose tyranny had become insupportable, and whose proscriptions had not been less extensive at Paris, than those of Sylla at Rome. Many of the deputies of the Brissotine party had been previously executed. Some popular champion seemed, however, to be essential to the Parisians; and we find *Danton*, formerly minister of justice, now possessed of a considerable but momentary authority. Mention might here be made of many once celebrated characters of the Revolution, who arrayed themselves in the robes of Cato, that they might the more securely perform the part of Cæsar, but whose names are now shrouded in the mantle of oblivion, and become, "to dull forgetfulness a prey." As, however, the conduct of the *Duke of Orleans* gave him, even in these deplorable

times, a sort of pre-eminence in infamy, and seemed to contradict the maxim of Juvenal—

" Nemo repente fuit turpissimus,"

by proving that an unprincipled mind may, even *at once*, attain to a disgraceful notoriety in crime, his execution may be mentioned as giving general satisfaction, although occurring at a period when death was more frequently inflicted to extinguish *virtue*, than to punish *crime*.

The Convention now decreed *that the press was free*, " and that at no time, for no reason, and under no pretext, it could hereafter receive any infringement, or be subjected to any retrospective effects." And they also celebrated a *fête*, in consequence of the total evacuation of the territories of the republic by foreign troops, and in honour of the victories obtained by their armies in *Germany, Italy, and Spain*.

The *Committee of Public Safety* at the same time announced the arrival of the contributions levied in Belgium, (for even at this early period of the war, the advantages of French fraternity were esti-

mated at no ordinary price,) amounting to 18,369,404 livres. The electoral throne of *Treves* was amongst the spoils brought to Paris, as the French, in imitation of the Romans, had already begun to collect *trophies* of their victories, although few of their commanders could boast of greater knowledge of the arts than was displayed by *Mummius*, at Corinth.

The office of proclaiming these successes was allotted to *Carnot*, of jacobinical notoriety: but what principally pleased his sanguinary associates, was the surrender of Cologne and of Coblentz, in which cities many unfortunate emigrants fell into the power of their relentless persecutors.

The efforts of the Dutch government to stimulate that people to resist the French armies having proved ineffectual, the Stadtholder and his family found it necessary to retire to England, where they arrived, after encountering many difficulties, on the 21st of January, 1795.

A new government, on the model of the French, was given by their authority to the Batavian republic, (for by that *antiquated* appellation Holland was now designated,)

which, in fact, rendered it a mere tributary province of France. And we find the same system of *federative republics* also formed in Italy, and subsisting until the *re-adoption of monarchy by the French*, when their *new ruler* issued to the dependent states his CONGÉE D'ELIRE, and at the same time recommended to them a proper person to be elected as their Sovereign, that is, one of whose fitness to wear a feudatory crown and to hold a barren sceptre, he was sufficiently convinced. The acquisition of the Seventeen Provinces of the Netherlands, together with their successes in Germany, Italy, and Spain, occasioned much exultation in France, and enabled the republican generals greatly to extend the scale of their operations, particularly as the attention of the *Russian, Austrian,* and *Prussian* courts were now diverted from the purposes of the coalition they had formed against France, by their mutual anxiety (an anxiety which had already caused the last named power almost entirely to secede from that coalition) to enrich themselves with the plundered provinces of Poland.

The dismemberment of that unoffending

country, (which was unable to resist the united power of its enemies,) will ever be remembered as one of the most iniquitous of modern spoliations; and it afforded a pretext and a precedent for that system of subdividing and apportioning nations, afterwards carried to such an alarming extent in Europe. So dangerous is it either for governments or for individuals to depart from the principles of *rectitude*, and so difficult is it to regain that character and integrity, which is often so inconsiderately sacrificed to the dictates of a *crafty policy*, or to the extravagant importunities of *ambition*.

An official note, dated March 1795, informed all *foreign ministers* at Warsaw, that they could no longer be considered as possessing any public functions, since *Poland had ceased to exist as a separate state*. The Empress of Russia having thus declared herself, proceeded to take possession of her ill-acquired possessions, and the deposed King retired on a pension to St. Petersburgh.

The portion of Poland, thus finally dismembered, contained only four millions of

inhabitants, whilst a territory, containing six millions, had been previously divided amongst the three neighbouring powers.

The ratification of peace, between France and Prussia, was announced on the 5th of April, 1795; an event which argued badly for the allied cause. Many of the Italian states, who had been urged by the British government to co-operate against France, were now obliged to sue for peace, which was also concluded by the Convention with the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel and the King of Spain, whose armies had been repeatedly defeated by the republican troops.

The month of August 1795, was memorable for the disastrous expedition to *Quiberon*, which was attended with great loss; vast numbers of emigrants falling into the power of their enemies, together with a great supply of arms and military stores of all kinds, landed by our government, who were led to look for a co-operation, which they did not experience, from the inhabitants of that district. Belgium was now incorporated with France by the Convention, who also decreed the free navigation of the

Scheldt, and exchanged the daughter of Louis XVI. for their ministers taken by the Emperor of Germany.

England was, during the year 1795, in a state of agitation, which required the utmost vigilance of the government to allay. The person of the best of Kings was repeatedly in danger; riots and tumultuous petitions for peace were frequent; but finally the good sense of the nation prevailed over the counsels of traitors, and preserved our excellent constitution.

LETTER VII.

WHILST it is a difficult undertaking to overthrow institutions which have been long sanctioned by the approbation of a *well-judging community*, who are naturally disposed to mistrust all innovations, however specious in *theory*, in that which they have found to be excellent in *practice*; it is but too evident that where the discrimination of a people gives way to their desire of novelty, their government must, by partaking of the general instability, become capricious and unsatisfactory. That which has been often changed will be the most easily subverted; nor can a government *hastily adopted* be expected to possess all those advantages which its framers might expect; nor be at once capable of maintaining that authority which has been recently reposed in it.

France, during the last few years, had made trial of several forms of government. *Royalty* had been first limited, then suffered to preserve only a nominal existence, and was finally supplanted by a *republican government*, which, in its turn, was to undergo a series of changes and modifications. Where many factions are embodied, it is impossible that they can all be satisfied; and the French had been, of late, so much divided on the subject of legislation, and had experienced such a variety of fleeting and unsatisfactory governments, that further changes, although generally desired, could not be accomplished without a renewal of those commotions, which attend the assemblies of a populace, long accustomed to rapine and disorder, whose *applause* gave a momentary sanction to a constitution, and whose *disapprobation* caused that power to vanish in one moment, which they had raised in the preceding for their idol. Like true followers of *Aristippus*, the French tried every possible experiment which fancy could suggest to their disordered imaginations. And surely the historian of those times will have but too much reason to

dwell on their fatal pliability of character, which resembled that of the youths described by the energetic Roman satirist—as

"Cereus in vitium flecti—monitoribus asper."

An oligarchical government having received the approbation of a majority of voters in the primary assemblies, the executive authority was vested in a *Directory*, composed of five persons, who were formally installed in the palace of the Luxembourg on the 1st of November, 1795. Their first act was the abolition of that terrible *revolutionary tribunal*, which had so long convulsed France by the atrocities it had perpetrated under the sanction of the Convention, which had just terminated its sittings; of which assembly it was truly said by *M. Real*, "that it had exhausted against itself its devouring energy." The *Executive Directory* (following the example of most newly constituted authorities) promised that they, in conjunction with the *Legislative Body*, would do *great things* for the advantage of the French nation, whose actual situation was indeed susceptible of much amelioration.

The following representation of the state of Europe at the close of the year 1795, was addressed by the celebrated Washington to the American legislature, and as it is not less forcibly than truly expressed, I shall beg leave to transcribe it:—

"Many of the nations of Europe with their American dependencies, have been involved in a contest unusually bloody, exhausting, and calamitous; in which the evils of foreign war have been aggravated by domestic convulsions and insurrection; in which many of the arts, most useful to society, have been exposed to discouragement and decay; in which scarcity of subsistence has embittered other sufferings; whilst even the anticipations of a return of the blessings of peace and repose, are alloyed by a sense of heavy and accumulating burthens, which press upon all the departments of industry, and threaten to clog the future springs of government."

War was now declared by the British government against Holland, that country being completely under the control of France; and our troops were withdrawn from the Continent, as the inutility became

apparent of continuing them in a country, the inhabitants of which had constantly refused in co-operating with them for the expulsion of their invaders.

But, although the sphere of action of the allies had become thus limited, a treaty of subsidy was signed at Vienna, by which the Emperor (in consequence of the pecuniary aid of England) promised to prosecute the war with increased vigour.

The French Directory, in the hope of maintaining that power which they were conscious of having abused, now professed their anxiety to restore to their country the blessings of peace. But various causes combined to prevent the termination of the war, although, after much severe fighting on the Rhine, an armistice was concluded between the French and German armies.

The evils of a *licentious press* now attracted the attention of the Council of Five Hundred, who decreed that all journals should contain the name of the author or printer, whose responsibility was thus judiciously restored; as it is only with *proper modifications* that the important advantages of the *press* can be maintained,

so as to prevent its becoming either the instrument of arbitrary power, or the means of disseminating licentiousness and discord.

In April 1796, the French Directory addressed a proclamation to their armies, on the re-commencement of hostilities, in which they were informed, that new victories must yet be gained before the advantages of peace could be restored. General *Moreau* was appointed to succeed *Pichegru* in Germany; and the command of the army of Italy was given to *Buonaparte,* now first officially introduced to the nations of Europe, (whose scourge he was afterwards to become,) having obtained the patronage of the Directory for the zeal which he had manifested in the cause of liberty, and for the ability with which he conducted the massacres at Paris, during the *reign of terror.* Nor did the success of Buonaparte, as a general, disappoint the expectations of his patrons;—but he may be said to have triumphed over nations who courted defeat; and who, deluded with the spirited invitations to *freedom,* then abounding in his proclamations, (which form a curious contrast to his subsequent productions, when

all traces of the enthusiastic admirer of Brutus were lost in the haughty style assumed by the self-constituted successor of the Cæsars,) rejoiced at the discomfiture of the forces who opposed his progress; and only resisted his authority when goaded to desperation by his emissaries, who were desirous that the coffers of the republic (and of her rulers), formerly replenished by the confiscated property of those *who fell in the Place de la Revolution,* might now be filled with the plunder of *emancipated nations.*

Buonaparte, having completely defeated the Sardinian army, granted peace to that monarch, who was obliged to surrender *Savoy* and *Nice,* in perpetuity to France; and to put his conquerors in possession of his principal fortresses, as pledges of his future neutrality. The Austrians, commanded by General Beaulieu, were next defeated successively at Montenotte, Millesimo, and Mondovi. The battle of *Lodi* was yet more decisive; and Buonaparte, having made his triumphant entry into Milan on the 31st of May, congratulated his army on their victories, " which had

delivered Lombardy from Austrian tyranny; the Po, the Jessin, and the Adda, those boasted bulwarks of Italy, being unable to delay their progress, and the Dukes of Modena and Parma owing their political existence to their generosity."

The courts of Rome and Naples, whose armies had been respectively defeated, also obtained an armistice from the French commissioners; whilst Buonaparte, following up the advantages he had gained, again engaged the Austrians, and defeated them with the loss of fourteen thousand prisoners, six thousand killed, and eighty pieces of artillery, at *Castiglione*. Leghorn now submitted to the French, who there acquired much of that plunder, which seemed not less valued by them than by the ancient myrmidons.

Nor was the allied cause (at the commencement of the campaign) more prosperous in Germany than in Italy. The armies of Moreau and Jourdan, having overrun the circles of Swabia and Franconia, the Emperor, alarmed at such a succession of disastrous events, appealed to the patriotism of his subjects to defend their country,

laws, and constitution ; and thus concluded his affecting address :—

" Behold the still smoking ruins of Italy, and the excesses and most inhuman cruelties committed there! Behold the devastation which the once flourishing countries of Germany have suffered, inundated by the armies of the enemy, and you cannot remain dubious about the terrible fate which threatens every country, on being invaded by such enemies."

The victories of Moreau had brought his army almost to the borders of the hereditary dominions of the Emperor, before they experienced any effectual resistance ; but here the bravery of the troops under the Archduke Charles, seconded by a rising of the peasantry, not only arrested his further progress, but obliged him to retreat towards the Rhine, after experiencing many reverses.

About the same time the army under *Jourdan,* were forced to evacuate Franconia ; and the French were defeated at Altenkirchen, with much loss, besides that of General Marceau, to whose memory a column has been erected, which forms a

conspicuous object to the traveller along the Rhine.

On the 11th of October, 1796, it was publicly announced that the court of Spain, acting under the control of France, had declared war against England. And on the 22nd the British government, wishing to discover whether there was any sincerity in the continued pacific professions of the French Directory, appointed Lord Malmesbury their plenipotentiary at Paris, where he was received with much enthusiasm.

The negociations were continued for about two months, and the Directory having then required the British minister to give in his *ultimatum,* immediately broke off the negociations, and required him to leave Paris in forty-eight hours.

From the papers laid before Parliament on the subject of this unsuccessful mission, it appears that the French government would not agree to treat on the proposed basis of the "*status ante bellum;*" nor (as they expressed it) ever consent to retire shamefully within their territories, as if they were vanquished. The propositions

that *Belgium* and Italy should be evacuated, are termed *openly infamous;* and the friends of peace are consoled for their present disappointment, with the hope that "Austria, despoiled of the resources of Belgium, Italy, and part of Germany, and as well undeceived respecting the British government, as pressed by her own subjects, suffering from the war, will feel the necessity of treating with the French republic; and that England, standing by itself, and justly exposed to all the resentment of the French, will not be able to dissemble its weakness; and will receive with more gentleness a peace which it now dares to disdain."

The death of the Empress Catherine of Russia, (which took place on the 17th of November, when in the sixty-seventh year of her age, and the thirty-sixth of her reign,) was, in the then position of European politics, a favourable event for France, as the *Grand Duke Paul,* by whom this celebrated Princess was succeeded, could by no means be depended on by the Austrian or British courts. The Elector of Saxony now seceded from the coalition against

France; and the Imperial army experienced so signal a defeat at *Rivoli*, that it was some time before it could again rally.

England did not, however, desert the Emperor in this extremity, but continued to supply him liberally with the *sinews of war*, so necessary to enable his Majesty to oppose the republican troops, now more numerous and more formidable than at any former period.

A *loyalty loan* (to provide for the increasing exigencies of the state) was now opened in London, when the vast sum of eighteen millions sterling was subscribed in the course of a single day—a lasting memorial this of the loyalty, perseverance, and wealth of Britain, which were indeed peculiarly required to uphold her during so alarming a crisis.

Towards the close of 1796, a French fleet of seventeen sail of the line, besides frigates and transports, having escaped from Brest, (where they had been long blockaded by our brave sailors,) arrived in the bay of Bantry; a violent and *most providential storm*, however, prevented General Hoche from landing his formidable

army ; and Ireland was thus rescued from the impending horrors with which she was menaced, whilst many of the enemy's ships fell into the power of our cruizers, and such of them as escaped were obliged to pursue a difficult and circuitous navigation.

The navy of England now rode triumphant on the seas: accounts were continually received of splendid successes and important captures ; whilst a Spanish war, always popular with the navy, now afforded them an unusually productive remuneration for their distinguished services.

Most of the colonies of our former allies, the Dutch, were captured, soon after we were obliged to act offensively against their revolutionary government ; as were many Spanish settlements, soon after the commencement of hostilities with that country.

The *plunder of Italy,* (now collected with the utmost rapacity by their commissioners,) however, enabled the republican government of France to continue their exertions against Austria. But severe as were the contributions thus imposed on the *private property* of the Italians, the removal, from that classic country, of the

most celebrated *public monuments*, which attested its ancient pre-eminence in the arts, excited still more strongly, throughout Europe, feelings of indignation against the French.

The distress of the Italians, on being thus deprived of their *chef-d'œuvres*, (many of which were plundered from their churches by the followers of a modern Atala,) has been feelingly described, and proves how worthy they were of possessing objects which they so well knew how to value. The scheme of concentrating the works of art at Paris, and rendering that city the emporium of European taste, was projected by the Directory, as being well calculated to gratify the national vanity of their subjects; and, as far as my observation goes, I am disposed to attribute the distress of the French, on the dispersion of their museum, rather to feelings of wounded pride, than to any real taste for the arts. The sentiments of one Frenchman on this subject, deserve to be recorded; and we find that the *architect Louis* protested with equal judgment as a man of taste and as a politician, against this plan of spolia-

tion, when first projected; his arguments were, however, disregarded, and the French continued to plunder the several nations whom they subdued, of every object which was deemed worthy of a place in their museum; and it was only when Paris was a *second time* occupied by the allied armies of Europe, that these much-envied possessions were restored to their rightful owners.

But to return to the political narrative we were engaged in.—The victories of Buonaparte obliged the Austrians to think seriously of peace. The battles of Castiglione, Arcola, and Rivoli, had placed all Italy in the power of the French; and they were not disposed to use that power either with justice or moderation. The ancient republics of Genoa and Venice were unable by any sacrifices to preserve themselves undisturbed amidst the surrounding convulsions. And the flagitious conduct of Buonaparte towards those states, particularly to the latter, was sanctioned by a government, whose approbation was never withheld from any measure which added to their ill-gotten wealth.

The Venetian states had for some time

been the scene of action between the French and Austrians, and when compelled to declare for either party, the Senate united themselves to the latter power. Their assistance was, however, of little avail, and this republic, which for so many centuries had claimed the sovereignty of the Adriatic, was dissolved by the mandate of Buonaparte, who easily forgot his promise of restoring Venice to her former splendour, when offered half a million sterling for consigning her principal territories to Austria.

Thus terminated the political existence of a state, which, no less singular in its government than in its policy, had been preserved for ages, rather through the jealousy of its neighbours and by long *prescriptive usage*, than by any remaining energy it possessed, although its population amounted to nearly three millions, and its dominions included some of the most favoured provinces in Europe. But *instability* is not less the lot of states than of individuals: and *Venice*, which, when threatened by the *league of Cambray*, possessed a powerful navy, a respectable army, and extensive credit, had subsequently

(as Montesquieu observes) confined its ambition to the perpetuation of its existence, and the not exposing itself either to good or to bad fortune, could *now* only oppose to its invaders a temporising policy, and a feeble resistance.

Yours, &c.

LETTER VIII.

THE negociations for that peace, which we have seen had become so indispensable to Austria, were commenced in April 1797, at *Leoben* in Styria, and about six months afterwards the definitive treaty was signed at *Campo Formio,* near Udino, between the Emperor and the French Directory.

In this it was stipulated that a congress should be held at *Radtstat,* for the purpose of arranging matters between France and the German Empire (the proceedings of which we shall presently have occasion to consider). That the Emperor should cede all Belgium, together with his possessions on the left bank of the Rhine to the Republic; and should receive, as an indemnification, Venetian Istria and Dalmatia, together with all the provinces of that *ci-devant* state, situated on the left bank of the Adige. That the Duke of Modena, in

lieu of his Italian dominions, should receive the Austrian Brisgaw. That the Emperor should acknowledge the Ligurian (late the Genoese) and the Cisalpine Republics as independent states; and that the latter should consist of the Milanese, the duchy of Modena, the three provinces or legations of Bologna, Ferrara, and Romagnia (wrested from the Pope), together with the territories lately belonging to Venice, situated on the right bank of the Adige. These two republics were, in fact, dependent on the French government, to which they owed their nominal existence as independent states, and to which they were bound by treaties to be subservient.

The extension of the French territory to the Rhine, and the incorporation of the rich provinces of Belgium with that country, enabled it to undertake and to accomplish still further spoliations, and seemed already to have established its preponderance in Europe. Still, however, after the severe reverses which Austria had sustained, it excited the astonishment of many politicians, that that power was enabled to come to such a satisfactory arrangement with the

victorious government of France. For the Venetian provinces, from their proximity to the hereditary possessions of the Emperor, were justly considered as affording him an ample indemnity for the relinquishment of the distant provinces of Belgium ; and the same selfish policy which had lately induced Austria to assist in the partition of Poland, now caused her, without compunction, to look for an indemnity in the plundered territories of her former ally. It has been positively asserted, that the members of the French Directory, as well as their general and negociator, were propitiated, on this occasion, by *valuable pecuniary considerations;* and having obtained a vast extension of territory for France, as well as gratified the vanity of the nation, they conceived they were at liberty to indulge their own rapacity, and they found the interest of the Emperor prompted him to attend to all their wishes. Buonaparte is said to have compared his conduct, during this negociation, to that of a person who, playing at *vingt-un*, and holding twenty in his hand, does not choose to run the risk of asking for

another card. And at this period, it must be confessed, that although he acted with apparent lenity to Austria, yet enough was obtained to satisfy, in the ablest manner, the ambition and the avarice both of himself and of his employers.

The actions of public characters have at all times afforded an ample field for speculation; and even those who, from their situations, are the least qualified for such a task, yet often amuse us with their conjectures. Various indeed were the motives which are said to have rendered Buonaparte impatient to terminate the war with Austria; of these, the scheme he had formed of invading Egypt, seemed to me the most probable; and the recent acquisition of the Venetian fleet and Ionian islands, seemed calculated to facilitate this enterprise.

The return of Buonaparte to Paris was hailed with the utmost enthusiasm. That city, during his absence, had been the scene of many serious commotions.—Pichegru, Barthelemy, sixty-five national deputies, and many other obnoxious persons of less note, had been lately transported to Cayenne,

by the Directory, without even the form of a trial; whilst the restricted liberty hitherto enjoyed by the press, was now withdrawn, as incompatible with the plans of government adopted by these despotic tyrants.

It was not, therefore, likely that, unpopular as they had become, the Directory would venture to oppose the wishes of a personage so formidable as Buonaparte, and from whose presence they had every thing to fear. The Egyptian expedition was accordingly readily assented to, and thirty sail of the line, eighty-six inferior ships of war, and three hundred sail of transports, were placed at the disposal of the general, together with the power of selecting his own officers and soldiers.

The capture of Malta (which is reported to have been accomplished in a manner not dissimilar to that which caused Philip of Macedon to be designated, "*Calidus* EMPTOR *Olynthi,*") was the result of this formidable expedition; but it would lead us too much out of that chronological order, by which we should be generally guided, were we at present to trace the progress of Buonaparte in subjugating

Egypt. Events prior, both in point of time and interest, now claim our attention.

England was perhaps at no period since the commencement of the war, in a more alarming predicament than in the beginning of the year 1797. It is not that she was unable, single handed and without allies, to continue the contest against France, whilst undivided against herfelf; but, on the defection of that navy which had hitherto been her bulwark, and of the active energy and zealous services of which she never before had any reason to doubt, the situation of England became truly precarious, and the most loyal subjects trembled for the safety of their country when the mutinies at Spithead and at the Nore were officially announced.

It was at this critical moment that *Sheridan* stood forward to interpose his powerful exertions in defence of all that is dear to Britons, and disdaining to

"Give up to party, what was meant for mankind,"

assisted at this juncture the measures of an administration to which he was habitually inimical.

To a certain degree the *contentions of party* may be beneficial to a country, but *England*—that

" Little body with a mighty heart;"

which has been justly described, as—

" Safe, if true within herself—"

has been often and fatally convulsed by the violence of *faction*, the storms of which more frequently deform than purify the political horizon.

The disturbances with which Ireland had been for some time threatened, fortunately did not assume that dangerous appearance, which afterwards characterized them, until our fleets had returned to their allegiance; and the victory of *Camperdown*, (11th of October, 1797,) which followed this happy event, was not less severely contested than that of *St. Vincent*, (February 14th, 1797,) which had preceded it. Both rank amongst the most gallant achievements which distinguish our naval annals—often, indeed, graced by victory, and but rarely sullied by disaffection.

In the course of this year a descent was

made by a small body of French troops, on the coast of Pembrokeshire, but they were immediately taken prisoners by the neighbouring inhabitants.

Lord Malmesbury was now a second time nominated by the British government to negociate a peace with the French Directory's plenipotentiaries at *Lisle:* but after the negociations had been continued for some time, and the public, thus led to hope that the obstacles, which, on a former occasion, had occasioned their failure, were now surmounted, the Directory recalled their ministers, and appointed others to succeed them, with such different instructions as to their mode of proceeding, that shortly afterwards it became necessary for Lord Malmesbury to quit *Lisle,* as it was evident the Directory only sought to protract the conferences with the view of conciliating the French nation (who were generally anxious for peace), and really entertained no desire of concluding any amicable arrangement with a power, towards which they still felt a violent animosity.

The great sacrifices hitherto so cheerfully

submitted to by the people of England, rendered it advisable that they should be convinced that their government opposed no *unnecessary obstacles* in the way of peace, but were ready to terminate the war, as soon as it could be done consistently with the honour and security of the country; and that the British government acted on this occasion with sincerity, and were guided by principles of sound policy, is, I conceive, apparent from the documents before the public.

The pressure of taxation in France had also considerably increased, as, notwithstanding the vast sums derived from the conquered states, still the French government had been so lavish in their expenditure, that they did not possess the means of equipping a sufficient force for their meditated descent on the coast of England. A private loan was therefore projected to promote this favourite object; and we find the name of *Thomas Paine* enrolled amongst those who subscribed towards the conquest and new modelling of Britain.

The intrigues of the French government, happily rendered futile in England, were

unfortunately but too successful in promoting a rebellion in Ireland. This first broke out in the northern province of Ulster, where the inhabitants, although the most affluent in the kingdom, had yet imbibed most deeply those visionary schemes which promised liberty to all insurrectionists, and which were circulated throughout the world with the utmost activity, for the purpose of deluding the ignorant, the dissatisfied, or the unwary. Republicanism was now the order of the day, and every nerve was strained to effect the destruction of a *constitution*, which embraces as *much of perfection* as is attainable by any *human institution;* and the imitation of which was originally professed by that fickle people, whose chimerical schemes have been productive of so much evil to the world, although they now affected to have far exceeded it in political excellence, and even seemed to contemplate it with indignation and abhorrence.

The Directory were well aware that Ireland was the most vulnerable part of the British Empire, and they therefore left no means untried, to spread throughout that

country a spirit of disaffection. The timely information received by the British government of the designs of the insurgents, so far disconcerted their views, as to cause them openly to raise the standard of rebellion before their plans had been altogether matured, and before the expected succours had arrived from France. The northern insurgents having been defeated in several engagements, the spirit of rebellion proceeded to shew itself in the other provinces of the kingdom, where an unhappy combination of animosities contributed to render many districts scenes of peculiar horror.

The county of Wexford, hitherto esteemed one of the most peaceable in the kingdom, (and a considerable part of which was remarkable for the traces of antiquity, still perceptible amongst its Strongbonian colonists,) was now the resort of the disaffected from all quarters, and presented a sad and afflicting spectacle of depravity and outrage, equalling, if not surpassing, any of those terrific scenes which had taken place during the rebellion of 1648.

The dreadful massacre at Wexford proves the extreme degree of infatuation

which may exist, even in an age which boasts of superior advantages, and affords a melancholy instance of men's conceiving they rendered an acceptable service to the Almighty, whilst actually engaged in the violation of his sacred laws, and in the destruction of his unoffending creatures.

The conduct of the Wexford rebels, who appeared to have lost sight of the ulterior projects of their leaders, whilst indulging in an unrestrained course of murder and devastation, tended, however, to reclaim the northern votaries of republicanism from the errors in which they had indulged, and to awaken many throughout Ireland from a delusive dream of *ideal liberty*, to the actual enjoyment of that substantial freedom they possessed.

Let us, however, no longer dwell on a scene so disgraceful to the annals of Ireland, but indulge the hope that the battles of Kilcullen and Arklow, of Vinegar Hill, and of New Ross, are destined to be the last instances of embodied rebellion on its records; and that the experience they have so fatally acquired, may cause all classes and descriptions of its inhabitants to con-

sign the remembrance of former dissensions to oblivion, and induce them the more strenuously to apply themselves to the promotion of good will, unanimity and concord.

The Wexford insurgents had fortunately been reduced to submission before the landing of a French corps of about one thousand one hundred men, under General Humbert, at Killala; otherwise the arrival even of this inconsiderable part of the army destined by the French government for the conquest of Ireland, might have been productive of much mischief; as, although they did not reach Ireland until a later period than was intended, they were still joined by many disaffected persons, and proceeded far on the road to Dublin, before Lord Cornwallis, who then held the offices both of lord-lieutenant and commander of the forces in Ireland, was enabled to take them prisoners.

The prompt and effectual aid which was afforded by the militia of Great Britain during this alarming crisis, is deserving of the highest and most grateful commendation. The bravery and loyalty of many Irish

regiments was also signally displayed ; but no praise which does not fall far short of their actual deserts, can be given to the yeomanry of Ireland, who were indeed the effectual preservers of the constitution of their country.

The French Directory, in consequence of a descent made by a small body of our troops for the purpose of destroying the canal of *Bruges*, (in which, however, they failed and were taken prisoners,) issued a decree that no quarter should in future be given to any British forces landing on the coasts of the republic. These legislators seem to have endeavoured on all occasions to excite the astonishment of the world by the *inequality* of their proceedings ; and, from the institution of fêtes for the Parisians, and the regulation of their own official costume and that of the public functionaries, we find them pass with rapidity to actions the most sanguinary and vindictive, declaring Lyons, (which had already suffered so much from revolutionary vengeance,) together with several other cities, in a *state of siege*, and condemning, unheard, all obnoxious persons to banishment or death.

Proceedings such as these remind us of the dreadful state of Rome under some of her *purple tyrants,* who alternately exercised their cruelty against *flies,* and against *men,* and who only convened the Senate, that it might deliberate on culinary affairs. If, indeed, as *Zanga* asserts—

"Wonder is involuntary praise,"

the Directory may *indirectly* claim that to which they could not otherwise pretend.

The next event which claims our attention is the celebrated *victory of the Nile,* (1st of August, 1798,) when the gallant *Nelson,* in a manner unparalleled in naval tactics, almost annihilated the vast navy which had conveyed the army of Buonaparte to the shores of Egypt,—nine sail of the line being captured, two destroyed, and the remainder much damaged. No victory ever occurred more fortunately for England, or cast a greater gloom over the French, who had sanguinely anticipated the destruction of our empire in the East, which they were aware could not be accomplished without a powerful marine; nor did the bulletin issued by the Directory, that their

navy was on this occasion *covered with glory,* prevent the nation from becoming acquainted with the real state of things, as the then government of France were not such adepts in the arts of deception as that by which they were immediately succeeded.

The capture of Minorca soon followed the victory of Nelson; and thus our fleet became possessed of a secure station whence they might observe the movements of the French or Spanish navies. A telegraph was now, for the first time, erected at Paris, in order to maintain a communication with the several sea-ports of France; but the first intelligence it had to announce was the defeat of the Brest fleet by *the tyrants of the sea,* with the loss of one ship of the line and five frigates. The escape of the gallant Sir Sidney Smith from the Temple at Paris now augured badly for the French, as it was reserved for him to contend successfully with Buonaparte, whose movements had been hitherto so successful, that the French already fancied themselves possessed of the wealth of India, and triumphed in the *approaching destruction* of

the *modern Carthage;* whilst they delighted to compare themselves to the *ancient Romans,* whom they certainly must be admitted to have surpassed in rapacity. To acquire plunder and to divert the attention of their subjects from internal abuses, the French government were perpetually employed in disturbing other nations: and a pretext was now afforded them, through the agency of their minister at *Rome,* (Lucien Buonaparte,) for revolutionizing the Papal states, and reviving the Roman republic under the protection of France. Whilst *Pius VII.* after many reverses and removals, died a prisoner in France.

Switzerland was next destined to feel the evils of the French yoke; and that country, so long the abode of peace and liberty, now exhibited a scene of anarchy and bloodshed. Had not revolutionary principles been extensively disseminated, previously to the invasion of Switzerland by the French (in 1798), the French armies would probably have found much difficulty in subduing the descendants of those who had triumphed over their ances-

tors at *Morat;* but the Swiss were not united, and consequently fell an easy prey to their invaders. Geneva was incorporated with France; and Switzerland, after having suffered unnumbered misfortunes, and being degraded, pillaged, and outraged, was erected into the Helvetic republic, and declared to be the ally of France.—But let me here conclude—for

" Quis talia fando, temperet à lachrymis ?"

LETTER IX.

You have no doubt had occasion to remark that the French lost no opportunity of displaying that overbearing violence, which they conceived to be the most distinguished characteristic of the Romans; and, indeed, their tyrannical and infamous conduct towards the Swiss and Italians, (which we have just been contemplating,) cannot be exceeded by any parallel in history. They did not, however, follow the example of the Romans, in permitting the conquered nations to retain their ancient laws and customs; but every state, under the influence of France, was doomed to experience how fallacious were the boasted advantages of her *new regime;* and the *Helvetic, Batavian, Roman, Cisalpine, Ligurian,* and *Lucchese* republics were respectively necessitated to model their governments after the various forms which

the caprice of the French led them from time to time to adopt.

The French negociators also assumed the most *dictatorial manner;* and at the *congress of Radtstat,* (which had been opened according to the stipulations of the treaty of Campo Formio,) when the great points of the boundary of the Rhine, and the plan of secularizing the ecclesiastical states of the empire, to indemnify its temporal princes, (who had ceded a territory, containing upwards of three millions of inhabitants, to France,) had been at length conceded to them by the German plenipotentiaries; they immediately proceeded to contend, with extraordinary tenacity, for the possession of those inconsiderable islands which are formed by the Rhine in its course; they demanded the demolition of the fortress of *Ehrenbreitstein;* and insisted that *Cassal* and *Kehl* should be occupied by French garrisons.

These extravagant demands alarmed the whole Germanic deputation, hitherto disposed only to conciliate; and even Prussia, although habitually jealous of Austria, protested against these claims, and refused

to surrender to France any fortresses on the right bank of the Rhine; they were therefore preserved to the empire, but *Ehrenbreitstein* was destined to destruction.

Had the *tyrants of the Luxembourg* (as the Directory were now called at Paris) been satisfied with the vast possessions they had obtained for the republic, and with the acknowledgment of its vassal states by the European powers, they would certainly have placed France in a most commanding situation; but, impelled by that desire of *uncontrolled dominion*, which is commonly most felt by persons unaccustomed to authority, (and which, if attained, they generally abuse,) they imagined that the terror of their menaces was equal to the force of their arms; and, intoxicated with the facility with which the principles of modern republicanism had been disseminated throughout Europe, they placed no bounds to their pretensions; and not possessed of *prudence* to be contented with preserving the imposing situation on which they might have stood, their fall was not less sudden than their rise had been rapid.

France being now almost entirely de-

prived of external commerce, it was chiefly by foreign pillage that its principal inhabitants (now become indifferent to the arts of peace) expected to be enriched.

The *lower classes of society*, (for such there still were, even in this *land of equality,)* long habituated to witness changes in their government, but deceived as to the promised advantages of these changes, seemed now to consider them with perhaps greater indifference and *sang froid*, than they would the representations on a theatre, which are more calculated to excite curiosity than interest. Some successful faction had from time to time engrossed the whole power of the state, and the people were in general as much excluded as formerly from any political authority; except, indeed, that they sometimes intimidated their rulers by menaces, or were made the instruments of those who profited by their insurrections.

The greatness of that military force by which the conquests of the Directory had been accomplished, rendered the promotion of disturbances in other nations a part of their state policy, that they might not be without pretexts for the "*Multis utile*

bellum," by which the leading statesmen and generals of the republic might have opportunities of gratifying their avarice or their ambition, without the necessity of applying themselves to those ordinary and ignoble means by which, in tranquil times, and under settled governments, fortunes are acquired, and abilities displayed.

When a quarrel is resolved on, either between nations or individuals, a pretext is seldom long wanting; and some differences between the Ligurian and Sardinian governments furnished the Directory with a cause of complaint against his Sardinian Majesty: the discord, which they had themselves fomented, was easily magnified by their diplomatists into a cause of war; and the military power being then called in, the King was forced to abdicate his throne, and the French established a provisional government in Piedmont.

The Grand Duke of Tuscany, in whose dominions the Pope and the King of Sardinia had found a temporary asylum, was now assailed by the French government, and was speedily obliged to submit to their demands.

The King of Naples, who had lately occupied Rome with his army, was also obliged, in his turn, to yield to the republicans, and was conducted by the British fleet to Palermo; whilst Naples, after a violent contest between the French and Lazzaroni, submitted to its invaders, and being formed into the *Parthenopean republic,* was, for a short time, enrolled amongst the allies of the Great Nation.

The Neapolitans were, perhaps, amongst the *few* nations of Europe, who, when subdued by France, beheld with complacency the overthrow of their ancient government; for the King had disgusted the higher classes of his subjects by the familiarity of his conduct towards the Lazzaroni; and the imperious character of the Queen was not calculated to render her respected by any class of society. The other states revolutionized had, in general, no just grounds of complaint against their governors.—For—the House of Orange had not proved unworthy of its ancestor, under whose auspices the liberties of Holland had been originally secured.—The King of Sardinia united in his character

both the dignity of a sovereign and the unostentatious virtues of private life.—The deposed Pope (Pius VII.) was both amiable and beneficent.—The Senate of Venice, although it retained to the last its characteristic haughtiness, yet had long ceased to be charged with oppression.—The Swiss were happy under governments of their own appointment; that of Berne being peculiarly distinguished for its mildness and attention to the comforts of its subjects.—And although the yielding and conciliatory conduct of Louis XVI. could neither preserve his crown, nor his life, amidst the fury of the revolution, yet already there are those in France, who are willing to do justice to his memory and to lament his fate.—Whilst the candid judgment of posterity will assuredly declare, that it is especially owing to the personal character, and to the many virtues which distinguished *George III.* and endeared him to his people, that England is indebted (under Providence) for having escaped the evils which desolated the Continent.

A new coalition against France was now formed by England, Austria, Turkey, and

Russia. The latter power engaged (in a treaty concluded the 11th of June, 1799) to embody a formidable army in consideration of subsidies promised by England; and the Emperor Paul invited the German princes to accede to this alliance, the objects of which were—the restoration of royalty in France, without the dismemberment of that country—the preservation of the integrity of Germany—and the re-establishment of the ancient governments of Holland and Switzerland.

The French Directory (who were still employed in carrying on the negociations at Radtstat) were, notwithstanding their arrogance and hauteur, unprepared effectually to oppose the sudden and formidable attack with which they were now menaced, having attended rather to the extension than to the consolidation of their dominions. Their forces dispersed throughout Italy, were unable to oppose the rapid advance of the Russians under Suarroff, and were totally defeated at Novi and Magnano, on the Jessin and the Adda, by that distinguished general, who had superseded the Austrian Generals Kray and Melas in their com-

mands. General Moreau, to whose able services the Directory had recourse in this extremity, (although they had lately treated him with indifference and injustice,) displayed much skill in concentrating his forces, but was obliged to retreat towards France accompanied by only twenty thousand men.

The union, which at this time subsisted amongst the allied powers, seemed to promise the most probable results, by encouraging the inhabitants of Europe to arm themselves against their oppressors. By the victories of Suarroff, the republics, lately established by the French in Italy, were dissolved with as much celerity as they had been constituted; and the banks of the *Trebia* (formerly distinguished for the victory of *Hannibal)* were now destined to be the scene of a struggle which was for a short time to decide the fate of Italy.

The different armies engaged in this campaign fought with as much obstinacy as if the fate of their respective nations was at stake; but the French were at last compelled to retreat, and abandon all their trans-Alpine possessions, Genoa alone ex-

cepted. Meanwhile the contest was carried on with similar activity in Switzerland and Germany; in which latter country, a most atrocious act had just been perpetrated by the assassination of two of the French ministers, who had been negociating at Radtstat, (the third having with difficulty escaped). The unprincipled characters of the Directory caused them to be generally suspected of this horrible act; but they did not fail to attribute it to the Austrians, who had required the ministers to quit Radtstat within twenty-four hours.

Suarroff having now conducted his army across the Rhætic Alps, advanced towards Zurich, near which city several desperate engagements took place between his forces and the French army under Massena. The latter were on the whole victorious, and the allies found it expedient, for the present, to evacuate Switzerland;—but the loss on both sides has been calculated as rather exceeding a fourth part of the effective force under arms, and this within the space of only fifteen days.

A considerable English and Russian army was in this year (1799) disembarked

at the Helder, with the view of forming a diversion in favour of the allied cause, as well as of enabling the Dutch to shake off the French yoke: and had this army met with that co-operation which might have been expected, the most beneficial results would probably have followed to the cause of European independence. But the Dutch, now accustomed to follow the mandates of France, remained passive spectators of the preparations making to restore their liberties. The French army in Holland was far from being numerous; but the partisans of revolution were confident of powerful aid from that quarter; and although the Texel fleet had hoisted the *Orange flag*, still the friends of the Stadtholder did not seem disposed openly to declare themselves until the allied army had obtained some signal success.

The British forces, under the command of His Royal Highness the Duke of York, now advanced to Alkmarr, and displayed in several engagements their accustomed valour; but the continued rains having rendered any communication throughout

the country almost impracticable, and the inhabitants not rendering our army any effectual assistance, it was judged advisable (particularly as the season was far advanced) that Holland should be speedily evacuated. A convention was accordingly concluded on the 18th of October, 1799, by which it was stipulated that eight thousand French and Dutch prisoners should be liberated, and that no opposition should be made to the re-embarkation of the British and Russian forces. Thus terminated this formidable expedition, which was composed of above forty thousand men, and the result of which, from the extreme apathy of the Dutch, instead of benefiting their condition, tended only for the present to confirm the oppressive vassalage in which they were held by France.

The public attention of the French was now principally excited by the junction of their fleet (on the equipment of which many millions had been lately expended) with that of Spain in the Mediterranean; but, instead of performing any memorable achievement, the united navies retired into

the port of Brest, where they submitted to be blockaded by a British squadron of far inferior force.

The reverses sustained by the French armies in Italy encouraged the King of Naples to confide himself once more to the protection of Lord Nelson's fleet, which appeared before Naples at a time when the inhabitants were favourably disposed to submit to their former government, and desired the expulsion of allies, who had rendered the very name of *liberty* hateful by their exactions.

A convention had been recently concluded with the republican party and the French by Cardinal Ruffo; this, however, the King refused to sanction; and the Lazzaroni became the ready instruments of his vengeance, above eight hundred houses at Naples being pillaged and destroyed by these desperadoes, whilst a special commission was established, which condemned vast numbers of suspected persons to death.

His Neapolitan Majesty now concluded an offensive and defensive alliance with the court of Vienna, which certainly tended

more to the re-establishment of his authority than did the severe measures to which he had recourse in his newly recovered kingdom.

Amongst the extraordinary events of this eventful era may be mentioned the surrender of Rome to a British admiral, and the establishment of a provisional government under the sanction of His Britannic Majesty, to conduct the affairs of the ecclesiastical states in the name of the Pope, who was still a prisoner in France.

The tide of success now every where favoured the allies.—*Tuscany* was restored to its respected sovereign;—the *Suabians* expelled their invaders;—and the royalists of *La Vendée* were again in arms, and obtained many signal advantages.

A great political movement was about to take place in France; that country was again pronounced to be *in danger:* the despotism, incapacity, and obstinacy of the Directory had completely alienated from them the small share they once possessed of the popular approbation; and the return of Buonaparte to Europe was looked for as the only probable means of restoring to the

French that *glory* and those *conquests* which they so highly valued—the former they felt was tarnished, and the latter had been wrested from them.

The Egyptian expedition had long ceased to answer the sanguine expectations it had once excited; and Buonaparte, whose character, either as a *politician,* or as a *moral agent,* had certainly gained no additional lustre by his conduct in that country, returned to France in November 1799, as triumphantly as if he had accomplished great things; leaving, under the command of General Kleber, that army which he foresaw could no longer further his ambitious projects.

The ease with which the *Directorial Government was dissolved,* and the *Consular authority of Buonaparte acknowledged throughout France,* can scarcely excite the astonishment of those who have carefully traced the progress and effects of the French Revolution; for the reformers of modern times did not delay the execution of their schemes, by looking for any precedents by which their conduct might be sanctioned or palliated.

The world had never hitherto witnessed any scenes at all similar to those which distinguished the termination of the eighteenth century, and *this* was certainly not the least remarkable amongst them. The various actors in this extraordinary drama were undoubtedly actuated by separate views and interests; but they had now met with a man who managed with such address as to turn them all to his own advantage; nor could it be expected that the fall of such men as *Sieyes, Carnot, Barras, Rewbell,* and *Ducos,* would afford much matter for regret.

We have now traced the political changes of France to what has been described as the fourth act of her tragical drama, and have seen republicanism, in point of fact, superseded by the commencement of a most despotic authority. The Constituent Assembly, the Convention, the Directory, the Consulate, and the Imperial Regime, have been enumerated as the five principal epochs of that dreadful revolution which has caused the effusion of such torrents of blood. The emphatic *Burke,* in speaking of this alarming era, (although he died before the esta-

blishment of Buonaparte's power,) prognosticated with that force of expression so peculiar to himself—" that out of the tomb of the murdered Monarchy of France, a vast and tremendous unformed spectre would arise, in a far more terrific guise than any which had ever yet overpowered the imagination, and subdued the fortitude of man." And Pitt declared, on the submission of France to the authority of Buonaparte, " that the jacobinism of France was now centred in *one man,* nursed in its school, who had gained celebrity under its auspices, and was at once the child and the champion of its atrocities."

Such was *Buonaparte,* who, following a course he had seen successfully pursued by others, now possessed himself of the executive power in France, (for the other two Consuls, nominally associated with him in the government, were mere political *non-entities ;)* and we cannot deny that his first decrees manifested much political sagacity, being calculated to conciliate many of the parties existing in France; and those who lamented the demoralized state of their country saw, with satisfaction,

that the ministers of religion, so peculiarly denounced by the Directory, were now to be sanctioned by the legislature. But, that he might still farther cement his power and increase his popularity, Buonaparte was aware of the necessity of making overtures of peace to the British government, (although it was already evident he entertained no real desire for peace, and was only bent on conquest and desolation). His propositions were discussed at great length in the British Parliament, and the impracticability of concluding a solid peace, under existing circumstances, was assented to by great majorities.

The dangerous system of *political expediency* was now assigned to justify the meditated conquests of Buonaparte; but whilst without any more plausible pretext to assign for his usurpations than the "*convenances morales et physiques,*" we must confess that he is not less to be pitied than Louis XIV. who is said by Hume, to have been unfortunate in one respect—"that he never obtained one good or fair pretence for war." I shall conclude by calling to your recollection, the emphatic

words quoted by Mr. Pitt, when arguing as to the impossibility of acceding to the pacific overtures of Buonaparte: —" *Cur igitur pacem nolo?—Quia infida est, quia periculosa, quia esse non posset.*"

LETTER X.

It has been often and truly observed, that no political authority is more formidable than that which is centred in the individual who succeeds to the administration of affairs upon the downfall of a republic, as he possesses, in a peculiar degree, the whole energy of the community. This remark applies forcibly to the case of Buonaparte, in whose hands the destiny, not only of France, but of almost all Europe seemed now to be placed; and even before the new constitution was formally accepted by the people, or those bodies distinguished by the titles of the *Conservative Senate,* and *Legislative Assembly,* had time to assemble, the new Consul had already begun to avail himself of the military and political advantages, which he derived from the revolution.

These were confessedly both numerous and important; and, if we fairly consider them, we shall, in a great degree, cease to be dazzled (as were too many superficial observers) with the *éclat* and success which attended the military career of Buonaparte.

In the first place, it may be observed, that revolutionary France was obliged to furnish as ample supplies of *men*, as the government might judge it expedient to require, either under the name of a conscription or of a requisition. As in the feudal times, no persons were now exempt from *military service;* and even those who were occasionally permitted to purchase substitutes, were often jocularly told—"that it was their money which had marched first, and it was now their turn to march after it."

The incentives to *ambition* were abundantly calculated to actuate the numerous soldiers thus collected together, as any one of them might, by merit and perseverance, hope to rise to distinction and authority. The *needy* and *avaricious* were also pleased with the hopes of wealth; for when the army had once passed the limits of France,

no quarter was given to the acknowledged enemy; and even the possessions of the declared friend were not always permitted to escape.

A second advantage possessed by the French general was his being at liberty, on all occasions, to exercise his own judgment, as to the measures most expedient to be adopted during a campaign—whilst the Austrian commander was restrained from any decisive proceeding, without obtaining the sanction of the *Aulic Council*, which, from its distance from the scene of action, often gave most erroneous directions.

In the third place, the federative system introduced by the Directory, and enlarged by Buonaparte, enabled him to render the resources of many states contributary to his ambitious views.

To these we may add the ample means his conquests afforded him of *bribery*, as, although the depravity of mankind has, in all ages, rendered this a most powerful engine, yet I think examples are not wanting to bear me out in the assertion, that it was peculiarly conducive to the success of Buonaparte; and his system

of espionage enabled him to use his arguments, *ad cupiditatem*, with peculiar effect.

All military sovereigns enjoy considerable advantages, and have commonly succeeded in accomplishing greater ends than other generals, although often with apparently less powerful means. Buonaparte was at once the main spring both of his *army* and his *cabinet:* the former was formidable, as being principally composed of one nation; the latter was formed of men alike remarkable for their talents as for their devotedness to their employer. Whilst the armies against which he had to contend, were not composed of fewer nations than their governments, were actuated by diversity of sentiments.

Although the first Consul of France had divested his subjects of almost the very semblance of liberty, yet he was still the idol of many amongst them, as well as the rallying point of the discontented in every country throughout Europe. His having raised himself on the ruins of social order and legitimate government gave him an

irresistible claim to the homage of such persons.

The inconsistencies of the modern friends of freedom are indeed both numerous and glaring;—and it was said by Frederick the Great of Prussia, (who, however, did not survive to witness that climax of absurdity to which they afterwards attained,) "that if he were disposed to punish the inhabitants of any of his provinces, he would send a *philosopher* to govern them."

The reflecting part of the French nation can attest the misrule of *professing philosophers*, and probably agree with the observation of their countryman, when he says—"*Pour moi, lorsque je dis philosophe du* 18^me^ *siècle, j'entends tout ce qui est faux en morale, en legislation, et en politique.*"

The advantages possessed by the French over the allied powers certainly existed before the era of Buonaparte, and contributed to the victories of the revolutionary generals; the subsequent extension of these advantages sufficiently accounts for the superior successes of Buonaparte—for the military impulse, once given to the French

nation, continued even after the causes which occasioned it had ceased to exist. And I am not disposed to think so highly of his *capacity* as a general, as to suppose that had he to command the troops against whom he fought, or even forces less animated than his own, that his individual talent would have ensured their ultimate success.

It is observable that however much many *ci-devant* jacobins and republicans appeared to rejoice in the exaltation of Buonaparte, he soon ceased to treat them with equal consideration and regard, but having gratified his ambition seemed inclined

"To hate those arts which caused himself to rise."

His *agents* were particularly attentive in reporting to him every circumstance which occurred in the society of the *jacobins*, and even cautioned their friends not to associate with them lest they should become *suspected characters*.

The extent to which the system of *police espionage* was carried under the superintendence of *Fouché*, was really incredible. That minister displayed consummate *finesse* in the *composition* and *detection* of a plot,

whenever it was expedient that his own zeal and vigilance should be displayed, or that the views of his master could be thereby promoted.

The first Consul had no sooner been installed in his new office than he published to the world the detail of that political code which he had adopted. The Directory had not fully carried into execution the Federative System, of which it had traced the outline by its treaties with Holland, Switzerland, and the Italian republics; its completion could be best effected by a military ruler; and we read in a demi-official paper, drawn up early in 1800, that—"France perceived that without a federative system power has neither justice nor guarantee, nor hope of duration.—Europe is now reduced to the necessity of recomposing its public system; the connection between France and some nations has laid the foundations of a political code, which will serve as the *protector for some*, the *censor of others*, and a *rule for all*." And again—"France for federative subsidies will substitute military services, and if princes disregard the voice of self-interest

which dictates an alliance, she will virtually ally herself to that country which they are incapable of defending."

Such was the system which was now to be carried into immediate execution; and accordingly no exertions were omitted by which the military ardour of the French might be promoted, and their armies placed again on that formidable footing, from which they had been suffered to decline; and, that he might increase still further his disposable force, Buonaparte enacted severe laws, by which the ulterior projects of the royalists in the western departments might be prevented; and no quarter was given to any of their leaders who fell into his hands.

The intelligence now received, that the Emperor Paul of Russia had withdrawn himself from the allied cause, was most fortunate for Buonaparte. But whatever motives may have actuated that capricious monarch's determination, he still, whilst declaring his intention of neutrality, professed his abhorrence of the French revolutionary *regime*.

Many motives concurred to determine Buonaparte not to delay in carrying on

offensive operations against Austria, and of these the consolidation of his authority at home, (which he was sensible was best effected by victories abroad,) was probably the principal. But he was unwilling himself to assume the command of his armies, until there seemed a probability of his performing some signal exploit.

The command of the French army in Germany was therefore entrusted to the celebrated Moreau, who had to contend with a formidable Austrian army, under General Kray; this, however, he defeated in the several batles of Stockach, Engen, Biberach, and Hochstet; and having taken the strong position of Ulm, he soon afterwards established his head-quarters at *Munich.*

General Massena, who commanded the French army in Italy, did not meet with similar success, but was obliged, after a vigorous defence, to abandon Genoa to the Austrians: this disaster rendered the departure of Buonaparte for his army indispensable; he accordingly put himself at the head of an army of reserve of fifty thousand men, which he had lately formed at Dijon,

and passed the Alps, without experiencing any difficulty except from the badness of the roads, (which probably caused him afterwards to form that magnificent line of communication between France and Italy, by the Simplon,) although in many of the mountain passes the advance of his army might have been easily arrested by the Austrians.

On the arrival of the Consul at Aosta, he found the whole of Italy, of which he had been three years before the conqueror and the arbiter, occupied by Austrian armies: but his present success was destined to eclipse his former conquest; and the memorable battle of *Marengo,* on the 15th of June, 1800, again decided the fate of Italy (which had been rendered doubtful by the preceding battle of Montebello); in this engagement the loss on both sides was about fifteen thousand men. Night only put a stop to the dreadful carnage; and *victory,* which had long seemed to hover over the contending armies, "*dubiis pennis,*" at length declared against the Austrians. The day following General Melas, finding his position no longer

tenable, proposed an armistice to Buonaparte, (to whom it was, in fact, equally desirable,) and his request was granted, on the condition that the French should be put in full possession of Lombardy, Genoa, and Piedmont. The entry of Buonaparte into Milan was distinguished by great rejoicings, as the Austrians had strangely neglected to conciliate the good will of the Italians, who were pleased even with the shadow of liberty which they now obtained, Buonaparte having decreed the re-establishment of the Cisalpine and Ligurian republics. The Austrian government now also obtained a suspension of hostilities in Germany, as they had not been able to oppose the advance of Moreau, who not only occupied the whole Electorate of Bavaria, but also took possession of the Tyrol and Grisons, with a view of forming a communication between his own army and that of Buonaparte in Italy. Being now desirous of terminating so unsuccessful a war, the cabinet of Vienna dispatched a minister to Paris, who might discover upon what terms peace was to be obtained. The loss of a battle in itself is often by no means so fatal,

as the panic which is thereby created, and the Austrian government seemed to have been reduced almost to desperation after the battle of Marengo.

Those, however, who are unacquainted with the secrets of politicians, are often inclined to censure or to praise them with equal injustice. Statesmen, as well as private individuals, are not unfrequently reduced to a choice of difficulties; and *Burke* truly tells us, that—"the counsels of necessity are seldom wise."

But Austria, although humbled by the past, and apprehensive for the future, was not prepared to submit to the imperious mandates of the consular government—the liberal subsidies of England renewed her courage and her exertions, and accordingly, on the expiration of the armistice, hostilities were recommenced with fresh activity.

The armies of France, elated by success, were, however, not to be resisted; they defeated their opponents at *Hoinlinden* and on the *Mincio*, towards the close of 1800, and the Austrians now accepted the terms dictated by their conquerors: these did not differ materially from the stipulations of

the former treaty of *Campo Formio;* and the wish of Buonaparte to deprive England of all continental allies may probably have induced him, on this occasion, to treat the Austrians with greater lenity than they would probably have otherwise experienced.

The definitive treaty of peace between France and Austria, was signed at *Luneville,* on the 9th of February, 1801, and soon after ratified by both governments.

The system of indemnifying the temporal princes of Germany, with the secularized possessions of their ecclesiastical neighbours, (which had been before assented to at Radtstat,) was now to be carried into effect. An additional indemnity was to be provided for the Grand Duke of Tuscany, whose Italian states were ceded, with the title of *King of Etruria,* to the heir of the Duke of Parma, (in consideration for which Spain agreed to relinquish Louisiana and her portion of St. Domingo to France). *Saltzburg* and some smaller territories were fixed on for this purpose, and the Austrian government in vain remonstrated against the *inadequacy of an indemnity,* which had received the united

sanction of the French, Russian, and Prussian governments. The latter power was rewarded by Buonaparte for her inconsiderable losses on the left bank of the Rhine, (but more probably for her *neutrality,*) with many valuable and extensive bishoprics, which were peculiarly desirable from the circumstance of their connecting together several, hitherto disunited portions of the Prussian monarchy.

With the exception of the change in the government of *Tuscany*, and that *Piedmont* was retained by the French, instead of being restored to the King of Sardinia, the political state of Italy remained as it had been established by the treaty of *Campo Formio;* and an amicable convention was even signed between the French Consul and the newly-elected Pope (Pius VII.). The friendly relations which subsisted between France and America were now strengthened by a new treaty of alliance; and the influence of French counsels were even extended to St. Petersburgh, every intrigue being resorted to, in order to render the Emperor Paul mistrustful of the power and views of England.

In the course of 1801, negociations were commenced between the governments of England, and France, who were now alike desirous of concluding an *experimental peace;* but before we proceed to notice the political consequences of the *treaty of Amiens,* it will be first advisable for us to take a cursory view of the principal events by which it was immediately preceded.

The colonies of France and Holland had mostly fallen into the hands of the British government at an early period of the war, and in general without opposing to our forces any protracted resistance. In St. Domingo alone, where the French had been enabled to re-inforce their army, the loss on both sides was considerable; but the unwholesomeness of the climate proved still more destructive to the combatants than even the ravages of the sword. The important conquest of *Malta* was not obtained until after a blockade of nearly two years; but was soon followed by the reduction of *Egypt,* (and here we may briefly notice the principal events of Buonaparte's expedition, which an accumulation of matters of greater interest prevented us

from doing in a former Letter). The signal victory of the Nile having (as we have seen) annihilated the navy of Buonaparte, he was not insensible of the disadvantage of being without the means of communicating with France; but possessed of Egypt, and tired of inaction, he determined early in 1799 on invading Syria. *Gaza*, and *Jaffa* (notorious for his atrocious conduct, which he has yet affected to vindicate,) were taken without much difficulty; but the active conduct of Sir Sidney Smith obliged him, at length, to retire from before *Acre*, with the loss of eight general officers and a vast number of his soldiers; for Buonaparte, always prodigal of human life, (having now professed himself a *true Mussulman,)* seems to have adopted, in its most destructive form, the Turkish mode of warfare.

In the July following, the French entered Aboukir, after having defeated the Turks, with the loss of nearly twenty thousand men in killed and wounded.

We have already noticed Buonaparte's return to France, and his installation as first Consul, in November 1799, after

having, in a most remarkable manner, escaped the British cruisers in the Mediterranean. The time had now arrived, when, through the valour of a British army, the Turkish crescent was again to have the ascendency in Egypt. On the 21st of March, 1801, the French were completely defeated near Alexandria, by the gallant *Abercrombie,* on whose lamented death, the command of the British army devolved on Sir John (now Lord) Hutchinson, who, having taken Rosetta and Cairo, proceeded in August to invest *Alexandria,* where the remains of the French army, under General *Menou,* amounting to between eight and nine thousand soldiers, and one thousand three hundred sailors, were forced to capitulate.

Thus was Egypt, from the possession of which the French had projected so many advantages, restored to that government from which it had been wrested by them in a time of peace. But so much has been written on this subject, that I need dwell on it no longer.

Yours, &c.

LETTER XI.

THE internal concerns of our own country now require our attention, and venerating, as you do, the matchless constitution we enjoy, any measure which tended to its consolidation cannot fail of obtaining your approbation.

It is probable that the important measure of the Union between Great Britain and Ireland had long been in the contemplation of Government before they submitted the advantages to be expected from its enactment to the legislatures of both countries. The attempts of the disaffected to separate Ireland from the British crown, of which she had long been a valuable and an integral part, had naturally rendered those who wished to counteract their schemes, anxious for the conclusion of a definitive arrangement which might for ever unite the two sister kingdoms.

The Union between England and Scotland had now subsisted for almost a century, greatly to the advantage of both countries, although originally it had been popular in neither. And if the opposition of an enemy to a measure of internal policy be permitted to recommend its adoption, the advantage of consolidating the legislatures of countries, subject to the same sovereign, will be readily admitted; for we are informed by Sully, in his Memoirs, that when Philip of Spain was informed of the design entertained by James I. of England, of uniting the legislatures of England and Scotland, he instructed his ambassador in England, to *spare no expense* in endeavouring to prevent a measure which he foresaw would materially increase the political importance of the British dominions.

The prejudices entertained by a considerable party in Ireland against the *Legislative Union* with England, occasioned its *rejection,* when first proposed to the Parliament of that country; but, upon more mature consideration, the measure was soon afterwards carried by a majority, which,

though originally small, yet increased, as the discussion proceeded, to forty-six in the House of Commons.

The House of Peers adopted the articles which were submitted to them with few amendments, and with little opposition; and on the 24th of March, 1800, both Houses waited on the Lord-Lieutenant to inform him they had finally acceded to the proposed measure, which having been carried by considerable majorities in both Houses of the British Parliament, received the royal assent on the 2nd of July. His Majesty, previously to proroguing his Parliament, thus alluded to this important event in his speech:—"*This great* measure, on which my wishes have been long earnestly bent, I shall ever consider as the happiest event of my reign, being persuaded that nothing could so effectually contribute to extend to my Irish subjects the full participation of the blessings derived from the British constitution, and to establish, on the most solid foundation, the strength, prosperity, and power of the British empire."

To recapitulate the various arguments

which have been urged for and against this measure, would be both a tedious and an unnecessary task—they are fresh in the recollection of every one ;—I may, however, express my individual conviction of its advantages and efficiency.

Ireland had been too long a prey to the machinations of the disloyal; but, as an integral part of the British empire, we may hope no future attempts may be made to deprive her of the blessings of a constitution now truly become her own, and which could alone secure the private property, the public prosperity, and the religious freedom of her inhabitants. May we not then indulge the hope that the advantages anticipated from this measure in His Majesty's royal speech just quoted, may be eventually realized ; and that the increased intercourse between the two countries may remove all local prejudices of their respective inhabitants ; but that being convinced of the necessity and advantages of becoming *really assimilated,* as well as *politically united,* they may effectually coalesce together,—thus bidding defiance to the efforts of their enemies, and by mutual harmony and good

will, endeavouring to merit that protection which has been so signally extended to them by Divine Providence?

From the contemplation of the domestic concerns of Britain, we may proceed to notice the affairs of her extensive possessions in the east. These had been for some time threatened with an impending war by the intrigues of French emissaries at the court of *Tipoo Sultaun,* (who was indebted for his ample territories to the lenity of Marquis Cornwallis in 1792). Hostilities actually commenced in 1799, but by the decisive counsels of Marquis Wellesley, and the valour of the British and native armies, our Indian empire was both protected and extended. The reduction of the Mysore country was followed by the capture of Seringapatam, where a vast treasure fell into the hands of the conquerors. The dominions of Tipoo, who died in defending his capital, were partly divided amongst the allies of the East India Company; but the most considerable portion of them were united to their own possessions. An increased revenue was thus obtained, but, at the same time, the

defence of such an extended frontier, in future wars, must be attended both with expense and difficulty.

In this campaign we first find distinguished mention of the name of Sir Arthur Wellesley, who here laid the first foundation of that military prowess, which was afterwards so beneficially exerted for the interests of his country and of the world.

In the year 1800, much distress was experienced throughout the manufacturing districts of England, which at the same moment experienced the united evils of a *scarcity of provisions* and a *stagnation of trade.* Alarming riots ensued in several places, which were speedily suppressed by the active interference of the magistracy; whilst the more affluent classes of the community did not shrink from the discharge of their duties, but contributed with liberality to the relief of their suffering neighbours.

About this time an attempt was made, by a person of the name of Hatfield, to assassinate His Majesty at the theatre in Drury Lane; but a good Providence preserved the life of our excellent Sovereign;

and as it appeared that the contriver of this atrocious design was insane, he was placed in a situation where he might not have the power of committing any further outrage; and this instance of the impartiality and justice of our laws did not fail to procure for them a just tribute of applause in other less free countries.

The early part of 1801 was rendered memorable by the formation of a new administration, and by the temporary retirement, from political life, of a minister who had, for seventeen years, presided over the counsels of Britain.

He who presumes, however cautiously, to criticise the conduct of an administration, is commonly included amongst its opponents. Political approbation, to be acceptable, must be unqualified; and the spirit of party, like the *firm friendship* of Sallust, commands its votaries to see all things through the *same medium*.

The peculiar circumstances of the times in which Mr. Pitt filled the office of first minister, rendered his opponents particularly violent; for they conceived all his measures were calculated to produce the worst pos-

sible effects, and accused him of having, like another *Cadmus*, endeavoured to raise up factions where none would naturally have existed. But with all due respect both to the motives and the opinions of his opponents, it is impossible for us to deny this great man the praise so justly due to the wisdom and the foresight of many of his official acts. Our *navy* had now attained a degree of glory unparalleled in the annals of any nation; and the name of Earl Spencer will be long respected by naval men, as well as be associated in future times with *ability*, integrity, and victory. Our army, although it had not at this time attained that great celebrity, which afterwards attended it, yet, under the discriminating guidance of His Royal Highness the Duke of York, was materially improved, and only waited an opportunity of distinguishing itself. And had our continental allies stood firm to their engagements, there is every reason to believe that Mr. Pitt would have witnessed a result more consonant to his expectations, than attended the progress of the war during his life. The cause of Mr. Pitt's

retirement at this juncture has been attributed to two motives;—*either*, first, his having pledged himself to procure for the Roman Catholics of Ireland, after the accomplishment of the Union, the full participation of all those privileges which are enjoyed by the members of the established Church—a measure to which His Majesty had declared he could not conscientiously agree; and the minister and his sovereign, being thus of contrary opinions on so important a subject, the resignation of a servant whose counsels could not be attended to became indispensable. Others, in the second place, assure us that the actual cause of this political change is to be attributed to the impossibility of Mr. Pitt's concluding a peace with France, of which the nation was now desirous, both from the defection of their allies, as well as from the extreme expense attending so arduous a contest.

The political opponents of Mr. Pitt, who had long indulged the hope of succeeding him in office, were much disappointed when they discovered that the influence of the minister with the sovereign

he had so long served, was still such as to enable him to recommend the formation of a cabinet, the principles of which did not materially differ from that which had so long received the sanction of the legislature, and the approbation of a large proportion of the community. The appointment of Mr. Addington (now Lord Sidmouth) to the high offices of first Lord of the Treasury, and Chancellor of the Exchequer, took place in March 1801, under circumstances peculiarly honourable to His Majesty, as well as gratifying to the new minister, who was supported by most of the members of the late administration, and gradually acquired the confidence of the nation.

The Northern powers, long jealous of the naval superiority of England, now formed a confederacy against that power, which it was not, however, possible for their united efforts to diminish. At this crisis victory opened for us the Baltic, and Denmark was obliged to negociate for the preservation of her capital; whilst a convention was soon afterwards concluded with Russia, by which the doubtful proposition, *that free bottoms made free goods,*

was resisted, and the dignity of Britain maintained with distinguished success.

The assassination of the Emperor Paul now placed his son Alexander on the throne of Russia; and his accession was hailed as a most auspicious event by all classes of his subjects, who, having suffered severely during the capricious reign of the late monarch, were pleased at the prospect of happier times, under a prince who possessed those amiable qualities so important to temper the exercise of despotic power.

The wish of the British nation for peace was now to be gratified; and after so many years of war, it seemed at least deserving of a trial, whether the time had not at length arrived when the nations of Europe might enjoy the blessings of repose. But whilst the attention of the world was directed to the pending negociation between its two greatest powers, much astonishment was excited by the conduct of Buonaparte, who, gradually laying aside the mask of moderation, thought proper, notwithstanding the recently concluded treaty with Austria, to annex Piedmont, Genoa, Parma, and Elba in perpetuity to France. Nor did

his aggressions rest here; for in January 1802 he assumed the title of President of the Italian (lately the Cisalpine) republic—an event which could not but alarm the other powers of Europe. *Austria*, however, had ceased to be formidable whilst without allies. *Prussia*, far from complaining of this proceeding, complimented the first Consul on these accessions to his power. *Russia*, far removed from France, did not immediately fear its aggrandisement. Whilst the *minor powers*, who had every thing to apprehend from the absorbing influence of France, were left at the mercy of a power, from whom they had every thing to dread, and whose unresisted usurpations proved that the balance of European power had ceased to exist. The British government alone remonstrated against the conduct of Buonaparte, who is said to have made light of what he had done, and to have replied, "*ces sont des bagatelles;*" and indeed the experience of every day proved that he considered *treaties* as *trifles*, and was to be bound by no compact when it suited his convenience to violate it.

A new constitution was now provided for the Italian republic ; but no traces of those principles, hitherto esteemed essential in free governments, were here to be discerned; and the Italians soon discovered that it did not suit the ideas of their new master, either to define or to maintain their privileges with too much exactness. Calamity and ruin seemed inseparable from a connection with France, and the governments of her vassal states—of *Holland*, *Liguria*, and *Switzerland*, were perpetually changed. Some of the smaller cantons of Switzerland opposed a brave but ineffectual resistance to a constitution imposed on them by Buonaparte, the forms of which were perfectly uncongenial to their long established habits, sentiments, and dispositions.

Although the conduct of Buonaparte did not encourage the British government to hope that the proposed peace would be of long duration, yet, as the continental powers did not interfere, no material interruption took place in the pending negociations ; the chief difficulty to their conclusion, respected the destiny of *Malta*, (which

ultimately became the pretext of a new war, as our government declined evacuating it, until Buonaparte should manifest a disposition to carry into effect the other stipulations of the treaty).

The *preliminary articles of peace* were, however, signed in London on the 1st of October, 1801; but the *definitive treaty* did not receive the signature of Lord Cornwallis, at *Amiens*, until the 27th of March, 1802. The *ratifications* were severally exchanged on the 18th of April, and *peace was formally proclaimed* in London on the 29th. The jealousy of both nations was very evident from the tardiness with which their negociators proceeded; for after a protracted discussion, the definitive treaty merely presents to us a transcript of the preliminary articles, and contained no intimation of any future arrangement for the regulation of the *commerce* of the two nations; neither were there any provisions calculated either to render the peace *secure*, by regulating the forces respectively to be maintained, or specifying what proceedings should be regarded as an infraction of it.

The colonies taken from France and her allies were restored, with the exception of Trinidad and Ceylon, which were ceded to England. The integrity of the dominions of our allies, *Turkey* and *Portugal*, were guaranteed; but the latter power ceded the district of *Olivenca* to Spain. The republic of the *seven Ionian islands* (formerly Venetian) was recognized. *Malta* was to be restored to the order of St. John, under the guarantee of the principal powers of Europe. The *Prince of Orange* was to receive an indemnity in Germany for the loss of his authority in Holland. The French troops were to evacuate the *Roman* and *Neapolitan* states; and the English were to retire from *Porto Ferrajo*, and generally from all the ports and islands occupied by them in the Mediterranean, or the Adriatic. Such were the principal stipulations of this treaty, the conclusion of which was celebrated with much festivity at Paris, on the 18th of April, on which day, being Easter Sunday, the restoration of religious authority was also publicly commemorated.

The Dutch rejoiced at the return of peace, which they hoped would favour

their commercial pursuits; but they soon discovered that the arts of peace would never find a protector in Buonaparte, his whole attention being directed to encourage a martial spirit in his dominions: with this view he instituted the *Legion of Honour*, as the basis of that feudal superstructure, the plan of which he had already traced. Aware of the popularity he had acquired as the restorer of peace, Buonaparte determined to avail himself of this opportunity of depriving the French of every trace of that *liberty*, in the pursuit of which they had suffered so many difficulties and degradations. Not being satisfied with his *Legislative Body*, he declared that he had "postponed to another period, the consideration of laws anxiously expected by the people, being convinced that the time was *not yet arrived* when those discussions might take place, with that calmness and unity of intention which they required."

The restoration of peace was also celebrated with great demonstrations of joy in England, where its advantages had been impatiently desired.

The inhabitants of the two rival nations

now seemed desirous of mutual reconciliation, and indulged the hope of a long interval of tranquillity; but their respective governments were actuated by a spirit of jealousy, which evidently indicated that the present was but a temporary and a delusive calm.

Yours, &c.

LETTER XII.

BEFORE we proceed to notice the renewal of hostilities (which the circumstances attending the conclusion of the peace of Amiens seemed to indicate would take place at no distant period), let us take a cursory view of the respective situations of France and England during the short interval of peace.

We have had before occasion to lament the preponderating influence of France; it had now, however, become truly formidable to the rest of Europe; and the statesman, unused to such alarming times, beheld with consternation the destruction of that political balance, for the maintenance of which such sacrifices had formerly been made.

The barriers, within which France had been long confined, not less for her own advantage than for the repose of Europe, were laid prostrate by the impetuous tide

of revolution; and many most valuable provinces (to the conquest of which Louis XIV. had in vain aspired) were now incorporated with France, giving an increase of six millions to her population; besides which, Buonaparte could command many considerable and nominally independent states,—for Spain, Italy, Switzerland, and Holland, were hurried within the attraction of his despotic power, and only moved as tributary satellites.

The possession of such vast authority might seem sufficient to satisfy the most ambitious. Buonaparte, however, sought its extension; and, as a step towards his ulterior projects, he caused himself to be appointed Consul for life, with the power of nominating his successor. He had lately condescended to accept the office of President of the Italian republic, because, as he informed that people, they did not possess any citizen worthy of the situation; and he now demanded of the French an extension of his former powers, under circumstances which would hardly admit of their refusal. Still the suffrages of the people in his favour (for he affected to decline his new

dignity until it had obtained the sanction of the nation,) were collected so tardily, that some displeasure was expressed; but, notwithstanding every exertion of his prefects, the signatures of those who were disposed to gratify the wishes of their master, and to rivet, yet more effectually, the shackles by which he had bound them, did not amount to one-tenth of the population of his dominions.

A new constitution was now to be imposed on France; but that which had been planned by *Sieyes*, not being sufficiently arbitrary to procure the sanction of Buonaparte, he had recourse to more congenial counsellors; and although he had of late appeared so anxious to procure the general concurrence to the extension of his authority, yet he now issued his mandate for the acceptance, by the nation, of a new code of laws, which had been adopted by his Senate in the sitting of a *single day*. The prolixity of the *Code Napoleon*, which occupied ten titles or chapters, may serve as my excuse for not attempting to detail its provisions. If *ambiguity* were desired, it was certainly here obtained; and the

consular judges were invested with full powers, not indeed "*amplare judicium,*" but "*to darken even by explanation, and puzzle by elucidation.*"

The cessation of hostilities with Great Britain having once more opened the seas to the marine of France, every exertion was made use of to increase its efficiency: and the attention of Buonaparte was also directed to the West India colonies of France; but the means he pursued to re-establish the power of that country in St. Domingo were marked by the most dreadful depravity, and the names of *Toussaint L'Ouverture, Christophe,* and *Dessalines,* cannot but recal to our minds scenes of perfidy and injustice, at which humanity revolts, and on which it would be painful to dwell. The re-establishment of *slavery* in the French colonies was now decreed; but indeed it could not be expected that the negroes should have been suffered to retain privileges of which their masters were no longer possessed.

But to proceed in our view of the internal state of France.—We find the *public revenue,* which had, during the adminis-

tration of *Neckar*, amounted to eighteen millions English, but which fell short by about two millions of the annual expenditure of the country, was now raised to thirty millions, the taxes having been considerably increased in the province of Old France, and many new territories being incorporated with them.

The *population of France*, which, before the Revolution, was estimated at twenty-five or twenty-six million , does not appear to have suffered as materially as might have been expected from the wars and internal commotions of the times, although the loss of lives, occasioned by the proscriptions at home, and the wars abroad, must have been immense. I have seen a calculation, by which it appears, that, between the years 1790 and 1796, not less than one million two hundred thousand soldiers were raised for the service of the state ; and the wars in which France was afterwards engaged, prove by their destructive consequences how dearly her conquests were purchased.

The *navy of France*, at the commencement of the Revolution, is said to have

consisted of eighty-one ships of the line, sixty-nine frigates, and one hundred and forty-one smaller vessels; the whole amounting to fourteen thousand guns.

That of Great Britain, at the same period, amounted to one hundred and seventy-two ships of the line, twenty-five of fifty guns, besides frigates and other armed vessels; the total being four hundred and sixty-one ships, and mounting twenty-five thousand guns. At the conclusion of the war, England had nearly seven hundred vessels in her service; and the balance in her favour of ships captured during the war, was eighty-three sail of the line, (and fifty-gun ships,) one hundred and thirty-four frigates, and two hundred and thirty-four sloops, forming a total of five hundred and one. By which it appears that the French must have bestowed great attention to the aggrandisement of their marine; but even with the appropriated navies of Holland, Spain, and Italy, they were not equal to contend with us on an element which Providence seemed to have rendered so peculiarly our own.

The liberality with which England re-

stored almost all the numerous colonies she had captured during the war, to their respective nations, cannot have escaped your attention; nor was this liberality impolitic, as England already possessed a greater number of colonies than were perhaps conducive to her prosperity; for the present state of Spain must convince us that a country is enfeebled by too great an extension of its foreign possessions.

The commerce of England had increased in as great a proportion as its national navy during the war; and whilst the population of France had merely *not decreased* during the last ten years, that of Britain had been considerably augmented. But it is the *revenue of England*, which especially excites our astonishment — at the extreme facility with which it rose, so as to enable her to defray the expenses of so destructive a contest. On looking back to the year 1760, we find the annual revenue of England was then estimated at about nine millions. In 1791 it had risen to sixteen millions; whilst, in 1803, the sums annually raised by taxes amounted to twenty-eight millions, besides a vast accu-

mulation of public debt, as the year following the peace of Amiens the sum funded was not less than ninety-seven millions; but this great additional loan was scarcely made an object of complaint or even of observation. Indeed nothing but the general spirit of unanimity, which animated the nation, could have carried us successfully through the most arduous contest in which we were ever engaged, and have enabled us to oppose, with effect, the powerful forces and the dangerous principles of France*.

The plan of German indemnifications, now carried into execution, occasioned a more serious infraction of the ancient constitution of the empire, than resulted either from the thirty years war, or from the

* In the year 1813, the sum annually raised by taxes, in Great Britain and Ireland, amounted to seventy-three millions; whilst the interest on the sums funded (about forty millions) raised our expenditure in that year to one hundred and thirteen millions. It may be likewise observed, that the poor rates of England are now equal to the whole revenue of the state on the accession of his present Majesty; for in the year 1760, they were only one million and a half.

treaty of Westphalia. The political aspect of that country was now completely altered by the secularising principle which had been adopted. The great ecclesiastical electorates of *Cologne* and *Treves* were entirely, and that of *Mentz* was for the most part, united to France; whilst the possessions of the ecclesiastical sovereigns, on the right bank of the Rhine, were bestowed on those temporal princes who had been deprived of territories on the left bank of that river, now the boundary between France and Germany.

The French Revolution was, however, destined to occasion more extraordinary and unlooked for events than had been ever before witnessed. France, always formidable from its natural advantages, was now peculiarly so, from the character which the majority of its inhabitants had acquired under their military ruler; and, like an *enormous volcano*, threatened the stability of the surrounding states, until those devastating fires of which it became the focus, should be either exhausted or extinguished.

The political conduct of the Emperor

of *Russia* seemed at this time considerably influenced by the French government, and that sovereign supported the recent changes proposed by Buonaparte in Germany and Italy.

Prussia, which had sustained no severe losses during the short period its monarch was a party to the coalition against France, received (as we have seen in a former Letter, and *nominally* for the loss of the inconsiderable territory of Cleves), many most important and valuable provinces, which at the time seemed likely to contribute to the lasting stability of that country. Subsequent events, however, have proved to us the short-sighted policy of its government; and we have seen with what facility those provinces bestowed at one time, with such apparent liberality, were afterwards resumed at the discretion of the donor. The neutrality of Prussia was at one time essential to the interests of Buonaparte; but, having succeeded in his schemes, he resolved on the dismemberment of a state, which might *once* have thwarted his ambition, and which from the first he had not spared from principles of moderation.

Austria had sustained great losses, in consequence of the two wars she had waged against France, both with respect to her military force and her pecuniary resources. Her territorial loss had also been considerable; but the acquisition of Venice (in exchange for the remote provinces of Belgium) gave her a place amongst the maritime powers of Europe; and, although its arsenals had been despoiled by French rapacity, yet they still afforded encouragement to future exertions in the formation of a navy. The Austrian government did not fall into the same error as the Prussian, by endeavouring to preserve a precarious neutrality, whilst Europe was devastated by war; but being aware that little is commonly to be expected from the moderation of a conqueror, it pursued a more determined part, and readily embraced every scheme which seemed to promise the depression of a power from which it had already suffered much, and from which it had still much to apprehend.

The interval of peace was assiduously employed by Buonaparte, in the formation

of such a formidable army as might enable him, at any moment, to throw off the *pacific character*, which for a time he had found it advisable to assume. He was aware that an authority acquired by arms must also be supported by arms; and from the *official lucubrations*, which occasionally appeared in the *Moniteur*, he seemed evidently "*to sleep on brambles*," until an opportunity presented itself of resuming his career of desolation.

The new system of *French diplomacy* undoubtedly afforded that government an increased facility of informing itself both correctly and minutely, as to the actual intentions, by which the principal powers of Europe were actuated; to obtain such information no pains were neglected; and many *confidential ministers* of the continental powers were *more than suspected* of having been in the interests of Buonaparte.

The system of education in France had now become either *military*, or *diplomatic*; and parents were compelled to send their children to schools, where, instead of acquiring principles of religion or morality,

they were only fitted to become the instruments of perpetuating the slavery of their country. This compulsive system has indeed fallen with its founder; but France will not soon recover its demoralizing effects.

Buonaparte was not, however, long content with officially abusing England in the Moniteur, and with asserting her inability, *single handed,* to contend with France; but his endeavours were directed to promote a spirit of disaffection in that country; and although there is little doubt that the treasonable conspiracy of Colonel Despard (discovered in the early part of 1803) was aided by the French government, yet those very men who had themselves risen by the most atrocious crimes, and who would have "*envied, not abhorred,*" the guilt of the *successful traitor,* were amongst the first to exclaim against the infamy of the *detected conspirator.*

A new rebellion in Ireland was also preparing by the intrigues of the French government, who, from the late unfortunate events in that country, perceived that it afforded a greater scope to the missionaries

of insurrection than any other part of the United Kingdom.

A proclamation was drawn up by Emmett, Quigley, and other traitors, purporting to be issued by the *provisional government of Ireland.* But the insurrection, which broke out in Dublin on the evening of the 23rd of July, 1803, was instantly suppressed; and it was not until the following morning, that all the inhabitants of Dublin were informed of the melancholy fate of Lord Kilwarden, who had been murdered by those who had assembled at the call of treason. The alarm on this occasion was considerable; but the energetic measures of government soon disconcerted the plans of the disaffected, and restored confidence to loyalty. Thus terminated another effort, on the part of France, to stimulate the ignorant and misguided to the subversion of a constitution, the advantages of which they were unable duly to appreciate; for those only can justly value the excellence of *British independence,* who have witnessed, in less favoured countries, the evils resulting from its absence.

Buonaparte, whose rapid elevation to despotic power in France, and to a control hitherto without example amongst the continental states, sufficiently prove him to have been an instrument in the hands of Providence, was, perhaps, permitted, amongst other more important ends, to rule many nations with a *rod of iron*, in order that we (who owe so much beside to that protecting arm which has been most powerfully extended in our defence) might attach ourselves more strongly to our constitution, as it has long subsisted in church and state; might enjoy the blessings we possess with truer gratitude, and might walk with increased zeal in the path of duty.

LETTER XIII.

We have already witnessed many extraordinary changes; but greater were yet to be accomplished through the agency of a man, who seemed appointed, for a time, to plant and pluck up, to cast down, and to destroy, according to his pleasure, that, like another Cyrus, he might convince even the most thoughtless, that "the Most High ruleth in the kingdoms of men."

The re-commencement of hostilities between England and France was now fast approaching; they were *again to be at war, because* (as was observed by an eminent statesman) *they could not continue at peace.* The warlike preparations of France rendered a similar activity on our part indispensable. The intemperance of Buonaparte was, on many occasions, forcibly displayed; but his enmity to England seems, in his celebrated conversation with Lord

Whitworth, to have completely overcome the bounds of prudence, and to have obliterated from his recollection the lessons of politeness he is said to have received from *Talma*. The dignified conduct of the British ambassador on this occasion, proved how worthy he was of representing his sovereign, and formed a striking contrast to the timidity with which many statesmen submitted to the capricious conduct of the French Consul. The example of his Excellency was indeed a salutary lesson to those

"Who borrow their behaviour from the great—"

of the necessity, on such occasions, of putting on—

"The useful spirit of resolution."

The dispute respecting *Malta* has been generally considered as the actual cause of the renewal of hostilities with France; but it probably only contributed to hasten a rupture, which, from the system of aggression, violence, and insult, adopted by Buonaparte towards our government, long appeared inevitable. Our lot was cast in

an age when we had not the option of preferring the blessings of peace to the calamities of war; but the renewal of hostilities (which was formally proclaimed on the 29th of April, 1803,) was distinguished by an act of perfidy and violence, on the part of Buonaparte, which would have disgraced the most barbarous age,—the detention of all those British subjects who had visited France, either from motives of business or curiosity.—The laws of nations were soon afterwards again violated by his sending an army through the German empire, for the purpose of occupying Hanover, although a treaty of peace actually subsisted between His Britannic Majesty, in his electoral capacity, and the French republic. The shores of the Elbe and Weser being thus seized by France, a British fleet was dispatched to keep them blockaded, and similar measures were soon afterwards adopted with respect to the ports of Havre, Genoa, &c. Buonaparte now proceeded to menace England with invasion, and following the example of the Directory, marched vast bodies of troops towards the coast, for the purpose of being embarked,

whenever his fleet might find confidence to venture beyond the protection of the batteries of Boulogne. The immense military force of France, which held the coasts of so many nations in thraldom, and reduced to slavery and distress their once prosperous inhabitants, prevented the British government from undertaking any offensive operations on the continent of Europe; but before the close of the year, the French colonies of St Lucia, Tobago, St. Pierre, and St. Domingo, together with the Dutch settlements of Demarara and Berbice, were again occupied by the British forces which had so recently evacuated them;—and even in the plenitude of his power, Buonaparte confessed he wanted ships, colonies, and commerce.

In the early part of 1804, much alarm and uneasiness was excited by the serious indisposition of His Majesty, whose malady was of a similar nature to that by which he had been formerly afflicted, and which, in 1789, caused such general consternation throughout the kingdom. Now, however, the public anxiety was peculiarly excited by the occurrence of this calamity, at a

period when every possible exertion was required to enable the British government to baffle the machinations of the most formidable enemy with whom we had ever yet contended. In about two months from the commencement of his illness, the convalescence of His Majesty was announced, and the welcome intelligence was received most joyfully by his loyal subjects.

On the 12th of May an important change took place in the councils of His Majesty,—Mr. Pitt being appointed first Lord of the Treasury, and Chancellor of the Exchequer, in the place of Mr. Addington, who relinquished those offices with much credit to himself; when the union of parties in Parliament, as well as the public voice, seemed to call for the formation of an extended administration, by which the talents of distinguished men, of all parties, might be effectually directed to maintain the threatened security of the state.

The expected coalition did not, however, take place, being rendered abortive by some of those powerful motives by which public characters are influenced, but which are seldom rightly understood by those who

are removed from the scenes of political contention. On the completion of the new arrangements it appeared that a majority of the former ministers retained their situations in the cabinet. The appointment of Lord Melville to the superintendence of the naval department was generally approved by the nation; and whatever opinion may be entertained respecting the event which led to the retirement of that minister from public life, still it must, in candour be admitted, that to him the naval service, that great bulwark of our country, was indebted for measures at once timely, salutary, and decisive.

That bravery, which is the characteristic of British sailors, was about this time signally displayed.—Some ships of the East India Company having brought to action, and defeated a French squadron, commanded by Admiral Linois, consisting of ships of war, in every respect superior to those heavily laden vessels, whose crews, thus preserved from French rapacity property to the value of a million and a half sterling. The affairs of India, during the government of Marquis Wellesley, afforded

much to engage the public attention, and their connected history cannot fail to be perused with the deepest interest; it would, however, be foreign to our subject, to enter into those details which would be necessary to render the events of that period at all intelligible;—I shall therefore only observe that two of the most powerful of the native princes were subdued; that not less wisdom was displayed in concluding the war, than energy had been shewn during its prosecution; and that ample testimony was borne to the merits of Marquis Wellesley's government, by the approbation of his sovereign, and the thanks of both Houses of Parliament.

The events, which at this period occurred in Europe, will furnish us with abundant matter for reflection; and amongst the numerous atrocities of Buonaparte, none will be remembered with feelings of greater indignation than the barbarity with which he hurried the *Duke d'Enghien* from the protection of a neutral state to an untimely grave. The favourable manner in which the character and talents of that lamented prince were spoken of, is supposed to have

occasioned his destruction; and it is reported that Fouché (whose political life did not display too much of *"the milk of human kindness,")* said on this occasion, *"C'étoit un coup de fusil inutilement lâché."*

But it were tedious even to enumerate the various violations of the laws of humanity and of nations, committed by Buonaparte; and it may suffice to state, that about this time the seizure of Sir George Rumbold, (the British envoy at Hamburgh,) and the deaths of Pichegru and Georges, were added to the already extended catalogue of his crimes.

The ambition of Buonaparte, long emboldened by success, now prompted him to aspire to the *imperial title.* He had some time previously endeavoured to procure from Louis XVIII. the relinquishment of the throne of France in favour of the Buonaparte dynasty; his overtures were, however, spiritedly declined by that prince, although he was then in a situation certainly not less deplorable than that of Francis I. when he exclaimed, *"We have lost every thing but our honour."* But the refusal

of Louis did not prevent Buonaparte from taking the necessary measures to hasten the accomplishment of his views, and his emissaries soon discovered — "that France might expect more from the family of Buonaparte than from any other—and that no title is more suited to the dignity of the supreme chief of the French nation than the title of Emperor."

Carnot, however, had the courage to refuse his assent to the proposed alteration in the government, which was finally adopted by the Senate on the 18th of May, 1804; and on the 28th it was formally notified to the foreign ministers, that *Napoleon Buonaparte* had been pleased to yield to the solicitations of his country, and had condescended to accept the title of Emperor of the French.

The revival of those titles and distinctions which, together with the throne from which they emanated, had been destroyed by the Revolution, was now acquiesced in by those who had formerly exclaimed against them, when subsisting under a legitimate prince; but who were willing to be decorated with the trappings of a jacobin

sovereign. Buonaparte was compared to *Terminus*, from his having so *happily* concluded the troubles of the Revolution; and its advocates flattered themselves they preserved their *consistency*, by voting that "the government of the French *republic* shall be confided to Napoleon Buonaparte, under the title of *Emperor*—and that the national coins shall bear on one side the imperial, and on the other the republican style and symbols." Another constitution was now conferred on France; it consisted of one hundred and fifty-one articles, and was well calculated to amuse the French with the shadow of that liberty, the substance of which it was not intended they should possess. Buonaparte's first exercise of the imperial authority was the nomination of his grand dignitaries, functionaries, and officers, and the adjustment of the titles by which they were respectively to be addressed. The former advocates of republicanism seemed to exult in the elevation of their chief to the throne of the Bourbons; and those whose hatred to the late, seemed to entitle them to the favour of the present, dynasty, had now the several

parts assigned them, which it was required they should sustain in this new distribution of the *dramatis personæ* of the French government.

The courts of Russia and Sweden openly avowed their disapprobation of the conduct of Buonaparte in assuming the imperial dignity; but the other sovereigns of Europe, although aware of the character of the man who now addressed them *as a brother*, did not delay to acknowledge him as such.—They soon, however, discovered that it was impossible, by any act of abasement, to conciliate a government which invariably regulated its conduct by principles absolutely at variance with the dictates of justice, the laws of nations, and with every established principle of rectitude.

Having thus become an emperor, Buonaparte was not insensible of the discontent his elevation might occasion; nor did he seem any longer disposed to tolerate those sarcasms, which, as a consul, he had affected to despise, but meditated the conversion of one half of his subjects into spies on the conduct of the other. The history

of the *French police*, as established by Buonaparte, proves him to have far exceeded *Machiavel* in subtilty. His courts of law were also so constructed as to form an unobtrusive engine of oppression and injustice. Nothing was thought so trivial as to be unworthy of the notice of the Emperor, whose attention was turned, with singular rapidity, from the most important to the most trifling events; and we find him, at one moment, determining the downfall of a monarch, or the new modelling of a government, and at another engaged in regulating the theatrical amusements of the Parisians, or canvassing the proceedings of the French literary Institute.

The wish of giving every possible degree of pomp and *éclat* to his approaching coronation, rendered Buonaparte extremely desirous that the Pope should repair to Paris for the purpose of performing the ceremony on that occasion. Neither promises, nor threats were spared to induce the compliance of his Holiness, who, at last, reluctantly yielded to the solicitations of his cardinals, and, probably with the best intentions, gave,

as far as it was in his power to do so, an appearance of legitimacy to the usurpations of Buonaparte.

The ancient maxim of the Kings of France, respecting the Pope, was—"*Qu' il est une personne sacrée, mais enterprenante, dont il faut toujours baiser les pieds, mais quelquefois lier les mains;*"—the latter part of this maxim was invariably followed by the new made sovereign, who, whilst he forged severe fetters for the Pope, soon dispensed with shewing him even a nominal respect*.

The details of Buonaparte's coronation are before the public; but although no expense was spared to render the ceremony as imposing as possible, yet I have heard many Parisians assert that it failed in exciting that degree of enthusiasm which it was expected to produce on a populace who generally delight in processions and magnificent exhibitions.

Those who had obtained the honours and emoluments of the imperial court were naturally interested in supporting the au-

* See further of the Pope, Letters XVII. and XX.

thority of a master with whose fortunes they were so intimately connected. But it was only by the "*panem et circenses*" that the lower classes (especially of the Parisians,) were to be conciliated, and these it became the policy of their sovereign to afford them; he therefore took measures to allay that turbulence of disposition which the Revolution had given to many of his subjects, by having recourse to those *opiates*, which, having formerly reconciled the Romans to subjection, would, he hoped, produce a similar effect on the French.

LETTER XIV.

HAVING in my last Letter announced the success of Buonaparte's ambitious projects, and conducted him to

"The dread summit of Cæsarian power,"

which, unlike Cromwell, he was destined both to attain and to survive,—I now proceed to notice the principal events of the history of France under the Buonaparte dynasty. It fortunately did not comprise a very long course of years; but every moment of its duration teemed with extraordinary events; and were *Robertson now* called on to name the most calamitous epocha in the annals of the human race, it is probable he would give the precedence in the scale of horror to the *reign of Napoleon*, rather than to the period which elapsed from the death of Theodosius the Great till the establishment of the Lombards in Italy.

An attempt to revive the *feudal system* characterised the reign of Buonaparte, and his victories, for a time, established a system of *military subinfeudation*, which, although defective in its provisions to maintain the internal order of a country, and unfavourable to moral and religious improvement, yet corresponded with the ambitious views of its re-founder, who appeared to disregard the testimony of experience, which attests, that *empires, founded on fiefs, are not durable*, and to imagine himself exempted from the common lot of military chieftains.

Great, however, as were the rewards he was enabled to bestow, and great as was the respect which he at one time received, still the vassals of the French Emperor failed in their allegiance when their co-operation was most peculiarly essential, and even assisted in destroying that power by which they had indeed been aggrandized, but by which they felt they might be, at any moment, annihilated.

That Buonaparte, whose authority had, for some time, been absolute in France, should have been ambitious of the imperial

title, was a circumstance by no means extraordinary: but the astonishment of the world was greatly excited when the Emperor of Germany, who was still seated on the most ancient throne in Europe, condescended to follow the example of the Corsican adventurer, by assuming the title of HEREDITARY EMPEROR *of Austria*; —that monarch about the same time found it prudent to increase his military establishment; and symptoms of a new coalition against the formidable and increasing power of France were perceptible from the movements of the Russian and Swedish courts.

Prussia, whose influence in the North of Germany was decisive, was, however, closely attached to the interests of Buonaparte; and there appeared no hope that her sovereign would adopt a more liberal policy, and employ his power beneficially for the cause of Europe.

Spain, completely subservient to the views of France, had now given her reluctant consent to the sale of Louisiana (which had been ceded to France in exchange for Tuscany,) to the Americans, which she had

resisted on the grounds that certain stipulations, agreed to by Buonaparte, had not been duly fulfilled. The predominating power of France also involved Spain in a war with England, and the strongest expressions of animosity were now indulged in by Buonaparte against our government, although, at the commencement of 1805, he had professed his desire for peace, and assured the French Legislative Body, "that no state should be incorporated with the empire, but that he would not sacrifice his rights, nor the ties that attached him to the states which he had created." Those, however, who had attended to the assurances of Buonaparte on former occasions, were not surprised to find them overlooked whenever it might suit his policy to disregard them; and even the least observant were alarmed at the rapid strides he took towards universal empire. He had not been long seated on the imperial throne before he discovered that the office of *President of the Italian republic* (formerly an object of consular ambition) was unworthy of being retained by an emperor, and that the *iron crown* of Charlemagne seemed alone suited

to his dignity. Nor did the Italians appear less urgent in their obsequious requests to have their country new modelled, than were the Asiatic nations in their supplications to be admitted within the jurisdiction of ancient Rome. Republicanism had now become *unfashionable,* as it only served to remind Buonaparte of principles which, although he had once professed, he now wished to see exploded; he accordingly complied with the entreaties of the Italians, and on the 26th of May, 1805, added to his other titles that of *King of Italy.* The incorporation of the Ligurian republic with France next followed; and Genoa, which had formerly contended for the empire of the Mediterranean, and had hitherto been suffered to retain a nominal independence, was now, like Venice, obliterated from the list of nations. Its obsequious deputies were graciously received by their new master, who was pleased to inform them—"I will realize your wish—I will unite you to my great people."

From the distant plains of Italy Buonaparte (now decorated with another crown,) repaired, with the utmost expedition, to the

Northern coast of France, and appeared to apply himself entirely to the completion of his preparations for the invasion of England. He was, however, aware that a continental war was approaching; and that an alliance had been already formed between the courts of London and St. Petersburgh, to which the cabinet of Vienna soon after acceded, being disgusted with the imperious conduct of Buonaparte, as well as lamenting the loss of those fine provinces of Italy, which he had united to his empire.

The professed objects of this coalition were—the evacuation of Hanover and the North of Germany by the French—the establishment of the independence of Holland and Switzerland—the re-establishment of the King of Sardinia in Piedmont, with as large an augmentation of territory as circumstances would permit—the future security of Naples, and the complete evacuation of Italy by the French armies; together with the establishment of an order of things in Europe, which might guarantee the independence of its several states, and present an effectual barrier to the usurpations of France. Such were the views

of the allied powers; but moderate as they may appear, they could by no means be acceded to by Buonaparte, consistently with his declaration to his Legislative Body, just quoted. Recourse was therefore had, once more, to arms; and Buonaparte having committed the government of France to his brother Joseph, set out for Germany on the 24th of September, and assumed the command of a vast army, now destined for the subjugation of Austria, instead of being employed in the invasion of England.

A considerable Austrian army had recently occupied Bavaria; but their success was but momentary, for their commander had committed a capital error in proceeding so far in advance as Ulm, whilst the Russian armies were still at a distance from the scene of action; and the defeat of the Austrians was not less sudden than it was signal and alarming. No victory, so important in its consequences, had hitherto been gained, at one blow, over so numerous and formidable an army; and the conduct of General *Mack* in surrendering to the French (and almost without resistance) an

army of thirty thousand men, together with the strong city of *Ulm*, and its immense military magazines, can be only attributed to absolute imbecility of character, or to a traiterous conspiracy against his sovereign.

The French army now advanced with rapidity to Munich, and having reinstated the Elector of Bavaria in his dominions, proceeded to invade the hereditary states of the Emperor Francis, who, from the dispersed state of his armies, was not even enabled to preserve his capital, which was occupied by the French army on the 13th of November. — At Vienna Buonaparte became possessed of a vast quantity of military stores of every description, and he affected to treat its inhabitants with kindness and moderation.

Several skirmishes now took place between the French and Russian forces in Moravia, where events seemed to indicate a general and decisive action between the contending armies. The same ill success had attended the Austrian army in Italy as in Germany, and the Archduke

Charles having retired from that country, proceeded towards Hungary, with the view of relieving the capital of Austria.

In the mean time the general engagement which had been long expected took place at *Austerlitz*. The military details of this decisive action (called by the Germans the battle of the three Emperors) I shall not pretend to relate, but content myself with observing that the combatants on both sides amounted to upwards of seventy thousand men; the loss of the allies (who were commanded by Prince John of Lichtenstein and General Kutousoff,) in killed, wounded, and prisoners, exceed a fourth part of their aggregate force; and forty standards, together with the chief part of their baggage and artillery, fell into the hands of the French, who, the day following this engagement, (the 3rd of December,) made a movement in advance. The Emperor of Austria now solicited an armistice, which was granted him by Buonaparte on the three following conditions:—First, That the French armies should continue to occupy all their conquests until the conclusion of a definitive treaty of peace.—Secondly,

That fourteen days' notice should be given before the recommencement of hostilities, in the event of the failure of the negociations:—and, Thirdly, That the Russian forces should evacuate Austria within fifteen days, and Gallicia within a month. To these degrading conditions the Emperor of Russia refused his acquiescence, being persuaded that the French might be successfully resisted by a prudent and resolute mode of conduct; and the Archduke Charles expressed the utmost regret on being informed of a transaction which precluded his making any further efforts for the advantage of his country, just at the moment he had summoned Vienna to surrender.

Thus terminated, in one campaign, the war between Austria and France; and (although the Russian force was nearly undiminished) Buonaparte was, by the mismanagement of their counsellors, enabled, for the *third time,* to dictate the terms of peace to the fallen dynasty of Lorraine. It is indeed painful to dwell on the reverses which Austria had experienced in her efforts to maintain the liberties of Europe; and we cannot repress our indignation at

the selfish and illiberal policy of the Prussian government, which refused to succour a rival power at a moment when a successful stand might have been made against the aggressions of France. To the ill-judged neutrality of Prussia may be attributed much of the subsequent success of Buonaparte: but although the neutrality of his Franconian territories had been violated by the French armies, and the voice of his subjects called on him to resent this indignity, still the hope of *aggrandizement* prevented the King of Prussia from contributing to the deliverance of Europe. His Majesty was apparently desirous of succeeding to that station, from which *Austria* seemed to have fallen; he soon, however, became sensible of the fatal error he had committed, and was convinced, too late, that instead of becoming the head of the Germanic empire, he had virtually rendered himself but the vassal of France.

Meanwhile the Emperor of Russia, whose gallant conduct, during the sanguinary battle of Austerlitz, had been most conspicuous, finding that even his powerful assistance could not induce the Austrian

government to make another effort against France, pursued his retreat into those distant provinces from whence he had called his forces, with the most liberal and disinterested views. The King of Sweden had lately made greater efforts against France than were compatible with the resources of his country; but he received liberal subsidies from England; and our government, having formed a depôt of Hanoverian troops at *Stralsund*, went to considerable expense in repairing the fortifications of that place.

The definitive treaty between France and Austria, having been negociated without delay, was signed at Presburg on the 26th of December, 1805, and ratified the day following; for the Emperor Francis had so far placed himself in the power of his conqueror that he could scarcely decline acceding to any terms which might be dictated to him. By this treaty Austria relinquished her Italian territories, which were united to the kingdom of Italy. The Tyrol and Voralberg, those ancient possessions of the imperial family, were ceded to its hereditary enemy, the Elector of Bavaria;

and the Austrian possessions in Bavaria, Suabia, and Franconia, were divided amongst the sovereigns of Bavaria, Wurtemburg, and Baden. The only territory ceded to Austria, in return for these severe losses, was the Duchy of Saltzburg; and the Archduke Ferdinand (to whom it had been assigned as a compensation for Tuscany by the treaty of Luneville) was now, by the capricious will of Buonaparte, removed to the sovereignty of Wurtzburg. The Grand Mastership of the Teutonic Order was also conferred on an Austrian Prince. The loss of Austria has been stated at one thousand two hundred and ninety-seven square miles, two millions, seventeen hundred and sixteen thousand inhabitants, and near two millions of annual revenue: but mere statistical details can give but a faint idea of the actual loss of power thus sustained by Austria, as by these arrangements she became less capable of undertaking an offensive war, and was deprived of those bulwarks by which she might best secure herself from invasion.

The loss of Venice was peculiarly regretted, as being fatal to the incipient

marine and commerce of Austria; and it was a severe humiliation to the Emperor to be obliged to recognize the new Kings of Bavaria and Wurtemberg, now created by Buonaparte, who declared his intention of rendering the former monarch sufficiently powerful to contend, single-handed, against Austria. A treaty was about this time concluded between Prussia and France, by which the tranquillity of the North of Germany was, for a time, preserved; and the King of Prussia proved the state of vassalage into which he had fallen, by placing his Franconian possessions of Anspach and Bareith at the disposal of France, and by occupying Hanover as an indemnity.

The Russian armies being now so far removed as no longer to occasion him any uneasiness, and treaties of his own dictation having been concluded with Austria and Prussia, Buonaparte seemed to have no enemy with whom to contend, except the King of Naples, who had permitted British and Russian forces to occupy his states, (contrary to the stipulations of the treaty of Portici). Exasperated at this proceeding, Buonaparte, on the day after he had signed

the peace of Presburg, officially announced that "*the Neapolitan dynasty had ceased to reign.*" This alarming declaration reached Naples just as the Russian forces (conformably to orders recently received) were preparing to evacuate that country—a measure which necessarily led to the departure of the British army;—and thus the King of Naples, being totally unable to resist the power of France, was compelled, a second time, to retire to Sicily, where he was protected by a British fleet and army, whilst Joseph Buonaparte was placed by his brother on the vacant throne; and it was only in the distant province of Calabria that any opposition was manifested to his government, as the Neapolitans were generally dissatisfied with the conduct of their sovereign and his queen.

An expedition was afterwards undertaken for the purpose of replacing the King on the throne of Naples: this, however, did not prove successful; for although few victories were more splendid than that obtained by Sir John Stuart at Maida, yet, as the co-operation of the Neapolitans was not sufficiently powerful as to promise any

ulterior success, it was judged advisable for our army again to retire into Sicily.

If the battle of *Austerlitz*, of which we have seen the melancholy results, must be confessed to have confirmed the military superiority of France, and left her, for a time, without a rival on the Continent, the naval ascendency of England was no less established by the memorable victory of *Trafalgar*, on the 21st of October, 1805, (which, following the unsuccessful rencontre of Admiral Calder with a French squadron, was productive of the most beneficial consequences,) and but for the death of the *heroic Nelson*, in the moment of victory, the public exultation would have been extreme. The capture of nineteen sail of the line, and the destruction of the collected navy of France and her dependencies did not, however, effectually console a generous nation for the loss of so distinguished a commander; and a less signal victory would have been hailed with greater joy, had *Nelson survived* to announce that his brave companions *had indeed nobly done their duty*.

Yours, &c.

LETTER XV.

LET us now direct our attention, so long engaged in pursuing the continental coalition to its unfortunate termination, to the affairs of our own country.

The victory of Trafalgar had given to Britain the undisputed sovereignty of the seas; the maritime trade of all nations was under her control; and it might now be more truly said, than when Grotius addressed the pacific James—

——————— "Quæ meta Britannis,
Littora sunt aliis; regnique accessio tanta est
Quod ventis velisque patet." ———

But notwithstanding the magnitude of her naval power, the situation of England was still precarious; for she had to contend with an enemy, the foundations of whose power she had not yet been able to subvert, and who was actuated by every motive of

policy, ambition, and resentment, to effect the destruction of the only nation which had been able to counteract any of his projects, or even to maintain with him an equal contest. The declining state of Mr. Pitt's health now excited considerable alarm. His illness was probably augmented by the disastrous issue of the late coalition, by the impeachment of his friend Lord Melville, and by the great pressure of public business which constantly occupied his attention.

It evidently appears that Mr. Pitt was desirous of strengthening and extending his administration, and for a short time he obtained the co-operation of Mr. Addington, who, in 1805, accepted the office of Lord Privy Seal, and the title of Viscount Sidmouth; but that statesman soon afterwards retired from the cabinet.

Mr. Pitt's illness continued rapidly to increase;—but he retained his faculties to the last; and shortly before his dissolution (which took place on the 23rd of January, 1806) he is said to have expressed great regret that he had not been more regular in his discharge of the duties of religion,

having always felt convinced of its great truths, although he had been so much abstracted and engaged by political concerns, as not to have sufficiently attended to them—a confession this, which, it is to be feared, is made under similar circumstances by many other persons, who, at that awful hour, when the certainty of death no longer admits of self-deception, feel the full force of their error, in permitting any temporal affairs however *important*, or any pleasures however *innocent*, to have diverted their attention from that habitual preparation for futurity, which should have been their *first concern;* and who are at last made sensible, that in order to die with the "*hope full of immortality,*" they should have confessed their *Redeemer in their lives ;* and not after having passed their days without the knowledge of his laws, content themselves with calling on his name, when the world and its pursuits are about to close on them for ever.

Many serious reflections naturally arise in the mind, when those characters who have been long distinguished in the world are called hence, to render their great

account to their Creator. Those who are engaged in the scenes of active life confess the necessity of interposing a period of retirement and examination, between the things of time and of eternity: but even with this impression on their minds, men are taken unprepared, and it would be well were the observation of *Quevedo* remembered, when he says—"*How can death be sudden to a being who knows that he must die, and that the time of his death is uncertain?*"—Few indeed are disposed in the concerns of this life to defer, until to-morrow, the business of to-day, yet the more important concerns of the soul, which may be required of us *before the morrow,* are often fatally neglected; so true is it "that the children of this world are, in their generation, wiser than the children of light."

I shall not, I am persuaded, incur your displeasure by these few observations on so interesting a subject; but I shall no longer digress from my political narrative, being well aware that your reflections are generally calculated to draw practical instructions from the various events you have desired I would recal to your attention.

To enter at any length into the character and merits of so celebrated a statesman as Mr. Pitt, whose administration was not less distinguished, as being one of the longest, than as being one of the most eventful in the British annals, is a task for which I am indeed unequal. We find it admitted by his opponents, that, as a debator, a financier, and as a disinterested politician, he was unrivalled: and that he was ardently attached to the honour and welfare of his country, and pursued that system by which he conceived it might be most effectually promoted, can be as little doubted, whatever objections may be urged against his public conduct during the most arduous period of our history.

Every honour was rendered by Parliament to the memory of the deceased minister; and *Mr. Wilberforce,* who (amongst many others) bore ample testimony to his merits, observed — " that although success was not a proper criterion by which to appreciate the merit of a great man, yet even were the character of Mr. Pitt to be tried by that rule, where was it possible, amongst the great men of ancient or

modern times, to find any one who had stronger claims to the gratitude and respect of their country, than those which could be advanced in his favour? When the revolutionary spirit had convulsed France, and alarmed the civilized world, that distinguished statesman completely succeeded, by the vigour and sagacity of his measures, in preventing that dreadful plague from reaching us. This was the main source of his distinction—this was the great pedestal of his fame."

The death of Mr. Pitt, at this critical period, led to a change in the counsels of His Majesty, as the members of his cabinet, being thus suddenly deprived of their head, and finding the public voice called for the formation of an *extended administration*, retired from those situations which the favour of their Sovereign would still have permitted them to have retained.—The general expectation was not, however, fulfilled by the new arrangement. A coalition was indeed effected between Lords Sidmouth and Grenville, and Mr. Fox; but the various members of the new cabinet were not found to possess either that

energy or that unanimity which the situation of the country evidently required.

Their first measures were pacific, as although many of the statesmen now acting with Mr. Fox, had been formerly distinguished for the zeal with which they had supported the war, and that others amongst them had witnessed the instability of the peace which they had lately concluded, still negociations were commenced with the French government: but after they had continued for some time, great as was Mr. Fox's desire for peace, he became sensible of the necessity of prosecuting those hostile measures, to which he had been so decidedly inimical.

Meanwhile a new war was preparing on the Continent; and the conduct of Buonaparte, towards the Prussian government, proved that he was desirous of overwhelming a power, which might at one period have thwarted his ambitious views.—Under pretence that the Russians had not evacuated *Cattaro,* Buonaparte refused to withdraw his armies from Germany, which he impoverished by his contributions, and harrassed by his despotism. The murder of

Palm, a bookseller at Nuremberg, for an alleged libel on the French Emperor, now contributed to render the Germans peculiarly desirous of freeing themselves from the yoke to which they were subjected. But it is not improbable that the Prussian government was induced to attend to the popular wish for war, (at a time when it could only be commenced under disadvantageous circumstances,) by the jealousy now entertained against Buonaparte, who, as Protector of the Confederation of the Rhine, had actually acquired that ascendency in Germany, of which Prussia had been long ambitious.

The peace of Presburg had left untouched the forms of the Germanic constitution, and by no means indicated that speedy subversion which awaited it. The prospect of peace with Russia, and the numerous army with which he held Germany in subjection, probably suggested to Buonaparte the design of reducing the princes of that country amongst his military vassals.

This plan was accordingly brought forward without delay; and on the 17th of June, 1806, Buonaparte was declared *Pro-*

tector of the Confederation of the Rhine, the ministers of the several princes included in this new alliance being scarcely permitted to read the papers to which their signatures were required. By this arangement Germany was parcelled out into a number of feudatory states; the few ecclesiastical princes, who had escaped former secularizations, were dispossessed of their dominions. The free cities were handed over to those sovereigns who possessed the favour of their new *protector;* and the petty princes of the empire were deprived of their ancient rights, and unceremoniously transferred as subjects to the members of the Rhenish confederation.

Thus was Buonaparte acknowledged the head of a vast extent of territory, (the population of which, by subsequent accessions, particularly by that of Saxony and Warsaw, amounted to fourteen millions,) and the Emperor Francis was compelled to signify his assent to these changes, as well as his abdication of the throne of the Cæsars. Thus was Germany, the former rival of France, and which, notwithstanding the complex nature of its government,

had long been a formidable barrier against the ambitious projects of that country, "*degraded from his high estate;*" and thus was the sceptre of the others laid at the feet of the modern Charlemagne.

The King of Prussia now attempted to place himself at the head of a *Northern confederacy,* that should include all those states who had not acceded to the Confederation of the Rhine. To this scheme, however, Buonaparte refused his acquiescence; and Prussia, foiled in her ambitious projects, was driven to desperation and to war: she had been as unprincipled in her morality as France, but failed of obtaining the expected reward, and became a slave without even the *premium servitutis.*

The expectation of a subsidy from England determined the Prussian government (notwithstanding its shameful conduct respecting *Hanover,* the possession of which it still coveted) to make pacific overtures, which the policy of our government induced them to accede to; and orders were dispatched for the removal of the blockading squadrons, which had for some time

greatly inconvenienced the commerce of the Prussian ports.

There appears to have been an evident error in his Prussian Majesty's retaining those ministers to conduct the war with France, who had displayed so much incapacity during the preceding negociations; and the selection of the Duke of Brunswick (contrary to the suggestions of the most experienced officers in that service) as commander-in-chief of the Prussian army, did not display much discrimination; for although that Prince had formerly been distinguished for his conduct under his uncle, the celebrated Prince Ferdinand, yet in the decline of life he ought not to have been opposed against so successful a general as Buonaparte. Many military errors have been attributed to the Prussian generals. But without pretending to enter into these details, it seems astonishing that with a force of one hundred and fifty thousand of the best disciplined troops in Europe, so little, even in the way of defence, should have been accomplished; and it is difficult to account for the disasters sustained by the King of Prussia, without suspecting

that he was betrayed by his servants. Hostilities commenced early in October 1806; and after being repulsed in several minor engagements, the Prussians were totally defeated on the 13th, at *Auerstadt*, with the loss of fifty thousand men in killed, wounded, and prisoners; sixty standards, three hundred pieces of cannon, and twenty general officers were captured by the French, whose loss was said not to have exceeded five thousand men. The Duke of Brunswick, whose many good qualities had endeared him to his subjects, and whose love of his country had procured for him the peculiar hatred of Buonaparte, received a wound in this engagement which soon afterwards terminated his life. The gallantry of this distinguished Prince led him to assist with eagerness in contending for the liberties of Germany, and that at a period of life when few are capable of great exertions. His memory will be long venerated by the brave, whilst they execrate the treason which contributed to his death, and to the destruction of his army.

On the 27th of October, Buonaparte made his public entry into Berlin. Mag-

deburg, Spandau, and Hamlin, surrendered, almost without resistance, to the French, although their united garrisons amounted to thirty-five thousand men;—the former city was considered as the bulwark of the Prussian monarchy, and contained a vast accumulation of military stores. Lubeck was taken by storm, and the free city of Hamburgh was occupied by the French, who imposed great contributions on its inhabitants, and confiscated all the British property they could discover.

By a decree, dated Berlin, the 20th of November, Buonaparte *declared the British islands to be in a state of blockade;* all English manufactures were prohibited, and her subjects and their property, wherever found within the countries under the control of France, were declared liable to seizure. The former part of this decree, like many others of the productions of Buonaparte, was calculated only to *amuse* the politicians of Paris; but the latter part filled the commercial cities of the Continent with dismay: and when the French merchants solicited some relaxation of a decree which threatened to involve

them in universal bankruptcy, they were sternly answered—"So much the better, the bankruptcies in England will be only the more numerous, and you will be so much the less able to trade with her."

The French, who had refused to grant an armistice to the Prussians, continued to prosecute their conquests with rapidity. The people of Poland were amused with the hope of recovering their independence; and the forces which Russia had dispatched to preserve the falling throne of Prussia, were defeated, after an obstinate resistance, at Pultusk and Golomyn. Buonaparte, every where victorious, now proceeded to aggrandize his own family — his brother *Lewis* being created King of Holland, and *Jerome* King of Westphalia, a state composed of the possessions of the illustrious house of Brunswick, and of the Elector of Hesse Cassel. The seizure of the city of Cassel was most unexpected. Its inhabitants had retired to rest, believing themselves the subjects of their ancient Prince; but during the night their city had been occupied by the French, and in the morning they were called on to swear

allegiance to a new sovereign. The princes of the house of Saxony were alone treated with indulgence by Buonaparte, on this occasion, being admitted members of the Confederation of the Rhine; and the Elector obtained several extensive provinces, together with the royal title. Such were the rapid strides made by Buonaparte towards universal empire, in the short space of two months; and thus sudden was the fall of Prussia, which now seemed scarcely able to contend with its *new made rival*, Saxony; but which was yet destined to experience still more severely the impolicy of the conduct it had so long pursued.

LETTER XVI.

THE unfortunate events noticed in my last Letter naturally spread dismay throughout the states of Europe, who had seen, by the fate of Prussia, that no political degradation could avert the vengeance of Buonaparte, whenever it might suit his views to depose or to despoil those princes towards whom he had once professed the most friendly relations.

From the conduct pursued by Prussia, after the battle of Austerlitz, towards Austria, the Emperor was unable, even were he disposed, to prevent the downfall of that sovereign; and Russia, being engaged by the intrigues of France in a war with Turkey, could not afford Prussia that powerful assistance which she required.

Thus, by his policy in dividing those whose interests should have led them to act with united energy against him, was Buo-

naparte enabled to triumph *separately* over sovereigns who might easily have preserved their political integrity. Attending in general but *to one great object at a time,* he proved an overmatch for those who assailed him with only a divided opposition; and whilst the armies of his opponents were dispersed over extensive provinces, it was his aim to concentrate his forces, and by the tremendous issue of a single battle, to reduce his enemies to desperation and submission.

We can indeed find no part of Europe which was not threatened by the ambitious projects of Buonaparte: and Portugal, menaced by his armies, had occasion to experience the advantage of her alliance with England; but his projects in the North of Europe prevented him for some time from invading that country.

Various naval victories were obtained by the British fleets, commanded by Admirals Duckworth, Warren, and Hood, over the squadrons which the unremitting attention of the French government enabled them to put to sea. The Cape of Good Hope was also captured from the Dutch;

and *Bucnos Ayres* for a time submitted to our arms; but the conduct of Sir Home Popham, the unauthorised planner of the latter expedition, was declared by a court martial, to be—"*highly censurable,*" and deserving of a "*severe reprimand.*"

The South American continent was much agitated by the expedition of *Miranda;* and the time seemed fast approaching when the Spanish colonies would follow the example of the British, and assert their perfect independence. The policy of Mr. Jefferson, President of the United States of America, was generally pacific; but differences had arisen with England respecting the impressing of seamen, maritime jurisdiction, and colonial trade, which had been for some time under discussion, although they did not as yet indicate an approaching war.

The persevering exertions of Mr. Wilberforce, which will be long remembered and admired by all those to whom the cause of humanity is dear, were at length rewarded by the Bill for the Abolition of the Slave Trade being finally carried in both Houses of Parliament (in 1806); and

the cause of injured Africa, too long forgotten, now triumphed over the selfish policy of those, who, for private ends, would have continued a traffic so disgraceful in itself, and so revolting to every proper feeling of our nature.

The same year which witnessed the death of Mr. Pitt, was also memorable for that of his great rival, Mr. Fox, whose life was terminated on the 13th of September, by a schirrous affection of the liver; which was probably accelerated by the active part he had been lately called upon to take in the counsels of his country. To attribute to this distinguished statesman the praise of great ability would be only to re-echo the general sentiment of the nation. Naturally of an ardent temper, he was liable to fall into extremes; and of his *private life* he has frankly and poetically confessed

——"In this all the world will agree,
One folly was never sufficient for me."

The *public* character of Mr. Fox I am by no means competent to discuss; and of his general attachment to the principles of the British constitution I do not wish to

suggest any doubts: but you will permit me to say, that, to my judgment it is very evident, that the violent sentiments which have sometimes fallen from this great man, have often been productive of bad effects on the minds of that (by no means inconsiderable) portion of the community, who are more commonly guided by the arguments of others, than by the reflections of their own understandings; and without proceeding so far as to describe Mr. Fox as "*a pander to the basest passions of the people,*" I cannot in candour withhold my opinion, that he has, *in point of fact,* often greatly misled their judgments, and needlessly excited their apprehensions.

The sentiments of Mr. Fox were, however, on many occasions highly to his honour; and in the session of Parliament which preceded his death, he argued against the pernicious tendency of that principle, lately adopted in Europe, of transferring the subjects of one prince to another by way of equivalent; which struck at the foundation of every government, and the existence of every nation. From his exertions in the cause of humanity, it would be

unjust to withhold our just applause; and whatever may have been the errors of his administration, it boasts the honour of having contributed to the abolition of a traffic, which had been too long a disgrace to our age and nation.

The death of Mr. Fox was scarcely less fatal to the administration, of which he was the leading member, than that of Mr. Pitt had proved to his political associates; for although it was not immediately dissolved, yet its decline now became a subject of anticipation. The place of the deceased minister in the cabinet was filled by the appointment of his nephew, Lord Holland, to the office of Lord Privy Seal; and some changes of minor importance took place.

The desire of strengthening their political power induced ministers to dissolve the Parliament, although it had not yet existed above four years, and that the exercise of this prerogative in 1784 had occasioned much animadversion.

The returns to the new Parliament were generally favourable to the wishes of ministers; but they incurred the odium of having exerted undue influence in many

places (particularly in Hampshire), and were charged with creating unnecessary offices for the purpose of promoting their political views.

The new Parliament assembled about the middle of December, and the addresses to His Majesty were carried in both Houses, after the subject of the late unsuccessful negociations for peace had undergone a discussion. All hope of a speedy termination to the war having now been dismissed from the minds even of the most sanguine, the finances of the country now claimed the serious attention of the Legislature; and although Lord Henry Petty, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, took a favourable view of our resources, yet the public, after having been amused with much parade of calculation and minuteness of detail, were not convinced of the ability of his statement, when recourse was at last had to the ordinary methods of taxation, and when they were informed that the property tax was *doubled.* That increased exertions were necessary, under existing circumstances, I am willing to admit; but the sincerity of the British character is not

to be amused by palliatives: unlike the French, Britons desire to be at once acquainted with the true state of things, which they have ever, at the worst of times, been prepared manfully to meet.

The coalition ministry was not found to possess that practical energy with which it was supposed they would have conducted the business of the state. A change of administration was, however, approaching; for His Majesty, not being disposed to accede to the representations of the cabinet, who insisted on the necessity of further concessions being made to his Roman Catholic subjects, was pleased to dismiss them early in 1807. The Duke of Portland was now placed at the head of an administration composed of most of those statesmen who had lately acted under Mr. Pitt, together with a new and distinguished minister, Mr. Perceval.

Motions against *pledges* from ministers to the King, and against the change of administration, were negatived in Parliament, which, on the 27th of April, was prorogued, and soon afterwards dissolved,

(after an existence of about four months, according to the late precedent) — His Majesty declaring his anxiety to recur to the sense of his people, whilst the events which had recently taken place were fresh in their recollection.

The new Parliament was opened on the 22nd of June, and continued sitting for about two months, but without transacting any business of particular interest.

An expedition to the Dardanelles was one of the last acts of the Grenville administration; but it was so ill contrived that success was not to be expected, and it exasperated, without intimidating the Turks. The remark of the Turkish envoy to Charles VII. of France, when taken by that monarch to a grand tournament, has been applied to this injudicious expedition: — "*That if it was in good earnest, there was not enough done; but if it was in jest, too much.*" Our squadron having failed in this attempt on the Turkish capital, proceeded to reduce Alexandria; but that city was evacuated by the directions of the new ministry, who were desirous of restoring

the amicable relations which had long subsisted between the British and Turkish governments.

The surrender of *Monte Video* to the Spaniards, by *General Whitelocke* (July 1807), greatly excited the indignation of the nation, who, long accustomed to find both bravery and talent united in their generals, were surprised at the selection of a commander possessed of neither.

A *third expedition* may be here mentioned—that undertaken by our government against Denmark, in the autumn of 1807. The discussions respecting the justice or propriety of this measure have been carried on with much warmth; to me, however, it appears, that the *necessity of the case (self preservation* being one of the strongest laws of nature) justified our government—they having received certain information that Buonaparte, who had for some time been evidently desirous of availing himself of the Danish marine, in order to further his plans against England, was now *about to make it his own.* The French *bureau d'espionage* was actively employed in forwarding the designs of Buo-

naparte, when a negociation was commenced by the British government with that of Denmark, the object of which was, that the Danish fleet should be confided to our custody during the continuance of the war, and that, in return for this proof of its sincerity, every assistance should be afforded the Danes in preserving their independence. These proposals were, however, rejected through the intrigues of Buonaparte; and our government, aware of the formidable preparations of the Danes, determined not to delay in possessing themselves by force of an armament, which it was probable would be ultimately employed against us. A fleet of twenty-seven sail of the line and other vessels, containing nearly twenty thousand men, was accordingly dispatched against Copenhagen, under he command of Admiral (now Lord) Gambier and Lord Cathcart, who, after a severe bombardment, succeeded in taking possession of the Danish arsenals, and removed their fleet and naval stores to England.

It is now time for us to notice the termination of the contest between the Emperor Alexander and Buonaparte,—

The former depended principally on the co-operation of Great Britain to enable him to call forth effectually the energies of his vast dominions,—the latter was strong in the resources of the powerful state of which he had possessed himself, as well as of those of the various nations he had subdued by his arms, or intimidated by his menaces.

The remains of the Prussian army, after the battle of Pultusk, has been estimated at between thirty and forty thousand men, whilst their Russian auxiliaries have been variously stated from one hundred thousand to one hundred and sixty thousand men. The armies of France and Russia, after various comparatively unimportant rencontres, were finally engaged at *Eylau,* on the 7th of February, 1807.

It seems to have been a prevailing maxim with Buonaparte, if possible, to out-flank his adversary's forces, or at least by getting into their rear to cut them off from their resources. This manœuvre, which had been attended with success at Marengo, at Ulm, and at Jena, was again employed on this occasion ; and the issue of the battle was no longer doubtful, when a French

corps, under Davoust, was at length enabled to fall upon the rear of the Russian army. It was not, however, without some degree of plausibility, that both sides claimed the victory on this occasion, or at least boasted of the discomfiture of the designs of their opponents — for it was evidently the design of Buonaparte to reduce Koningsburg (the spires of which he pointed out as an encouragement to his soldiers from the heights of Eylau); but although he remained for some days in possession of the scene of this hard-fought battle, yet soon afterwards he found it expedient to make a retrograde movement. The views of General Bennigsen probably extended to the relief of the cities on the Vistula, and he might have expected to force the enemy beyond that river; but whilst he foiled the views of Buonaparte, his own were but partially successful.

The important city of Dantzig now surrendered to Buonaparte, and compensated for the unsuccessful operations of his army in Pomerania, where Marshal Mortier had concluded an armistice with the King of Sweden.

But the triumph of the French Emperor was completed by the result of the battle of *Friedland,* on the 14th of June—a day he considered fortunate, as being the anniversary of the battle of Marengo; and this engagement proved most fatal to the cause of European independence.

The loss of the Russians, from the 5th to the 15th of June, has been stated by the French at sixty thousand men *hors de combat,* besides almost the whole of their ammunition, and their magazines, on a line of more than forty leagues. The French, however, concealed their own loss, which was above twenty thousand men. Still the reverses he had sustained (although they were by no means irreparable,) determined the Emperor of Russia to conclude a peace with France, which was accordingly signed at *Tilsit,* on the 7th of July—the terms being soon adjusted, as the war related not so much to any direct interests at issue between the two Emperors, (with an account of whose interview I shall not tire you, as it is painful to dwell on those reverses which place a legitimate sovereign on a level with an usurper,) as to the fate

of *Prussia,* which was now reduced to the rank of a secondary power, being obliged to relinquish above half those possessions which the successive policy of its sovereigns had acquired. " If," said Buonaparte, on this occasion, " the house of Brandenburg *yet reigns,* it owes this to my sincere friendship for the powerful Emperor of the North." The fall of Prussia from the view we have already taken of her policy, can excite in us neither surprise nor commiseration. The founder of that monarchy acknowledged he was " *a robber by profession ;*" and although his successors were subsequently aggrandized, yet finally their dominions fell a prey to the most powerful robber of modern times. Some districts of Prussia were assigned to Russia; but the boasted promises of Buonaparte to the Poles terminated in his assigning that portion of their country, which had belonged to Prussia, (having given it a constitution on the French model,) to the King of Saxony, with the title of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw. Prussia was further obliged to acknowledge all the changes made by Buonaparte; to maintain

forty thousand French troops; and to exclude all English manufactures from her remaining territories (which did not contain above five millions of inhabitants).

The toleration of the Jews was now a favourite object with Buonaparte, who conceived their industry would make amends to his revenue for the defalcations with which it was menaced by his *continental system*, now opposed by the *British orders in Council issued* in November 1807.

It was, however, by the sword that Buonaparte professed to govern; and his generals were accordingly rewarded with *feudatory possessions*—Berg, Neufchatel, Ponte Corvo, and a long list of other states being assigned them. The diplomatic services of Talleyrand were rewarded by the principality of Benevento; and the order of the *Iron Crown* was instituted to stimulate the military energy of the Italians, as the *Legion of Honour* did that of the French. Previously to his quitting *Tilsit*, Buonaparte planned the re-founding the Western empire, and proposed to include Spain, Portugal, Denmark, and finally Austria, amongst his conquests.

Whilst, to induce the Emperor of Russia to join in his views against England, he flattered him with the hope of acquiring the sole empire of the East of Europe. Before he returned to Paris, Buonaparte visited Milan, and received the homage of his Italian subjects; whilst his hostility to Spain was now proved by the union of Etruria with France.

LETTER XVII.

THE restless mind of Buonaparte could neither enjoy the blessings of repose, or permit them to be enjoyed by others. Like the fabled Ixion he was perpetually in motion; and unable to bear the silence of reflection, he sought abstraction from himself amidst scenes of horror and desolation: but, even whilst externally victorious, he was yet assuredly tormented from within.

The conquest of Prussia, and the *diplomatic triumph* he had obtained over Russia, far from satisfying the ambition of Buonaparte, served only to stimulate it to ulterior objects, and to increase its growth. The deposition of the King of Etruria, and the seizure of his dominions, although in point of treachery it was a deed worthy of its author, yet, being rather effected by the pen than by the sword, was far from satisfying an arbitrary sovereign, who was determined his armies should not remain inactive.

When, however, Buonaparte had determined that Spain and Portugal should no longer be governed by their ancient line of sovereigns, but receive kings of his own dynasty, he had indeed occasion for all the machinations of his Machiavelism, and for all the exertions of his feudatory commanders. Like most tyrants, Buonaparte wished for impossibilities or contradictions; he acknowledged the advantages he derived from the Spanish treasury, but still, rather than suffer a Bourbon to be the dispenser of those advantages, he resolved on subduing Spain—by which extravagant scheme he not only lost those supplies which he had hitherto drawn from that country, but involved himself in a contest, not less destructive to his army than to his resources.

The *ambition* of Buonaparte, on this occasion, was not less than the *avarice* of the countryman in the fable:—the one wished for the nominal authority whilst he possessed the real power; the other sought, at once, to obtain that wealth, which by perseverance he might have accumulated—and both were alike disappointed.

Volumes have been written on the con-

duct of the Spanish war; and this, as well as some other expeditions undertaken by Buonaparte, seems to invalidate the maxim of the Florentine politician, who assures us that—" most men fail only because they are wicked by halves;" and affords a striking example to the world, that not even the most subtile rules of human policy are capable of ensuring the success of those who adopt them, when it is the will of the Great Disposer of all events—" to scatter the proud in the imagination of their hearts."

To present you with a satisfactory detail of all the arts used on this occasion by Buonaparte; to describe the manner in which he drafted the prime of the Spanish army into Germany,—the treason which he plotted with the Prince of Peace,—and the manner in which he first deposed Charles IV. then Ferdinand VII. and finally entrapped them both at Bayonne, would oblige me to exceed the narrow limits, within which I proposed to confine myself, in these Letters. The narrative of these atrocities has been minutely detailed by *M. Cevallos;* and we may remark that the Spanish revolution, as it was planned by those who had subverted

the legitimate government of France, was also partly accomplished by the same means; and Buonaparte, who, as a *terrorist*, had conducted the massacres at Paris, now, as an emperor, commanded the perpetration of similar horrors to intimidate the inhabitants of Madrid. At one time the Spaniards were informed, "that they had to thank *Napoleon* for all the happiness they enjoyed,"—and at another moment he declares himself "sent to punish them for their iniquities;"—whilst, by a strange inconsistency of conduct, we find the dethroned King reproached for not having interposed to save the life of his cousin Louis XVI.

The fortresses of Spain being mostly occupied by his troops, and the deposed sovereigns placed under the protection of his police, Buonaparte now proclaimed his brother Joseph King of Spain, (having removed him from the throne of Naples, in which he was succeeded by *Murat*, brother-in-law of the Emperor, contrary to the advice of *Talleyrand*, who contended against the continual transfer of crowns, as contrary to the principles of monarchy,)

and asserted his right to dispose of the Spanish crown on the score both of *policy* and *justice*.

It was not, however, until he found himself opposed with ability and vigour, both by diplomatists and statesmen, that Buonaparte condescended to publish any *justification* of his atrocious conduct towards a nation to whom he had professed the greatest friendship. He had formerly not been sparing in disseminating his political lucubrations, and, with a view of in some degree respecting the opinion of the world, he assigned some cause, however little satisfactory it might have been for the conduct he pursued: but after the peace of Tilsit, when the whole continent of Europe was paralyzed by his influence, he no longer continued his former plan of proceeding; and if it was not until the 5th of September, 1808, that he published, in the Moniteur, an article (dated Bayonne, and purporting to be written in the preceding April,) in the shape of a ministerial paper, which, although it is one of the most curious productions of modern diplomacy, will carry no conviction to any

thinking mind; and its author, notwithstanding his virulence against England, can hardly be supposed not to have felt,—that it is easier to commit actions, such as Buonaparte's, than to justify or defend them.

The French Emperor having secured the Royal Family of Spain, and terrified the inhabitants of Madrid, and other places, by the severity of his conduct, conceived he had attained the object of his ambition: but he was destined to experience the truth of Clarendon's remark,—"that they who trouble the waters have seldom the benefit of the fishing;" and the general feeling of indignation which caused the Spaniards to rise in a mass against their despoiler, at once astonished the other nations of Europe; who now discovered what effectual resistance the united energy, even of the least favoured nation, may oppose to the most powerful despot,—as well as convinced that despot, that it is far easier to violate all laws, both sacred and profane, than when "*chaos is come again*," to derive from its obscurity that baneful influence which was sought for.

The amount of the French forces in Spain, on the first rising of its inhabitants against the Buonaparte dynasty, was probably not less than one hundred thousand men: and although on the first receipt of this intelligence Buonaparte affected to speak contemptuously of a spirit, which he feared might find its way into his vassal kingdoms; yet, when he witnessed the enthusiasm excited in England by the arrival of the Spanish deputies, and that they had obtained for their country far greater assistance than could have been conceived in so short a period; when he saw his fleet in the power of a people whom he had treated with so much contempt; and when he discovered that the provisional government of Spain (acting in the name of Ferdinand VII.) not only proceeded in arming the nation, but had actually concluded offensive and defensive alliances with England and Portugal; then indeed he began to feel the extent of the error he had committed: and although he was dead to the compunctious of conscience, yet he was tortured by a disappointed ambition; for whilst he did not fear being reproached

as a *bad man*, he was alarmed lest he should be considered as an *unskilful politician*. Meanwhile the French armies were every where assailed by the desultory warfare of the Spaniards; and Morla, Castanos, and Palafox, not only forced their invaders to raise the siege of Saragossa, but also to evacuate Madrid, from which city, however, they carried off much plunder; and it was observed by the Spaniards, that "because King Joseph could not put the crown upon his head, he had put it into his pocket."

Nor were the Portuguese backward in rising against their invaders, when the assistance of England seemed to promise a successful issue to their exertions. General Junot had, for some time, occupied Lisbon with a French army; and the Royal Family of Portugal, more fortunate than that of Spain, had effected their escape from a country, the independence of which they were unable to maintain; and, remembering the example of *Æneas*, the illustrious House of Braganza repaired to *Rio Janeiro*, where they hoped to preserve that liberty which Lisbon could no longer afford them.

The landing of Sir Arthur Wellesley's army at Mondego Bay was soon followed by the victories of *Roleia* and *Vimiera*; but in proportion as these successes had raised the public exultation, so strongly was the national dissatisfaction expressed, when the signature of the *Convention of Cintra*, on the 30th of August, 1808, was officially announced.

The evacuation of Portugal by the French was indeed accomplished; but England was to be at the expense of transporting the army she had conquered, together with the plunder they had collected, to the most convenient ports in France, from whence they might again advance against her soldiers, under more favourable circumstances. A formal declaration of His Majesty's disapprobation, both of the armistice and convention, was communicated to Sir Hew Dalrymple, under whose directions the other generals had acted on this occasion. The Russian fleet, stationed at Lisbon, was, on the 3rd of September, surrendered as a deposit to the British Admiral, Sir Charles Cotton, who had refused to accede to the Convention of

Cintra, by which it would have escaped from us.

To avert any danger on the side of Germany, (for *Austria* had already begun to arm, and had she then proceeded to action, important indeed might have been the results,) Buonaparte, towards the close of 1808, determined on having an interview with the Emperor Alexander at *Erfurth;* and that every possible degree of *éclat* might attend this meeting, all the vassal sovereigns of France were commanded to attend, to each of whom might be applied, in a political sense, the description Dryden gives us of the Rhodian Prince:—

"Though ruling others, yet himself not free,
Made impotent by power, debased by dignity."

Great were the speculations as to the issue of this conference:—an offer of peace to England was the result; but as Spain must have been abandoned to obtain it, our government of course declined these overtures; and whilst Buonaparte was engaged in withdrawing from Germany the whole of his disposable force, the Spaniards, aware of his views, and knowing (however

he might wish to have this proceeding thought an act of favour to the Germans, and a proof of his confidence in the courts of Petersburgh and Berlin,) that their subjugation was his real object, employed themselves in concentrating their juntas and their armies, whilst the absence of their leader caused the French to remain inactive on the Ebro.

Buonaparte, who had long been strengthening his army in the Peninsula, in the month of December, 1808, found himself at the head of a vast and well-organized army of about one hundred and fifty thousand men, (for the excellent manner in which the French commissariat was supplied in a country, so large a portion of which had been completely ravaged, was peculiarly striking); but judging, that the contest in which he was engaged would not be speedily terminated, the French senate were called on to levy one hundred and sixty thousand conscripts without delay.

To oppose these formidable armies the Spaniards could only muster seventy thousand men, who, as might be expected, were obliged to yield to the superior numbers

and discipline of the French, who again occupied Madrid; but if we consider the defenceless condition in which Spain appeared to be a few months previously, we cannot but admire the spirited resistance made by its inhabitants against their invaders.

A British expedition was this year dispatched for the assistance of the King of Sweden: but that monarch, although unable to oppose the united forces of France, Russia, and Denmark, yet displayed the most extraordinary feelings on this occasion; and Sir John Moore with difficulty escaped from the violence of the King, and reconducted to England an army which he was not permitted to land in Sweden. A treaty was soon afterwards concluded between the courts of Russia and Sweden, by which *Finland* was ceded to the former power, to which it was a most valuable acquisition; whilst *Stockholm*, situated in a sterile country, severely felt the loss of that fertile province, from whence most of its provisions were procured. The disastrous influence acquired by Buonaparte in the North of Europe, now obliged the

members of the Bourbon family to repair to England, where it was probable the Pope would, if possible, have joined them; as, notwithstanding the concessions he had made, Buonaparte soon deprived his Holiness of his liberty and his dominions, declaring, that as the munificent donations of *his predecessor, Charlemagne,* had been used for very different purposes from those to which he had allotted them, it was fitting they should be recalled.

The Pope, however, displayed a degree of firmness which will long cause his name to be respected, as well as obliterate the recollection of the erroneous impressions, under which he acknowledged he had once acted. His protestations are alike convincing and affecting; but Buonaparte, confiding in his alliance with Russia, and no longer respecting the opinion of the world, determined on being obeyed, and warred equally against morality and justice.

As the restorer of a national church in France, Buonaparte has been loudly extolled, but with what justice will best appear by reviewing the motives by which he was actuated on this occasion. Nor do

we find these *obscurely stated* by his minister, who, in recommending to the French senate the adoption of a *concordat,* which had been prepared for that purpose, observed, that "religion was an useful instrument in the hands of government, as well as a consolation to weak minds and timorous consciences."

But, even in the worst of times, we may find instances of *that homage which vice is ever constrained to yield to virtue;* and we may sometimes trace in characters where, perhaps, we might have least expected to find such impressions, a sense of those great truths which, however they may for a time be disregarded, will be at last acknowledged.—Nor are we without examples that many who, like Voltaire, have passed their lives *in fighting against God,* have, like him, expired under accumulated feelings of remorse, horror, and despair. Whilst the truth of Christianity cannot be more strikingly displayed, than by the tranquil, resigned, and confiding manner, in which the humble and sincere believer resigns his spirit to his Creator. *The protecting arm of Providence* may indeed,

"*to the unwise,*" seem for a time to be withdrawn from the cause of Christianity; but although they, who trust in its defence may for a season be "chastened and corrected, yet shall they never be given over unto death."

In continuation of our political narrative, we may observe, that the task of conducting the British army into Spain was now confided to Sir John Moore, whose penetrating mind soon discovered, in the reception he experienced from the Spaniards, that the most forcible representations were necessary to induce a government, naturally opinionated, and

"Who, if once wrong, will needs be always so,"

to pursue those active measures, without which success could not be attained. Flattering, but generally fallacious expectations of co-operation were held out by the Spanish Junta; and Mr. Frere (the British ambassador at Madrid) was not less sanguine in his expectations: but as Sir John Moore advanced, he found a melancholy difference between the actual state

of things, and the representations which had encouraged him to proceed.

The defeat of Castanos at Tudela, the treason of Morla, and the total dispersion of the Spanish armies, having rendered it no longer a question in what manner the British forces might best assist the cause of Spain, but how their own security could be provided for, Sir John Moore therefore determined on retreating to Corunna,—to accomplish which, it was necessary to traverse above two hundred and fifty miles of a most difficult country, in the depth of winter, subject to every privation, and continually exposed to the attacks of a French army of eighty thousand men, whilst our army did not exceed twenty-eight thousand. On the 16th of January, 1809, the French, who, during the retreat, avoided a general engagement, resolved to attack the British army during their embarkation; our soldiers, however, succeeded in reaching the ships which awaited them, but not without suffering considerably. Amongst those who fell on this occasion, was the *gallant Moore*, who, with his last accents,

expressed his hope *that his country would do him justice.* That this retreat was disastrous cannot be denied, as in it we lost between five and six thousand men, together with a vast number of horses, and military stores of every description. Above twenty thousand men were, however, preserved to their country by the circumspection, energy, and skill, of our lamented general, under circumstances of peculiar difficulty: nor can we doubt but that his dying hope will be realized by a candid people; for it is by no means the character of Britons (although they may be compared to the Carthaginians by the French,) *to estimate merit by success,* or to treat an *unsuccessful* as a *guilty* general.

Yours, &c.

LETTER XVIII.

HUMILIATED as the House of Austria had been by the peace of Presburg, it can hardly be supposed that any favourable opportunity of endeavouring to retrieve its fallen fortunes would be passed *unheeded by*.

The observation of the Roman historian, "*Dum singuli, pugnant, omnes vinçuntur*," had been but too fatally exemplified after the battles of *Austerlitz* and *Eylau;* for Buonaparte, by his artifices, had prevented any effectual coalition from being formed against him; and from the *unsupported attacks* of any single power, he had but little to apprehend.

The time, however, now chosen by Austria for the renewal of a contest, to which she was impelled by so many motives, seemed judicious, as the obstinate resistance made to the aggressions of Buonaparte in Spain had kindled a spirit of impatience of his control in Germany. War was for-

mally declared by Austria against France, on the 8th of April, 1809, and it was computed that the Archduke Charles, at the commencement of the campaign, had at his disposal an army of not less than three hundred and fifty thousand men.

Buonaparte having, on the evening of the 13th of April, been informed, by the telegraph, that the Austrians had passed the Inn, set out from Paris the following morning, to assume the command of his army: this was extremely formidable in itself, and was supported by numerous German auxiliaries. They were assured by their commander that their past successes were but a pledge of future victories, and that Austria, which having been vanquished in three successive wars, owed every thing to their generosity, would again recognize her conquerors. The result unfortunately justified this prediction, — the Austrians being defeated at *Abensberg* on the 20th, and at *Eckmuhl* on the 22nd of April. In these two battles Buonaparte boasted of having taken forty thousand prisoners, and one hundred pieces of cannon; and following the course of the Danube, he entered

Vienna on the 12th of May, (little more than a month from the commencement of the war,) without experiencing any effectual resistance. But although his eagles were again planted on the towers of Vienna, Buonaparte was aware that whilst the spirit of a people remains unbroken, the occupation of their capital was not a final triumph; he accordingly endeavoured to alienate the affections of the Hungarians from a government to which they had been long attached, and invited them to become an independent state, and, under his auspices, to choose for themselves a sovereign. In the mean time, the Archduke Charles, having with incredible activity reassembled his army, again contended with the French on the 21st and 22nd of May. On the former day the Archduke was partially victorious; and on the latter, after a contest still more destructive than that of Eylau, the French were driven from *Aspern*, and retreated from the left bank of the Danube, with a total loss of thirty thousand men, five generals killed, eight wounded, and two taken. The loss of the Austrians was about one-third of that sustained by the French.

This success inspired the Germans with fresh confidence; and the inhabitants of its Northern provinces, placing themselves under the command of the Duke of Brunswick and Colonel Schill, rose against their oppressors, and became so formidable as to require a considerable French army to prevent their advance to Cassel. The Austrians, under the Archduke John, had obtained several advantages in Italy, but were obliged to abandon them in order to contend on the Danube for the existence of the Austrian monarchy. Every exertion was made by the contending powers during the interval between the battles of *Aspern* and *Essling*, and the decisive action at *Wagram*, on the 6th of July, on which eventful day between three and four hundred thousand men, with about fifteen hundred pieces of cannon, contended for the most momentous objects. Unfortunately the Archduke John did not arrive in time to co-operate with the Archduke Charles, (which, had the Austrians adopted the use of the telegraph he might have done,) so that the French were finally victorious, taking twenty thousand prisoners, four

hundred of whom were officers, and reducing the effective force of the Austrians to sixty thousand men. It is truly painful to dwell on such scenes of havoc and destruction; nor is it less so to relate the melancholy consequences which ensued; for the Austrians, again yielding to circumstances, were obliged to obey the imperious mandates of their conqueror. An armistice was concluded on the 12th of July, by which the Emperor surrendered all the strong places in his dominions to the French, and bound himself not to assist his former subjects, the Tyrolese, who, led on by the patriotic Hoffer, maintained a long struggle against the Bavarian government. —The abandonment of that attached and generous people must have been a severe sacrifice to the House of Austria.

After a considerable interval (for Buonaparte was not impatient to withdraw his army from the free quarters they enjoyed,) a definitive treaty of peace was signed at Vienna on the 14th of October, 1809.—In this it was stipulated that Austria should cede to Buonaparte the few sea-ports she was permitted to retain by the treaty of

Presburg in 1805, together with all those parts of the circle of Austria situated on right bank of the *Saave*,—the new limit of that empire which had lately extended to the *Mincio* and the *Adige*. The Emperor of Russia was rewarded for his neutrality, during the late contest, with a portion of Austrian Poland, containing four hundred thousand inhabitants. The King of Saxony received the whole of New, or Western, Gallicia, together with other territories in Poland and Bohemia. The Kingdom of Bavaria was aggrandized with Saltzburg, together with a part of Upper Austria, and thus included the whole course of the river Inn within its limits. Austria was further obliged to abandon the Mastership of the *Teutonic Order*;—to recognize the changes which had taken place, or *might subsequently take place*, in Spain, Portugal, and Italy;—and to accede to the colonial system, which proscribed English manufactures and commerce.

In consideration of these cessions, the Emperor Napoleon guaranteed the *integrity* of the remaining possessions of the Emperor Francis. He engaged to permit

his subjects to trade by way of the port of *Fiume;* and promised to procure a pardon for the Tyroleans from the King of Bavaria.

It was now that Buonaparte, aware of his vast authority, conceived the design of allying himself to the most ancient dynasty in Europe; and he is said to have observed, after having granted an audience to the Emperor Francis—"Since my cousin is reduced to wait on me, I may surely be permitted to visit all his family."—It has been conjectured that the subsequent marriage of Buonaparte with the Archduchess Maria Louisa, (in April 1810,) was stipulated for in a secret article of the treaty of Vienna. This was truly a *degradation* of the most painful nature, and which it is difficult to conceive the Emperor would have acquiesced in. Power and kingdoms were the objects for which the rival sovereigns had contended, and their abandonment would have been comparatively trifling, when compared with the sacrifice of high and honourable feelings.

Having thus traced to its close the unsuccessful effort of Austria to restrain the power of France, we may observe, that

with a view of making a diversion in favour of the German cause, which, at one period, had assumed a favourable aspect, the British government determined on an expedition, with the view either of taking, or destroying, the navy of France in the Scheldt, as well as on making a descent on the coast of Italy: this for a time prevented the French reinforcements from proceeding against the Austrians; but it was soon necessary for our troops to retire into Sicily.

Of the former expedition you will not require me to say much. That it was ably planned, and judiciously intended, I think you will admit; but its results are too melancholy and too recent to require any extended comments. On the 15th of August, Flushing, with its garrison of six thousand men, surrendered to our army, under Lord Chatham, which consisted of between thirty and forty thousand men. The majority of this force returned to England about the middle of September, the impracticability of any ulterior proceedings for the reduction of the fleet and docks at Antwerp having become apparent: but it was not until three months afterwards that

the island of Walcheren, which had proved so fatal to our soldiers, was finally evacuated.

During these operations Spain presented a scene of comparative inaction, as, during the absence of Buonaparte, his forces had confined their operations to carrying on the sieges of Salamanca and Gerona: but before the close of 1809, almost all the strong places in Spain were reduced by the French; and the army of Cuesta was defeated at Medellin with considerable loss.

The government of Spain unquestionably wanted that vigour which the state of their country so loudly called for; and it was chiefly by the proclamations of individual generals, that the national spirit of resistance was kept alive.—In some of these we find the losses Spain had suffered forcibly depicted, and a confident hope expressed, that every fresh attack of her enemies would raise her to a higher pitch of glory;—her scattered soldiers were invited to re-assemble on the field of honour, where their services could alone be effectual for their country, whose standard, notwithstanding the machinations of the enemy, still continued to fly.

That the exertions of England were continued with unabated ardour, generosity, and perseverance, in the cause of Spain, the battle of *Talavera,* on the 27th of July, will afford to posterity a signal proof; and the future historian will describe it as one of the hardest fought engagements which occurred during the Peninsular war. The loss sustained by our forces in killed, wounded, and missing, was about six thousand men; that of the French ten thousand; whilst the Spaniards were so placed as not to have lost above one thousand soldiers. But although Sir Arthur Wellesley (whose distinguished services were now rewarded by the title of Viscount Wellington,) had, on this memorable day, the glory of arresting the progress of an army far more numerous than his own, still the British loss could not be as easily repaired as that of the French, whose forces, under Marshals Ney, Soult, and Mortier, having effected a junction, Lord Wellington expressed his conviction that his army was only to be saved by great celerity of movement. The confidence of the army in their commander was indeed proportioned to the energy of

his genius; and of him we may say, "*invidiam gloria superasti.*"

Nor was the British army ever surpassed by that of any nation, in undaunted valour and military efficiency; and the enemy, notwithstanding the vast numerical and other advantages they possessed, were taught by repeated experience, that there is inherent in Britons a spirit which rises with the urgency of the occasion, and which will ensure victory when it is to be obtained by any human means.

After the battle of Talavera the disproportion between the British and French forces, in Spain, was extreme,—the former not exceeding twenty-five thousand men, whilst the latter possessed a disposable force of one hundred and twenty-two thousand men, exclusive of their numerous garrisons. It is only when we consider all the disadvantages with which Lord Wellington had to contend, that we can be enabled justly to appreciate the consummate ability he displayed during the Spanish war. To attain *great ends* with abundant means cannot excite astonishment, although many have even failed

of this; but our admiration cannot be repressed, when, in despite of circumstances, originally the most unpromising, we trace the arduous and persevering labours of our general, until they were finally crowned with success.

The Marquis Wellesley, who had been judiciously nominated ambassador from the British government to the Spanish Cortes, found much, in his new situation, to engage his active mind, and soon suggested various improvements for giving the requisite efficiency to the executive authority of Spain. He also expressed his conviction that the principal advantage to be expected from the British army in Spain, was by their co-operating with the forces of that nation; the blunders of many of whose generals he exposed, as the conduct of some of them seemed almost treasonable, whilst they all required to be placed under the active superintendence of a commander, who might reduce to a connected system the hitherto desultory warfare which had been carried on.

The Spaniards are not insensible of their national dilatoriness; and the truth of their

proverb, "*Let my death come from Spain,*" (that it may be long in coming,) was experienced by Lord Wellington, when applied to the *co-operation* he experienced.

But whilst the Lords Wellesley and Wellington were thus exerting themselves in Spain, *India,* the former scene of their distinguished services, exhibited a most alarming appearance. The British authority in that country, as Mr. Hastings has observed, "hangs only on the slender thread of opinion;" and the weakness of that thread was fatally exposed by an appeal to the native troops against their European officers, between whom and the East India Company serious differences had arisen. Into the merits of this case I have no inclination to enter; but that an incorporated society of merchants should have been able, during so many years, to govern with success the vast peninsula of India, is a fact calculated to produce much reflection in the minds of statesmen.

Meanwhile the war between France and England was carried on with unabated energy.—The fleet of the former power was defeated near Aix; and the Ionian Islands,

which the French had endeavoured to retain, with a view to their designs in the East, were formed into an independent state, under the guarantee of England, whose forces now occupied the city of St. Domingo, the Isle of France, and Martinique.

The revolution which now took place in Sweden, excited the astonishment of Europe. Its sovereign had been long distinguished for his persevering opposition to all the designs of Buonaparte, who spared no expense to procure his deposition from a throne which his ancestors had so long filled with advantage to their country. That the extraordinary conduct of Gustavus might have induced his subjects to desire his abdication, is not extraordinary; but we are astonished to find a French general elected as successor to the *Vasas*. The French having themselves applied to Buonaparte, the lines of Merope, where Polipontes exclaims—

"Un soldat tel que moi, peut justement pretendre
A gouverner l'état, quand il l'a su defendre.
Le premier qui fut roi fut un soldat heureux:
Qui sert bien son pays n'a pas besoin d'ayeux."

" A chief like me with justice may pretend,
To rule the country which he could defend.
A valiant soldier first obtained a crown,
No ancestry he needs, whose deeds are of renown."

were anxious the Swedes should follow their example. — This they accordingly did,— Gustavus was forced to abdicate his throne, (from which his children were excluded);— his uncle, the Duke of Suedermania, was appointed King, by the title of Charles XIII. and as that Prince had no family, the succession to the crown was vested in the dynasty of Bernadotte. The victories of Buonaparte had obliged many of the states of Europe to receive Kings of his nomination; but Sweden was unconquered, and her self-degradation was the more extraordinary.

Buonaparte, on being informed of this event, declared that "no revolution should be brought about by force of arms, as sovereigns were thereby placed in *aukward predicaments.*" The tenderness which this revolutionary prince affected to feel for the rights of sovereigns is truly amusing.

The year 1809 was distinguished by few domestic events of political importance,

the most remarkable being the charges brought against His Royal Highness the Duke of York by Colonel Wardle, which for a time excited the attention of the Parliament and the nation. The enemies of His Royal Highness threatened much, but accomplished little. The *private life* of the Duke was not a subject for public discussion; as it is to be feared that instances of moral delinquency are but too numerous amongst us, without proceeding to any minute scrutiny of particular characters, which rarely conduce to any beneficial purpose. As a *public character,* the merits of His Royal Highness cannot be sufficiently acknowledged; for the superior condition of the British army proves, beyond dispute, the ability of the illustrious personage, under whose auspices it has attained so high a pitch of glory.

The temporary retirement of the Duke of York was generally regretted; and much satisfaction was expressed at His Royal Highness's reinstatement in his high office, by the judicious determination of His Royal Highness the Prince Regent.

LETTER XIX.

BUONAPARTE, now allied to the imperial house of Austria, proceeded with hasty strides towards the accomplishment of those designs which had long occupied his mind. His progress had hitherto been impeded by few obstacles; and he had not experienced any effectual opposition, either to his *arms* or to his *inclination,* (even when it prompted him to divorce a wife, against whom he had no legitimate ground for such a proceeding). His progress along the Northern coast of France, with his new Empress, reminded him that one part of his *continental system* required the formation of a *marine;* and that the other rendered it necessary for him to supply a vent for the commerce of France without receiving that of England in exchange. The annexation of Holland to his dominions was now probably determined on; and, to prepare the Dutch for the change, we find their

country described in the Moniteur as being only a part of France, an *alluvion* of the Rhine, the Meuse, and the Scheldt, those great arteries of the French empire. It was not, however, until the 9th of July, 1810, that the formal incorporation of Holland was announced. On this occasion the Dutch were informed that their union with the Great Empire could alone restore them to *prosperity*, Holland being, in fact, only a shoot, a portion of territory necessary to complete the form of the empire as well as its system. The *astonished Scheldt* is represented as swelling with pride to behold twenty vessels of the first rate protecting its shores; and this union of the two countries is further recommended as being a necessary step to the acquisition of a navy, and to the punishment of England.

These reasons (which, in fact, with a trifling alteration, would suit the circumstances of any state Buonaparte might wish to incorporate with his empire, and which we find almost literally applied, in the following year, to justify the extension of his dominions to the Baltic), were by no means satisfactory to the Dutch, who,

although they probably partook on this occasion of the *astonishment* ascribed to the Scheldt, yet were far from feeling any *pride* on being informed of what they considered a most disastrous event.

Submission was, however, necessary; for although they might, without difficulty, have confuted the arguments by which their new sovereign endeavoured to prove the necessity of the political change they were to undergo, yet, as he possessed the power of *enforcing obedience*, opposition would but have aggravated their misfortunes. The *arguments* of Buonaparte were indeed futile, but his *deduction* was *irresistible;* and had the Dutch been as good logicians as *Favorinus*, like him they would have seen the expediency of yielding to a man whose arguments were supported by a military force, not inferior to that of the Emperor Adrian.

Before the publication of this decree, *Louis Buonaparte*, aware that his imperfect compliance with the tyrannical mandates of his brother, would probably occasion his removal from the government of a people whom he was unwilling to

oppress, abdicated the throne of Holland in favour of his son.—This disposition was, however, reversed by *Napoleon,* who assigned the Grand Duchy of Berg to his nephew, and permitted his brother to continue in a private station. In his subsequent visit to Holland, Buonaparte could not fail perceiving that he was only greeted with forced rejoicings. This, however, produced no alteration in his conduct: he had adopted the ancient maxim of tyrants—"*Oderint dum metuant;*" and whilst he could maintain obedience to his authority, he was not solicitous to inquire from what motive it resulted.

The confiscation of British and colonial property was every where rigorously enforced; nor could the obsequiousness of the Americans preserve their property from his grasp.—The coasts of Holland were placed under the control of French officers, without whose permission, not even a fishing boat could put to sea: whilst Amsterdam, deprived of its commerce, was declared the third city in the French empire; and by an act of official robbery, the public creditors of the late government were de-

frauded of two-thirds of the property which they had advanced on the national security.

To maintain his ascendency in Italy, Buonaparte now caused a military road to be constructed over the Simplon, which, had it been intended for any beneficial purpose, would have justly entitled him to praise; and the canton of the Valais, through which this stupendous work was carried, was formally united to France. The Austrian court having adopted the colonial system of Buonaparte, the politicians of Vienna lamented the loss of the coffee, which was so essential to their consultations, and of which the French Emperor was reported to partake so abundantly. The Swedes were also called on to make similar sacrifices, and were involved by the same counsels in a war with England. The state of the *press* now underwent many new and minute regulations, in the countries under the control of Buonaparte: at Paris the printers were reduced to eighty, and only one journal was permitted in every department.

It seemed to be the benevolent intention of the French Emperor to relieve his sub-

jects from those political cares of which he wished to bear the undivided burthen; and he also endeavoured to promote *uniformity of sentiment* in his dominions, by limiting the number of French journals, so that they might be the more easily inspected by his police, and by excluding altogether from circulation those foreign journals, for the correctness of whose sentiments he could not be responsible.

The same zeal for the interests of his subjects led him to discourage, as much as possible, all curious political inquiries, and to exclude from the libraries of all Frenchmen, the works of many authors who appeared to touch on subjects which he conceived were better passed over in silence.

The Emperor was, however, sufficiently acquainted with the nature of the human mind, and had, in particular, such an insight into the active dispositions of his own subjects, that being aware his intentions (however laudable) were liable to misapprehension, he took occasion sometimes to favour the public with his official sentiments in the Moniteur; and subjects were proposed for discussion which might

at once exert the ingenuity of Frenchmen, and conduce to the greatness of his empire, by discovering substitutes for the various articles of colonial produce he had prohibited; and a manufacture was soon established with a view of extracting from a species of beet-root a substitute for sugar.

Some resistance having been made to his decrees of confiscation by the clergy of the two departments, into which the Roman states had been recently formed, on its annexation to France, they were informed by their new master, that—" a strong government may tolerate those who profess a different religion, but not those who refuse to obey its orders."

Dionysius had formerly discovered that a woollen cloak was more convenient for an idol in his days than one of gold—Buonaparte acted with equal rapacity towards the possessions of the christian church, and justified his conduct by a mode of reasoning equally fallacious as that of the heathen tyrant*. Italy was at this time by no

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* Legitur de Dionysio Siciliæ tyranno, ut alios mittam, dectracto etiam Jovi Olypimo, magni pon-

means in a tranquil state, the Neapolitans having experienced the deceitfulness of Buonaparte's promises, and being dissatisfied with the sovereign he had placed over them, rejoiced at the failure of his expedition against Sicily (which was protected by a British fleet and army); and the forces of Murat being soon required in another quarter, the Calabrians renewed their resistance to his authority.

The expectations of Buonaparte were now sanguine as to the result of the war he had provoked in Spain; into which country, the recent peace with Austria had enabled him to pour a force of about two hundred thousand men, which he boasted would soon compel the English to retreat to their ships; and if abandoned by their allies, no effectual resistance could be expected from either the Spaniards or the Portuguese.

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deris aureo amiculo, quo cum tyrannus Hiero è manubiis Carthageniensium ornaverat injectoque ei laneo pallio dixit, Æstate grave amiculum aureum esse, hieme frigidum: laneum autem ad utrumque tempus anni aptius.—Valer. Max. *Liber. Memor.* 1. *cap.* 3.

In consequence of his recently concluded nuptials, Buonaparte had delayed his journey to the court of his brother Joseph; but his generals were amply instructed how to act, and a corps of eighty thousand men, destined for the conquest of Portugal, was placed under the orders of General Massena.

England was not, however, unmindful of her threatened ally, with whom she had recently concluded a new treaty of friendship, commerce, and alliance. Her army in that quarter was reinforced, and British officers were appointed to discipline the Portuguese troops, thirty thousand of whom were taken into our pay.

The exertions of the Spaniards had been by no means commensurate to the dangers by which they were menaced; and the entry of a French army into Andalusia seems to have been as totally unexpected by them, as if their country were in a state of profound peace.

The siege of Cadiz was undertaken by the French in May 1810, about which time the British forces obtained possession of Ceuta. In the following month, those

who wished well to the cause of Spain, justly alarmed at the blind improvidence which had characterized the General (or Supreme) Junta, procured the formation of a *Regency* at Cadiz, and at the same time the Extraordinary Cortes of the nation were summoned to assemble in that city.

The war in Spain had throughout been characterized by many circumstances of peculiar atrocity; but these were exceeded by a decree of Marshal Soult, in which he designates all Spaniards armed against the French as robbers, and condemns them to be tried and executed by a military commission, and that their houses should be destroyed. This, however, was afterwards revoked in consequence of the retaliatory measures to which the Regency were obligedo have recourse.

But notwithstanding the exertions of his generals, the expectations of Buonaparte as to the speedy conquest of Spain were far from being realized; nor could the utmost ingenuity conceal from him the disasters of Almeida and Busaco. Portugal was preserved from subjugation by the judicious conduct of Lord Wellington,

who had not only to contend against a powerful enemy in the field, but also to guard against the machinations of traitors within the walls of Lisbon. Towards the close of the year an expedition was formed, with the view of making a diversion on the coast of Malaga ; but this failed of success, and our troops, with their commander, Lord Blayney, were captured by the French.

The few remaining colonies of France, Guadaloupe and the Mauritius, were occupied by our forces in 1810 ; the fall of the latter, which afforded a convenient station to the enemy's privateers, was of much importance to our East India trade.

Amongst the various occurrences of this eventful period, none excited more general attention and sincere regret, than the alarming illness of our excellent Sovereign, occasioned by his paternal anxiety respecting his lamented daughter, the Princess Amelia, as the accumulated pressure of his feelings completely incapacitated His Majesty from attending to any business. In consequence of the inability of the King to sign the instrument for its further prorogation, Parliament assembled in November

1810; but the report of the physicians, respecting His Majesty's health, being at first favourable, the two Houses adjourned from time to time in order to wait the event. It soon, however, became evident that the prospect of our venerable Sovereign's recovery was remote, if not improbable; and the attention of Parliament was therefore directed to provide for the due execution of the royal authority thus fatally interrupted at so critical a moment.

The melancholy precedent in 1789 was in the recollection of the Legislature; and after much discussion, it was determined to proceed by means of *a bill,* vesting the executive authority in the Heir-Apparent to the Crown, rather than by an *address* to His Royal Highness to assume the exercise of that authority. The great seal having been put to the instrument of Regency, (by a resolution of the two Houses of Parliament,) His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales was invested with the authority of Regent of these kingdoms, on the 11th of February, 1811.

Nothing, indeed, could be better calculated to alleviate the affliction of the nation,

at the melancholy state of their revered Sovereign, than the truly dignified and decided conduct pursued by his illustrious son, who resolved to continue that line of policy which had hitherto been sanctioned by the Legislature, the vigorous pursuit of which has distinguished the government of His Royal Highness by the most glorious and unprecedented victories, the consolidation of the tranquillity of nations, and the commencement of that pacific era for which Europe had long sighed in vain.

The immediate circumstances of the times, however, called for unabated exertions; and with a view to increase the disposable force of the kingdom, a bill received the royal assent, authorising the interchange of the militia regiments of Great Britain and Ireland.

A temporary, but severe pressure on the mercantile interest rendering the assistance of Parliament necessary, the issue of six millions of exchequer bills was sanctioned for that purpose. Some riots and disturbances took place, in consequence of the depression of trade, but without having any connection with the political outrages

which had disgraced the metropolis, some time previously on the committal of Sir Francis Burdett to the Tower, by the authority of the House of Commons, for a libel on that branch of the Legislature. In a great city the agitators of public tranquillity will ever find numbers ready to join in any outcry, and to perpetrate any atrocity.

The French journalists, (who had probably never read the able work of Mr. Colquhoun on the Police of our Metropolis,) in speaking of these disturbances, affirmed that the era of the *British Revolution* had commenced; but they were disappointed in their expectations, and perceived the truth of the remark—that the English are never better satisfied with their constitution, than when they seem most to grumble at it.

The arrival of the deposed King of Sweden in England excited much attention; but although liberal pecuniary offers were made that prince by the British government, he altogether declined them, and preferred living in the most retired manner possible.

Sweden, Denmark, and Norway, were

now required by Buonaparte to assist in furnishing a conscription of four thousand seamen, for the prosecution of his plans; but the rumour of a Northern confederacy, headed by Russia, although very prevalent, did not deter Buonaparte from proceeding in his *absorbing system*:—he united the whole North-West coast of Germany to his dominions,—dispossessed the Duke of Oldenburg (the near relation of the Emperor of Russia) of his dominions—forcibly seized Lubeck and Hamburgh; the latter city was declared the capital of the department of the Elbe; and the intention of the Emperor was announced of opening a communication between France and the Baltic, by means of canals.

From these successful usurpations, it is most satisfactory to direct our attention to the Peninsula, where the spirit of resistance was unceasingly experienced by the French, their armies being annoyed during the winter months by the constant hostility of the Spanish *guerillas*, and Portuguese *ordenenanzas*.

The judicious conduct of Lord Wellington, under whose auspices the Portuguese army had become an efficient force,

obliged the French to evacuate that country early in 1811. The Spaniards did not possess the same confidence in their British allies; and the exertions of their patriotic chiefs were often neutralized by the machinations of traitors.—Of this the fall of Badajos is a melancholy instance; for although it contained a numerous and well provisioned garrison, and that Marshal Beresford, with nearly twenty thousand men, was advancing to its relief, yet treachery opened the gates of that important fortress to the French. In the South the siege of Cadiz was still continued, and British valour was never more conspicuously displayed than at the memorable battle of *Barrosa,* on the 11th of March, 1811. The force under General Graham consisted of about three thousand British, and two thousand Spaniards; whilst the French, commanded by Marshal Victor, amounted to eight thousand. The Spaniards, who had been left to defend the heights of Barrosa, abandoned their position, and only rejoined our army after the conclusion of the action. But although the French were thus, as nearly three to one against our troops, they were defeated by the de-

scendants of those by whom their ancestors had been conquered at Cressy and Agincourt. The loss of our army was two hundred and fifty killed, and nine hundred and eighty-six wounded; that of the enemy was about three thousand men. "No expression of mine," said General Graham on this occasion, "could do justice to the conduct of the troops throughout; nothing less than the almost unparalleled exertions of every officer, the invincible bravery of every soldier, and the most determined devotion to the honour of his Majesty's arms in all, could have accomplished this brilliant succes sagainst such a formidable enemy, so posted. In less than half an hour from the commencement of the action the enemy were in full retreat."— The French were soon afterwards defeated at *Almeida,* and again at *Albuera,* with a total loss of eight thousand men, whilst that of Marshal Beresford's army was about five thousand. But although the presence of Buonaparte was necessary to maintain the tottering throne of his brother in Spain, we find him engaged at Paris in superintending fêtes to celebrate the birth of his son, the King of Rome.

LETTER XX.

We have lately left the Emperor Napoleon employed in directing the concerns of that infant son, to whom he hoped his extended dominions might descend; and it is curious to observe that singular character in a moment of comparative inaction, and for a time devoting himself to domestic affairs, before we again attend him to those tremendous scenes of desolation, which preceded the termination of his empire.

The *exposé* of the state of France in July 1811, claims our notice as a curious document. In this the Legislative Body are informed, that since their last meeting, France had received an addition of sixteen departments, containing four millions of inhabitants, and yielding an annual revenue of one hundred millions, and extending along a coast of three hundred leagues, abounding in all kinds of maritime resources. France is there said to unite "all that France,

Italy, and Germany possess for the construction of ships. The union of Rome has given coasts to the empire, and deposes the Popes, who have sacrificed eternal to temporal concerns." (The *exposé* adds) —"This also is the only means whereby that proper influence which the Pope ought to possess over spiritual concerns can be rendered compatible with the principles of the empire, *which cannot suffer any foreign bishop to exercise authority therein.* Twenty-seven bishoprics are vacant, to which the Pope has refused to institute persons named by the Emperor; this refusal has nullified the concordat,—it no longer exists. A council of the clergy has been convened, which will decide whether France, like Germany, shall be without episcopacy. *There is, however, no disunion between the Emperor and the Pope, as the head of religion, which can cause the least inquietude to the most timorous souls.*" Mention is also made of various internal works of public utility, which were either carrying on, or in contemplation. Amongst the *improvements,* we find the abolition of all places of *private education,* and the placing

all schools, &c. under the control of the Emperor. Schemes for rendering the colonial produce of the British settlements unnecessary, are triumphantly enumerated, and our ruin is confidently predicted. But the few allusions to the state of the Continent are sufficiently moderate; for, instead of those pompous expressions generally used, we are only told—" after some campaigns, Spain shall be subdued."

In the month of September, we find Buonaparte at Boulogne: there, however, he had the mortification of witnessing, from the barge in which he sailed with his Empress, the severity with which his vessels, on venturing from their moorings, were treated by the British cruisers; and he returned to Paris, convinced of his present inability to deliver Europe from the naval tyranny of England.

But to return to the affairs of Spain.—Lord Wellington, who had recently undertaken the siege of Badajos, soon found it advisable to relinquish it; and being sensible of the advantages of a *Fabian warfare,* he accordingly retired behind the Guadiana; and the banks of the Aguida,

the Coa, and the Douro, were severally distinguished by the operations of the British army. In September Lord Wellington made a movement towards the North of Portugal, to facilitate the efforts of the Spaniards in Galicia, the capture of Figueras and Tarragona having enabled the French to reinforce their army in that quarter. We soon afterwards find the enemy represented by Lord Wellington, as having risked every thing, in order to collect a formidable army in Estremadura, with which they hoped at one blow to terminate the campaign. This expectation the British general completely frustrated, by retiring to a most advantageous position; and the French soon discovered the inconvenience of continuing in a province so remote from their magazines, whilst their convoys were perpetually intercepted by the Guerillas.

Towards the close of 1811, a considerable sensation was excited at Cadiz, by a report that the Cortes were about to re-establish the *Inquisition,* and that too at a time when no single province of Spain was completely freed from the power of the

enemy. Wiser councils, however, prevailed,—the proposed measure was relinquished; and in the spring of 1812, the Duke of Infantado, who enjoyed the confidence of the nation, was placed at the head of the Spanish regency.

About the same time the hereditary Prince of Sicily was appointed by his father *vicar-general* of that kingdom, into the constitution of which many changes were introduced with the view of assimilating it to the British. That Sicily required some amelioration in its government it is impossible to doubt; but whether its inhabitants were fitted to receive *our laws* does not appear equally obvious. The violent conduct of the Queen compelled the adoption of some change to preserve Sicily from the French, as she actually sought to dismiss those very troops which had preserved Sicily from sharing the fate of Naples. The hereditary Prince, however, judged differently, and appointed Lord William Bentinck captain-general of his army.

On the 11th of February, 1812, commenced the unrestricted government of His Royal Highness the Prince Regent. This,

however, was not attended with any material change in the royal counsels; but Lord Wellesley having retired from the cabinet, was succeeded by Lord Sidmouth. The intention of the Regent to form an extended administration was not attended with success; but the letter which His Royal Highness addressed to the Duke of York on that subject, will ever remain a memorial of the truly British sentiments which actuated the mind of his Royal Highness on so important an occasion. In his speech, on opening the session of Parliament, the Prince Regent feelingly lamented the continued illness of His Majesty;—he congratulated the two houses, on the effectual defence of Portugal —on the conquests in the East Indies (of Banda, Cebes, and Ternate, from the Dutch, who soon afterwards lost Java and Batavia), and on the promising state of the finances of the country, notwithstanding the expensive war in which we were engaged. You cannot fail to contrast the dignified and unostentatious speech of the British Regent, with the pompous *exposé* of Buonaparte, which has just been noticed. The one may perhaps have been calculated for

the meridian of France, but the other is indeed suited to the taste of Britain. The French enslaved and degraded, are yet flattered that foreigners may peruse a statement of their *prosperity*, which they are well aware is most fallacious; whilst the English do not desire any detail of the advantages they enjoy, being satisfied of their reality.

I have not as yet noticed the differences which had for some time subsisted between the British and American governments; this, however, I must no longer neglect, as they led to serious results. In December 1811, we find the President of the United States complaining to Congress that England, instead of being induced by the extinction of the French decrees to repeal her Orders in Council, had denied that such extinction took place, had carried them into more rigorous execution than before, and required that previously to the repeal of those orders, the commercial affairs of the two countries should be restored to the footing on which they stood prior to the issuing of the French decrees. Some dissatisfaction is also expressed that England

should have protested against the occupation of the Floridas by America, which is declared to be only a temporary measure, resulting from the interest necessarily felt by that government in the fate of Spanish America.

Meantime Buonaparte, the great champion of the Americans, because he attempted the destruction of English commerce, was now preparing for a Northern war, which was chiefly suggested by his enmity to our country. — He demanded that France (for so he designated the whole extent of Europe, from the shores of the Baltic to the Adriatic), should become an *armed nation;* he delared that a local force of six hundred thousand men was necessary to insure the internal tranquillity of his dominions, and *to guard his frontiers on all hands from the introduction of English merchandize.* But it is observable, that whilst he holds out the prospect of a perpetual war between France and England; and whilst it is declared to be a capital offence to hold *any* communication even with Heligoland, the Emperor himself (probably thinking with Vespasian that "*lucri*

bonus est odor, ex re qualibet") condescended, for a *valuable consideration,* to grant licences to trade *directly* between France and England, declaring all the time that the Berlin and Milan decrees are fundamental laws of his empire, until England shall repeal all her Orders in Council since May 1806 inclusive, *and abandon her new principles of maritime law.*

In these much discussed *Orders in Council,* I can see nothing but what appears both *just and necessary* for the protection of that commerce, which is so essential to our prosperity, and indeed for the commerce of America also, although her government were of a contrary opinion, and exclaimed against our right of self-defence and retaliation against France, notwithstanding every assurance, that no hostility was intended, provided the Americans would but avoid occasions of offence. We shall, however, subsequently have occasion to observe, that the British Orders in Council, (which our government afterwards revoked, as far as they respected the Americans, provided they repealed their acts of exclusion against us,) could not have been the

real cause of the hostility of America against this country.

The accounts from Spain at this period seemed to justify the unusual *moderation*, with which Buonaparte had lately alluded to the state of affairs in that country; for soon after the commencement of the campaign of 1812, Lord Wellington became possessed of two of the most important places in Spain—Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajos. In speaking of the fall of the former, *Marshal Marmont* said—"there is something in this event so *incomprehensible* that I will not permit myself to make any observation upon it." Whether Buonaparte was satisfied with this account does not appear;—but in these two fortresses, Lord Wellington became possessed of six thousand prisoners, three hundred and thirty pieces of ordnance, and abundance of military stores. Marshal Soult, who had raised the siege of Cadiz, with the intention of relieving Badajos, finding that place had fallen, retired from the British army. In June 1812, the fortifications which the French had constructed at Almarez, were destroyed by Sir Rowland Hill; and the approaching

contest in the North, not only prevented Buonaparte from reinforcing his army in the Peninsula, but even obliged him to withdraw many of his soldiers from a contest, which, owing to the skill and perseverance of the British general (now advanced to the dignity of Duke of Ciudad Rodrigo in Spain, and Marquis of Wellington in England), had not realized his expectations.

The preparations of the Emperor of Russia were on a scale suited both to the extent of his dominions, and to the magnitude of the object for which he had to contend, as the approaching conflict was to decide, whether Russia was yet to exist as an independent state, or to be classed amongst the vassals of Buonaparte.

The armies of France, and her tributory states, were most numerous. Austria and Prussia were obliged to furnish thirty thousand men each, for the reduction of the only power by whose aid they could ever hope to recover their independence. The Poles were invited to enlist under his banners; and Buonaparte, at the commencement of the war, was at the head of a

disposable force of above half a million of soldiers. Russia had, in fact, now to contend against the united force of Europe, relying only on the justice of her cause, and having to conquer the aid of other states, by the prowess of her arms. The Emperor was however enabled, notwithstanding the intrigues of Buonaparte, to conclude a peace with the Turks, which was of great importance at so critical a juncture.

The great complaint of Buonaparte against Russia, as expressed in his declaration of war, is, that she had favoured English commerce; and he declares that his enmity to that country, and his hope of undermining her marine, induced him to unite Holland and the coasts of Germany to his dominions. These papers prove (were such proof wanting) his contempt of public opinion; for he actually considers the dissatisfaction of the Emperor of Russia at his conduct to his brother-in-law, the Duke of Oldenburg (whose dominions he had incorporated with France, as a convenient arrangement, promising that prince an indemnity elsewhere), as conclusive evidence of his hostile disposition.

By way of interlude to the negociations between France and Russia, we are presented with a correspondence on the subject of peace, addressed by the French minister for foreign affairs to Lord Castlereagh, in April 1812. The answer of the British minister is chiefly confined to a request that the French government would explain what meaning it attaches to the proposal of acknowledging *the independence of the present dynasty of Spain;* and that if Ferdinand VII. is there understood, the Regent of England is willing fully to discuss the proposed basis; — here the matter ended, no reply having been received from the French government.

Treaties of peace and alliance were now concluded between the British, Russian, and Swedish governments. But although war had been formally declared by Buonaparte against Russia, some time elapsed before the actual commencement of hostilities. Having, however, appointed his Empress Regent during his absence, the French Emperor repaired to Dresden in July, where he was received by the Emperor of Austria, the Kings of Prussia and

Saxony, and other dependent princes: but the advance of his vast army was retarded by a scarcity of provisions, which was severely felt both in France and Germany. In reviewing these unparalleled preparations, and in considering the extraordinary character of Buonaparte, the forcible lines of Dr. Johnson's imitation of the Tenth Satire of Juvenal recurred strongly to my mind; and although they are probably in your recollection, yet the beauty of the poetry may excuse my inserting them, even should they be thought less applicable to *French* than to the *Carthaginian* or the *Swedish* generals:—

" On what foundation stands the warrior's pride,
How just his hopes, let *Swedish Charles** decide;
A flame of adamant, a soul of fire,
No dangers fright him, and no labours tire;
O'er love, o'er fear, extends his wide domain,
Unconquer'd lord of pleasure and of pain;
No joys to him pacific sceptres yield,
War sounds the drum, he rushes to the field;
Behold surrounding kings their power combine,
And one capitulate, and one resign:

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* Buonaparte.

Peace courts his hand, lust spreads her charms in vain,
'Think nothing gain'd,' he cries, 'till nought remain;
On Moscow's walls till *Gothic** standards fly,
And all be mine beneath the polar sky.'
The march begins in military state,
And nations on his eye suspended wait;
Stern famine guards the solitary coast,
And winter barricades the realms of frost.
He comes, nor want, nor cold his course delay—
Hide, blushing glory, hide *Pultowa*'s† day;
The vanquish'd hero leaves his broken bands,
And shews his miseries in distant lands.

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He left the name at which the world grew pale,
To point a moral, or adorn a tale."

Previously, however, to our tracing a hasty sketch of the Russian war, let us for a few moments direct our attention to the affairs of Spain, where the inability of Buonaparte to reinforce his armies had rendered the decline of his power very evident. The fall of Salamanca was announced in July; and in the same month Lord Wellington defeated *Marmont* at Tormes, with the loss of between ten and twelve thousand men killed and wounded,

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* *Gallic.* † Smorgonies.

seven thousand prisoners, besides artillery, standards, baggage, &c. The British loss was four hundred and twenty killed, two thousand seven hundred wounded; that of the Portuguese three hundred and sixteen killed, and one thousand nine hundred and ninety-six wounded; whilst the Spaniards lost two men killed, and four wounded. Joseph Buonaparte had left Madrid with fourteen thousand men to assist Marmont; but on learning the total defeat of that general, he retired towards Segovia, but not without the loss of a part of his rear guard.

On the 12th of August, Lord Wellington made his triumphant entry into Madrid, to the great joy of the inhabitants. He there became possessed of two thousand five hundred prisoners, one hundred and ninety-eight pieces of brass ordnance, and twenty thousand stand of arms. The siege of Cadiz was now raised by the French, and that of Burgos by the British forces; and in November, 1812, Lord Wellington, after a most brilliant and successful campaign, conducted his army into winter quarters.

On the 18th of June, 1812, war, which had long appeared inevitable between the British and American governments, was formally declared by the latter power. And it is observable that the President, in his message announcing this event, enumerates even those causes of offence for which reparation had been made and accepted, as in the case of the Chesapeak; but the Orders in Council are chiefly complained of. We shall have again occasion to revert to this subject; but the affairs of Europe, at this crisis, are too important to be permitted to give place to American politics. It is indeed clear that the war now commenced, was contrary to the principles of sound policy: and notwithstanding the boasted genius of their counsellors, the Americans seemed under the influence of an evil destiny, (*sub luce malignâ.*)

Although the year 1812 presents us with few domestic occurrences of importance, yet one event of unparalleled atrocity will cause it to be long considered with feeling of peculiar horror. On the 12th of May, that upright minister and distinguished

private character, *Mr. Perceval,* was assassinated in the lobby of the House of Commons, by a man of the name of Bellingham, (whose crime, melancholy to relate, seems to have met with the approbation of some persons). He appears to have had no particular resentment against the lamented personage whom he murdered, but to have felt generally discontented against government, whom he accused of injustice in not remunerating him for certain commercial losses he had sustained. It not appearing, however, that he was sufficiently disordered in his intellect, as to be exempted from public justice, he was executed on the 18th. The family of the deceased minister were amply provided for, and a public monument was voted to his memory by the House of Commons. After the death of Mr. Perceval, an attempt was made to form a more extended administration. But this having failed, Lord Liverpool, whose abilities had long entitled him to the confidence of his country, was placed at the head of his former colleagues, and you will admit the energy of their counsels.

LETTER XXI.

THE events which have hitherto engaged our attention, momentous as they have been, are yet far exceeded in importance by those which are now to be presented to us.

The energy, which the French exhibited at the close of the Revolutionary War, having defeated the several coalitions formed against their aggressions, their spirit of dominion was but increased by success. But the usurpations of Buonaparte having convinced the world that those principles, which promising freedom, had terminated in so unparalleled a tyranny, must have been radically defective, the early fascination of the Revolution consequently ceased, when Buonaparte endeavoured to give a new bias to the character of the French, and sought to abstract their attention from those Utopian schemes of liberty, which they had so unsuccessfully pursued, by inflaming

them with the desire of that universal empire to which his ambition prompted him.

The ancient governments of Europe had repeatedly discovered the disadvantages with which they had to contend, in opposing the republican armies of France. The soldiers of Buonaparte were for a time equally successful; but having ceased to be considered as the champions of liberty, they ceased to be irresistible.—Then it was that the governments of Europe indulged the hope of ultimate success: and as the American Indians are said to have taken courage, when they discovered that their Spanish invaders were not *immortal,* but might actually fall under their imperfectly contrived weapons; so the sovereigns of Europe, although their armies were still inferior to those of Buonaparte, no longer despaired of successfully resisting his aggressions, when they found that those principles which had formerly alienated from them the affections of their subjects, were gradually ceasing to influence their minds.

The overthrow of the Russian empire seemed alone wanting to place the whole Continent of Europe in the power of Buona-

parte:—her monarch had dared to complain against his aggressions, and had even refused obedience to his mandates; can we, therefore, be surprised that the revolutionary conqueror determined on extinguishing that Northern light, which still illumined its own hemisphere, and declined being graduated by the meridian of France?

The passage of the *Niemen*, like that of the *Rubicon*, was intended to have destroyed the liberty and the independence of the world. Cæsar indeed judged rightly in supposing that the degenerate Romans would submit to the yoke of an ambitious master; but Buonaparte was deceived in the character of Alexander, when he thought that even the conflagration of Moscow would shake the settled purpose of his mind.

The third bulletin of Buonaparte announces the entrance of his vast army into the Russian territories; but above a month passed without any general engagement, the Russians wisely retiring before their opponents, and laying waste the country in their retreat. It was not until the 16th and 17th of August that the sanguinary

battles of *Smolensko* took place:—the victory was claimed by the French. The loss on both sides has been stated at twenty-two thousand men, but the Russians retired unbroken, and even defeated the French shortly afterwards at *Polosk*. After an interval of anxious suspense, the contending armies again contended, with almost unheard-of fury, for victory, at *Borodino*, on the 7th of September. The loss of the French was about twenty thousand men; that of the Russians was probably much greater. The latter claimed the victory, but did not find themselves able, any longer, to oppose the progress of the French to Moscow, which they entered on the 14th of September. A most tremendous scene was now exhibited by the conflagration of the vast and ancient metropolis of the Czars, the population of which was above three hundred thousand souls.

" Urbs antiqua ruit, multos dominata per annos:
Plurima perque vias sternuntur interea passim
Corpora, perque domos, et relligiosa deorum
Limina.
Tum verò omne mihi visum considere in ignes
Ilium."

It is, however, rather from the bulletins of Buonaparte, than from the pages of *Virgil*, that we must look for an account of this transaction; and although he is evidently desirous that it should be understood that his army was sufficiently well accommodated, yet he thus describes the awful scene: —"Five-sixths of the houses were built of wood, the fire spread with a prodigious rapidity,—it was an ocean of flame,—sixteen hundred churches, one thousand palaces, innumerable magazines, nearly all have fallen a prey to the flames. — The fires subsided on the 19th and 20th,—three quarters of the city are destroyed."

Thus did the author of this desolation announce *that Moscow was no more.*— Of that vast city the quarter of the *Kremlin* alone remained, being protected by its walls from the general conflagration. In his bulletin of the 9th of October, Buonaparte does not speak of quitting the ruins of Moscow, but on the 14th he appears to have discovered that nine-tenths of the city were destroyed, and that it would be soon necessary for his army to be *in winter quarters*. This necessity compelled Buona-

parte, on the 22nd of October, to abandon a place, the occupation of which he had expected with anxiety, both for the convenience of his army in so severe a climate, and as a means of inducing the Emperor Alexander to accede to his demands, as the Emperor of Austria had done on being dispossessed of his capital.

On quitting Moscow Buonaparte felt he had failed in accomplishing those vast projects of which he had boasted; and the entrance of the Russian army into that city, on the very day of his departure, loudly proclaimed his improvidence, in remaining so long in a position, from which he was at last compelled to retreat under such unfavourable circumstances. An attempt to "*extenuate*" the conduct of Buonaparte would be in vain undertaken by his greatest advocates; but lest we should "*set down ought in malice*" against him, let us refer for an account of his retreat to his twenty-ninth bulletin, dated the 3rd of December.—In this he again informs us, that the cold had set in with great severity on the 7th of November, and that however hard it appeared to put him-

self in motion during so cruel a season, that the *new state of things* required it. The cold suddenly increasing, the roads were covered with ice; the cavalry, artillery, and baggage horses perished every night, not only by hundreds, but by thousands; so that in a few days, more than thirty thousand horses perished. It was also necessary to destroy a great part of the cannon, ammunition, and provisions, of the army, which, from being described as in *such excellent order* on the 6th, is, on the 14th, characterised as *miserable;* and the enemy, who saw on the roads the traces of that *frightful calamity,* which had overtaken the French army, endeavoured to take advantage of it. On the 16th Buonaparte was defeated at Krasnoi by Kutusoff; and having abandoned Smolensko, he fled across the Dnieper.—In the twenty-seventh bulletin he acknowledges the loss of a whole brigade; but in the twenty-eighth he boasts of a victory gained by his *cavalry,* although he had previously informed us of the sad condition to which his army was reduced,—*without cavalry,*—deficient of ammunition,

and horribly fatigued by fifty days' march, —carrying with it all the sick and wounded of so many great battles, and greatly in need of getting to its magazines.

That the enthusiasm of the army for the Emperor had diminished, we may infer from his statement, that it was necessary to collect the officers who had still a horse remaining, in order to form a corps of six hundred men, in which *generals acted as captains*, and colonels as subalterns; and this SACRED BAND did not lose sight of the Emperor's person for a moment. The corps of officers for the protection of the Emperor, proves he had every thing to apprehend from the fury of his suffering soldiers, and accounts for the comparatively small number of that rank taken, in proportion to the private soldiers, by the Russians. The official returns of the captures made by the Russians, from the 22nd of October to the 26th of December, is as follows:—forty-one general officers, one thousand two hundred and eighteen officers, one hundred and sixty-seven thousand five hundred and ten privates, one thousand one hundred and thirty-one pieces of cannon. Ancient his-

tory affords us no instance of so great an army having been so suddenly disorganized; and could we find any parallel for these awful scenes, we must look for it in the sacred volume, where the sword of the destroying angel is represented as fulfilling the dispensations of Omnipotence.

Buonaparte raised the indignation of his soldiers to the highest pitch, by abandoning them at Smorgonie on the 5th of December, only two days after his twenty-ninth bulletin had been published. He arrived *incog.* at Paris on the 18th, and affected to treat his losses as trifling, until something might occur which would justify his adopting a different course. This justification, he conceived, was afforded him by the defection of the thirty thousand Prussian auxiliaries; and on this plea he calls on the Senate at once to furnish him with three hundred and fifty thousand men, exclusive of one hundred and fifty thousand men of the conscription of 1814, which had been previously called for. This force of five hundred thousand men he declared necessary to prevent the mischief that might accrue from this horrid act of treachery;

and in addition to this, it is proposed to form an imperial guard, composed of the sons of persons of property in France, that thus the fidelity of the parents might be secured, and the power of the tyrant supported by the exertions of those whom he oppressed. But we cannot suppose it possible that the adulation and compliance of his Senate could remove the disappointment of Buonaparte, and his regret at the loss (which he could no longer conceal) of that vast army by which his ambitious projects were to have been effected. Still, even under these circumstances, whilst the remains of his once mighty army had retired into a few Polish fortresses, and whilst he had actually no present means of resisting his pursuers, we are informed by Buonaparte, that *the war in Spain is to be maintained,* and *that his original views in the North are to be accomplished**.

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* It may be noticed amongst the events of these memorable times, that many of the shattered military implements which lately dealt death and destruction through the provinces of Russia, have arrived at the iron works of Cramond, for the purpose of being turned into instruments of husbandry.

The arrival of the Russian fleet in the Thames proved to the world the confidence reposed in the British government by their new ally; and the liberality and generous feelings of this nation were largely experienced by the Russians.

After the battle of *Krasnoi* the French were no longer able to resist the Russians; surrounded by the sickening, the dying, and the dead, their vivacity forsook them, and they became incapable of making any effectual exertion.—A last attempt was made on the banks of the Beresina, by the retreating army to face the victorious *Witgenstein;* but they did not effect the passage of that river without the loss of their rear-guard, baggage, ordnance, &c. — Much of the plunder of Moscow, including church plate to a considerable amount, was here retaken. The French now continued their retreat to *Wilna,* marching all night, and halting during the day, formed into squares, to protect themselves against the incessant attacks of the brave followers of Platoff. Thus harrassed by perpetual warfare, and suffering in almost an equal degree from the severity of the weather, the remains of this

once mighty army entered *Wilna* (December 10th, 1812); but the advanced guard of the Russian army arriving almost at the same moment, they were obliged to retire from that city without delay, and to abandon to their pursuers the vast magazines stored with those things of which they stood in so much need. Here again the French rear-guard was defeated and taken, whilst five thousand of their soldiers, in the hospitals, fell into the hands of the Russians, together with one hundred and fifty pieces of cannon, and several generals.

At *Irlst* the French, to gain time, made another unsuccessful attempt to face their enemies, their loss being about six thousand men; but even these continued defeats and losses bore no proportion to the fatigues and sufferings of the soldiers of Buonaparte, who, by the time they reached Tilsit, were not able even to oppose the advanced guard of the Russian army.

The Saxon and Bavarian contingents were, for the most part, involved in this general destruction; and the Austrians, although unbroken, shewed no disposition to act against the Russians.

The King of Prussia now found himself enabled, by the advance of the Russian army, which had already occupied Berlin, to comply with the wishes of his subjects, (who had risen *en masse* against the French,) and he concluded an offensive and defensive alliance with the Emperor of Russia.—That magnanimous sovereign, on entering the Prussian states, disclaimed all ideas of conquest,—offered peace and independence to every nation which was disposed to abandon the cause of Buonaparte, — expressed his desire to restore Prussia to its former consideration, and concluded his forcible address by reminding the nations of Europe, that it would be an abuse of the goodness of Providence, not to take advantage of so favourable a crisis, by re-constructing that balance of European power, which could alone ensure public tranquillity, and individual happiness.

The Swedish government now came forward with a peculiarly forcible declaration of the causes which compelled it to join in the war against France; and ably enumerated the various evils resulting from the professed friendship of France.

The disposition of the people of Saxony was favourable to the cause of European liberty; but their sovereign (who, not being himself able to conquer, had adopted the counsel of *Phocian,* and sided with the power which had been hitherto victorious,) on quitting his capital, entreated his subjects to remain tranquil, until he should be relieved by his great and powerful ally. The Emperor of Austria, about this time, declared his intention of limiting his efforts to the defence of his own frontier; a resolution, which was in fact a virtual abandonment of the cause of Buonaparte.

The *exposé* of the state of France, in March 1813, proves the dejection of her ruler, being mostly occupied with trivial internal details, and scarcely referring to foreign political relations. He had, however, been for some time actively employed in organizing an army, to oppose the further progress of those hardy soldiers whom he had called forth by his aggressions, from the most distant limits of the Russian empire; but it was with far different auspices he now quitted Paris from those under which he had set out from that capital,

about ten months before, to assume the command of a vastly superior army. Hostilities now recommenced, and on the 1st and 2nd of May the French and allied armies contended at *Lutzen,* in Saxony, (formerly memorable for the victory and death of Gustavus of Sweden); here the centre of the French army, commanded by Buonaparte in person, gave way, and was only saved by the advance of his last reserve, and by the obscurity of night, which concealed them from the fury of their pursuers.

Buonaparte now endeavouring to get into the rear of the allied armies, they found it advisable to retire behind the Elbe; and on the 21st the contest was renewed with increased violence at *Wurtchen,* in Lusatia, the allies still retiring in the most regular manner. On the 22nd of May an *armistice* was concluded (which continued for about three months); this left the whole of Saxony with the French,—nearly all Prussia in the possession of the allies,—whilst a part of Silesia was considered as neutral ground. Much alarm was excited at the moment by this arrangement, which, probably, was effected through the interposition

of *Austria*, who, sensible of the control possessed by Buonaparte over the French, (which was most evident by their compliance with all his extravagant demands, after the late decisive failure of his views,) and feeling also the powerful attitude in which she herself stood, required the belligerent powers to accept her mediation; and a congress was accordingly opened at *Prague* for the negociation of a general peace.

Thus have we traced to its close the most memorable campaign of which we possess any records;—a campaign in which the visible interference of Divine Providence was clearly discerned by all nations who saw the "*fire and hail, snow and vapour, storms and tempests,*" fulfilling the word of their great Creator. Those who judged from past experience hardly doubted but that Buonaparte would have again experienced that success which had so constantly attended his projects; but his fall at a time when it was altogether unlooked for, was destined to confound the wisdom of the wise, and to cause even the most worldly-minded persons to exclaim "*This hath God done.*"

Of the arbitrary conduct of Buonaparte in Russia, numberless instances are recorded;—one, however, it may be sufficient for me to mention, and that is, his having actually executed several Russians for having set fire to *Moscow*, although they acted under the orders of their superiors before the entrance of his forces into that city. Buonaparte seems, during this campaign, to have been divested of his accustomed foresight; for he remained in the heart of Russia long after his generals had called on him to retreat, and that even his own suggestions must have repeated the warning exhortation, "*Heu fuge crudeles terras.*"

Every hand in Europe was now to be raised against a man, whose conduct was neither regulated by *judgment*, nor even by *self-interest*.—His situation was indeed most critical, and, like all those who abuse their power, he was compelled to be always victorious that he might be preserved from annihilation. The French Revolution could not be expected to terminate without some dreadful catastrophe; and Europe would be indeed happy, were the principles which

occasioned it, destroyed by the flames of *Moscow*. To the excellent sovereign of Russia I would say, with *Claudian*—

" Te propter gelidis Aquilo de monte procellis,
Obruit adversus acies revolutaque tela
Vertit in auctores, et turbine repulit hastas.
O nimium dilecte Deo; cui fundit ab antro
Æolus armatus hiemes; cui militat æther,
Et conjurati veniunt ad classica venti."

" For thee the North from frozen mountains blows
The whelming stores of winter on thy foes.
In mid career the furious lance arrest,
And whirl, reverted, on its owner's breast.
O lov'd of Heaven! for thee in icy showers
The Lord of winds his wrath tempestuous pours;
Fierce in thy cause conspiring winds engage,
And, to preserve thee, send forth all their rage."

LETTER XXII.

A DESIRE not to interrupt the progress of our brief narration of the Russian campaign prevented my alluding to any other events in my last Letter. We may now, however, take advantage of the recent armistice to look generally around us; and as the war lately commenced with America claims our attention, I shall transcribe some passages from the masterly declaration on that subject, issued by the Prince Regent in January 1813, which may supersede the necessity of any observations of my own. —This paper observes, " the real origin of the present contest will be found in that spirit which has long unhappily actuated the counsels of the United States;—their marked partiality in palliating and assisting the aggressive tyranny of France; their systematic endeavours to inflame their people against the defensive endeavours of

Great Britain; their ungenerous conduct towards Spain; and their unworthy desertion of the cause of other neutral nations. It is through the policy of such counsels that America has been assimilated in policy with France, and committed in war against Great Britain." After noticing the aggressions of France against America, which were so tamely submitted to, as clearly to prove the subserviency of that government to the French, it proceeds:—"Against this course of conduct, the real cause of the present war, the Prince Regent solemnly protests—whilst contending against France, not only in defence of the liberties of Great Britain, but of the world, His Royal Highness was entitled to look for a far different result. From their common origin, from their professed principles of freedom and independence, the United States were the last power in which Great Britain could have expected to find such a willing instrument and abettor of French tyranny. Disappointed in these, his just expectation, the *Prince Regent* will still pursue the policy which the British government has so long and invariably maintained, in repelling

injustice, and in supporting the general rights of nations; and under the favour of Providence, relying on the justice of his cause, and the tried loyalty and firmness of the British nation, His Royal Highness looks forward to a successful issue to the contest in which he has been compelled, most reluctantly, to engage."

There appeared but one common sentiment in England as to the impossibility of our relinquishing the right of taking British seamen from American merchantmen. But that this was only a pretext, made use of by the war party in America, became evident, by their not being conciliated by the conditional repeal of our Orders in Council; and the actual causes of the contest were only to be discovered in their envy of the greatness of Britain, and in their desire of conquest, at the expense both of Spain and England, whose Northern colonies, and the adjoining provinces, soon presented a scene of active warfare.

The renewal of the East India Company's charter was about the same time agreed to by Parliament, after much discussion; but the cursory view we are obliged to take of

public events will not permit our dwelling on any points of minor importance; and our attention is again called for by the affairs of the Peninsúla, from which it has been long diverted.

The armistice in Germany induced Buonaparte to make a last effort in Spain, and he dispatched Soult to command the army he had collected in that country. Few campaigns opened more brilliantly for the British army; and the downfall of the Buonaparte dynasty soon became apparent.

Lord Wellington (who had lately come to a most satisfactory understanding with the Spanish government) was, in the spring of 1813, at the head of nearly one hundred thousand men, and on the 21st of June he obtained a signal victory over the enemy at *Vittoria*. The loss of the allies was seven hundred and thirty killed, and four thousand one hundred and ten wounded, two-thirds of whom were British. The difficult nature of the country alone prevented the entire destruction of the French army;—their loss was about twenty thousand men; one hundred and fifty one pieces of cannon, and four hundred and fifteen baggage

waggons, were captured by our distinguished general, whose movements were so judicious, that the French, finding their retreat by the high road to Bayonne impracticable, fled towards Pampeluna, (which they entered with only one howitzer in their train,) and thence, by Roncesvalles, into France.

This signal success was followed (as it had been preceded) by many engagements of minor importance; and the French would have been speedily dispossessed of the few possessions they yet retained in Spain, had not the comprehensive plan of operations of Lord Wellington been marred by the failure of Sir James Murray's expedition, which delayed the liberation of some of the Eastern provinces of that country.

Meantime Marshal Soult, who had been commissioned by Buonaparte to relieve Pampeluna and St. Sebastian, accomplished those objects with great promptitude; and concentrated his army near Huarte, which Lord Wellington describes as one of the strongest positions he had seen occupied by troops. From this, however, he was forced by our army on the 29th of July, and by

the 4th of August he was completely driven out of Spain, with the loss of fifteeen thousand of his soldiers; that of the allied army was about one thousand killed, and six thousand wounded. The proceedings of the Spanish government at this time were more decided than at any other period; and the Pope's nuncio (Gravina) was banished for interfering with the decrees of the Executive Government, and insisting on the restoration of the Inquisition.

The battle of the Pyrenees, on the 11th of August, having finally accomplished the deliverance of Spain, that great object to which the exertions of the British government, and of Lord Wellington, had been so long directed, our victorious army *entered France in the beginning of October.* We must not, however, anticipate the events in that quarter; and that we may trace with regularity the downfall of the Buonaparte dynasty in *France, Italy, Naples,* and *Westphalia,* as well as in *Spain,* we are now called on to notice the state of affairs in Germany, where hostilities recommenced on the 17th of August, 1813.

By the accession of Austria to the allied

cause, a coalition was effected, which was destined to accomplish the greatest ends; and those who had disapproved of the armistice, as tending rather to the advantage of Buonaparte, than to that of the allies, now became sensible of their error, and admitted that had the proffered mediation of Austria been declined by the allies, the Emperor would, perhaps, have united his forces to those of his relative, whom he might have thought sufficiently humiliated:—but finding, during the negociations, that the mind of Buonaparte still indulged schemes of ambition, which were incompatible with the repose of Europe, every motive combined to induce the Emperor Francis no longer to remain a passive spectator of a struggle, maintained by the united sovereigns of Europe, not only for their independence, but even for their very existence.

Denmark, and the Princes of the Confederation of the Rhine, were now the only remaining allies of Buonaparte; but the astonishing rapidity with which he had raised and embodied the vast army he now again brought into the field, proved that

the utmost union was required amongst the allied sovereigns, in order to overthrow his still formidable power.

The perusal of the *Austrian manifesto* on this occasion, was rendered peculiarly interesting from the losses that country had sustained in her repeated endeavours to restrain the aggressions of France,—these losses are feelingly enumerated. The union of the Austrian princess with Buonaparte is noticed as an event which it was hoped would have brought him to a sense of moderation and justice. It remarks that the campaign with Russia "furnished a memorable example of the failure of an undertaking, supported by a gigantic power, and conducted by a captain of the first rank, when in the confidence of great military talents, he despises the rules of prudence, and outsteps the bounds of nature."

It appears that in December 1812, Austria had proposed to Buonaparte the restoration of peace to Europe; but he would not hear of the violation of the integrity of, what he designated, the French empire, nor even agree to any nominal sacrifices.—His object was evidently to gain over Austria

to his cause; but the principal provinces of Prussia were in vain offered to a power which had witnessed the evils of a selfish policy.

Vast preparations had been made on all sides for the renewal of hostilities.—The plan of the allies was to advance at the same moment from all parts of their extended line, making the grand attack from the side of Bohemia, on the enemy's flank at Dresden; whilst *Blucher* threatened them in front, and *Bernadotte* kept them in check on the side of Berlin.

Buonaparte's plan appears to have been, first to force Blucher's lines, and then to attack the right flank of the allied army in Bohemia, whilst an attack was to be made on the side of Berlin, to obtain possession of that capital. This project he attempted with his usual precipitancy; and coming against Blucher with an army of one hundred and ten thousand men, that general was obliged to retire behind the Katzbach. In the mean time the grand allied army passed the frontiers of Saxony, and advanced upon Dresden with one hundred and forty thousand men; forcing, in their way, the

entrenched camp of the enemy at Pirna. Buonaparte returned immediately to the relief of Dresden ; but the action of the 26th of August, before that city, consisted chiefly of a heavy cannonade, and frequent charges of cavalry. It was on this day that the allied sovereigns were deprived of the able counsels of General Moreau, his legs being carried off by a cannon-ball going through his horse, as he was in conversation with the Emperor of Russia, and his death soon afterwards ensuing.

On the 28th a corps of the allied army engaged an army of thirty thousand men, under General Vandamme, of which scarcely one-third escaped. To Bernadotte was entrusted the protection of Berlin, and this he was enabled to accomplish, having collected together from eighty to ninety thousand men. On the 4th of September, Marshal Ney, with seventy thousand men, attacked a body of about forty thousand of the allied army at Tuterboch, where they supported themselves until reinforced by Bernadotte, when the French were obliged to retire, with the loss of nine thousand prisoners, and as many more in killed and

wounded. The spell by which Buonaparte had bound the nations to his chain, was now evidently broken, and a spirit of determined resistance was excited, which promised still more than the physical force and military skill by which he was opposed, to shake the very foundation of his power.

Lord Wellington had first the glory of dissipating that illusion which had given to the armies of Buonaparte the character of invincibility; and the victories of our army in the Peninsula had produced effects which were felt at the remotest extremities of Europe, and infused new life into the then expiring exertions of her sons in the cause of independence.

The troops furnished by the Confederation of the Rhine now daily deserted from the standard of Buonaparte; and whilst his situation in Germany was thus alarmingly precarious, the entrance of a British army into what he professed to call the *sacred territory of France,* rendered his situation doubly critical. A new levy of two hundred and eighty thousand men was now demanded, and if it could have been rendered effectual, he would have drawn from France,

in the course of less than twelve months, above eight hundred thousand soldiers.

After having remained for some time inactive at Dresden, Buonaparte moved upon Leipsic on the 15th of October—a movement this, which his former general, Bernadotte, has declared to have been made four days too late; and he adds, "it has been fatal to the French army, and has destroyed, in two battles, the spell of Buonaparte's invincibility." The battles near Leipsic were most tremendous,—that on the 16th was by no means decisive; but the memorable result of the conflict on the 18th is thus summed up by *Sir Charles Stewart*:—"The collective loss of above one hundred pieces of cannon, sixty thousand men, and an immense number of prisoners; together with the destruction of the Saxon, Wurtemberg, and Bavarian, troops, are some of the fruits of this glorious day." Lord Cathcart observes—"nearly half a million of soldiers fought in this battle, probably one of the most exterminating that ever took place; the presence of the sovereigns animated their armies." On the 19th Leipsic was taken; and Buona-

parte with difficulty escaped the premature blowing up of a bridge over the Elster, which he acknowledges was attended by the loss of twelve thousand of his soldiers; and on the day following three hundred pieces of cannon, one thousand caissons, and fifteen thousand prisoners, besides twenty-three thousand sick and wounded at Leipsic, fell into the hands of the allied sovereigns;—whilst the meeting of the Emperors of Austria and Russia, the King of Prussia, and Crown Prince of Sweden, in the great square of Leipsic, after the signal triumph which Providence had given to their cause, must have been peculiarly interesting, and have inspired the inhabitants of that desolated country with the hope of better days. The King of Saxony, whose conduct had not entitled him to any commiseration, now attempted to claim the notice of the allied sovereigns, but was conducted, under an escort, to Berlin.

The Crown Prince of Sweden thus notices the conduct of Buonaparte:—"It is inconceivable how a man who had commanded in thirty pitched battles, and had so distinguished himself, should have been capable

of concentrating his forces in so unfavourable a position,—the rivers Elster and Pleisse in his rear, a marshy ground to traverse, and only a single bridge for the passage of one hundred thousand men, and three thousand baggage waggons;—every one asks, is this the great captain who has hitherto made Europe tremble?" The force with which Buonaparte escaped from this destructive contest was estimated at eighty thousand men, but in his retreat to the Rhine he probably lost at least half these forces, every day from the 20th to the 29th of October being signalized for some attack upon his broken army.

At Hanau he was attacked by the united Austrian and Bavarian armies under General Wrede, (for even Bavaria now declared against him; and like many, who less deserved it, Buonaparte found himself—

"Deserted in his utmost need,
By those his former bounty fed."

The French here claim the victory, but in fact they only, by a desperate effort, cut their way through the opposing army, with the loss of nearly thirty thousand men, and arrived at Mentz on the 2nd of November, whence

Buonaparte proceeded to St. Cloud, where he received intelligence of the loss of Dresden, and the surrender of General St. Cyr, with sixteen thousand men, to the allied army.

Holland, as well as Bavaria, was now independent; and although the defection of that country was carefully concealed from the Parisians, the cry of *Orange Boven* (up with the Orange) was re-echoed throughout its provinces; and there turn of the family, by which they had long been governed, was anxiously expected by the Dutch. *Hanover* was also restored to the paternal government of its ancient sovereigns;—the kingdom of Westphalia was dissolved. The general enthusiasm extended as far as the shores of the Illyrian provinces, and justified the observation of Lord Aberdeen, that "the long sufferings of many nations were drawing to a close."

On the 14th of November, Buonaparte informed his senate that all Europe, which had a year ago been united with France, was now leagued against her,—"this," he says, "is because the opinion of the world is regulated either by France or England;"

and he adds, "we should have every thing to dread, but for the energy and power of the nation." For the support of his falling fortunes, Buonaparte proposed to add thirty per cent. to the assessed taxes; he doubled the tax on property, and increased other imposts.—Thus were the French made to feel, in a sensible manner, the weight of those burthens they had so long imposed on other states.

In addition to the two hundred and eighty thousand conscripts lately ordered to be raised, Buonaparte now called for three hundred thousand more; and whilst he decreed the formation of four armies of reserve, to defend France from invasion, he addressed himself to his subjects in a style well calculated to produce an effect upon their felings.

The allied sovereigns having now reached Frankfort, issued, on the 1st of December, a declaration, stating that "the first use they had made of the victories which had conducted them to the banks of the Rhine, was to offer peace to Buonaparte, on terms which would secure the independence of France, and even consign to her a greater

extent of country than she had possessed under her kings." So explicit and so moderate a declaration extorted some notice from Buonaparte, who, being sensible of the effect it would produce, complained to the Legislative Body that his great designs for the *prosperity* and *happiness* of the world had been frustrated; and he called on France to display her whole strength, that he might negociate with effect." Before the end of December the allied armies had crossed the Rhine in several places, and France, which but a few months before, would have treated as ridiculous the idea that her territory would have become the theatre of war, now actually felt those horrors which she had delighted to inflict on the other nations of Europe.

The opposition of Denmark detained for some time the advance of Bernadotte into France, but was contributary to the aggrandizement of the crown to which he was heir in remainder; Denmark being obliged to cede Norway to Sweden, in exchange for her possessions in Pomerania,—and thus Sweden was fully indemnified for the pre-

vious cession of Finland to Russia. The dismemberment of the Danish monarchy cannot be regretted; for that state had certainly done less than any other during the various wars in which Europe was involved, to entitle it to respect in its prosperity, or to commiseration in its fall.

Buonaparte was now destined to experience the defection of another sovereign of his own creation, and upon whose fidelity he thought he might rely; for his brother-in-law, Murat, wishing to preserve the throne of Naples, turned against his relative those means which he had given him to support this new feudal system.

Having now no motive to detain Ferdinand VII. from a country in which he had no longer an army, Buonaparte restored him to liberty, having first concluded a treaty with him, which was of course rejected by the Cortes; and Spain, on receiving again that prince for whom she had contended, had but too much reason to lament that his political views were by no means calculated to answer the sanguine expectations of improvement which had been associated with his name.

Like *Galba, Ferdinand* might have been considered "*capax imperii, nisi imperasset;*" and had he never ascended the throne of Spain, his name, from the enthusiasm at one time associated with it, might have procured him with posterity the reputation of having been a great prince; whilst he will now be only noticed in history as an illiberal king, whose mind was too contracted to profit by the splendid examples of many of his contemporary sovereigns.

One of Buonaparte's generals, however, did not desert either his service, or the principles on which it was commonly conducted, in this critical position of his affairs; and the name of *Davoust* will be long associated with every thing most cruel and tyrannical in human nature; whilst the tenacity with which he endeavoured to preserve the remains of the once flourishing city of Hamburgh for his master was productive of no advantage to his cause.

Dantzic, Wittenberg, and Torgau, were now in the possession of the allies; but although obliged to contend for the preservation of his capital, Buonaparte declined relinquishing the fortresses of Italy, which

subsequently submitted to the Austrians. Had his outposts been less numerous, his effective army might have been greatly augmented, and have perhaps contributed to preserve his power. The politician may therefore, with apparent reason, accuse Buonaparte of having, to all human probability, lost a substantial empire, by endeavouring to preserve, with reduced means, the extended outline of that feudatory dominion which his ambition had originally traced out: whilst those whose views are of a more elevated nature, may conclude that the destiny of the French empire had been accomplished, and that the time appointed for the downfall of its founder had arrived.

LETTER XXIII.

We are quickly advancing to the concluding scene of Buonaparte's reign, and cannot fail of being impressed with the astonishing rapidity of the current of events, which now ran as strongly against him as it had at one time done in his favour. On the 25th of January, 1814, Buonaparte once more left Paris for his army, now no further removed from that city than Chalons. On the 28th, he attacked the allied army at St. Dizier, and a succession of engagements followed, in which the allies are admitted to have been victorious, the French being driven to Troyes, with the loss of four thousand prisoners, and sixty pieces of cannon; they subsequently retreated to Nogent, within sixty miles of Paris; whilst, notwithstanding the impracticability of the measure, every step was taken to convert that capital into a

strong military position. Between the 10th and 16th of February Buonaparte obtained some advantages over Blucher, who retired to Chalons, where he was joined by part of the army of Prince Schwartzenberg, the advanced guard of which had arrived within forty miles of Paris, but soon afterwards retreated.

Meantime negociations were opened at *Chatillon* on the 14th of February; and amidst the fury of war, a last attempt was made to treat with Buonaparte, who was still confident of success, although he had not been able to induce the French to rise generally in his favour. On the 9th and 10th, Buonaparte was defeated with the loss of six thousand prisoners, nearly an equal number killed and wounded, together with fifty-eight pieces of cannon, by the army of the veteran Blucher, which, for fifty days successively, had been continually either marching or fighting, during which time only two days had elapsed in which, exclusive of general actions, his rear had not been engaged with the enemy.

From the 4th to the 13th the Austrians had remained stationary at Troyes, and were

even accused of treachery by those who did not reflect, that although it might be for the advantage of Buonaparte to run all risks, even to gain a temporary success; yet that such was by no means the policy of the allies, removed as they were from their resources, and contending as they did for such important interests. During this month the contest was carried on with vigour by Lord Wellington in the South of France.—Bourdeaux had capitulated to his army, and many battles were fought along the Garonne and the Adour. On the 8th the British forces, commanded by Sir T. Graham, which had been promptly sent to assist the Dutch, sustained considerable loss in an attack which they made on the strong fortress of *Bergen-op-Zoom*.

The negociations at Chatillon were finally broken off on the 18th, and a declaration was shortly afterwards issued by the allies, expressing their final determination not to treat with Buonaparte, (whose pretensions, fortunately for the ultimate repose of Europe, were of such a nature as to render peace with him utterly impracticable,) whilst they professed their intention

of respecting the integrity of ancient France, as well as of recognizing whatever constitution the French nation should adopt.

The ministers of the allied powers at Chatillon had indeed a most arduous task to perform,—for the fruits of the most brilliant victories have been often lost by unskilful diplomatists; and on this occasion it was necessary that the unreasonableness of Buonaparte's conduct should appear evident to the French,—for had he been too soon proscribed, or even had any attempt been made to impose on him any rigorous conditions, the French might have risen in his favour, and the invasion of that country might have proved as unsuccessful in 1814 as it did in 1792.—Whilst Buonaparte, elated at the favorable terms offered him by the allies, and confiding in his power to triumph over enemies who thus seemed to dread him, became in a good measure the instrument of his own overthrow.

You will therefore join me in admiring the conduct of Lord Castlereagh on this occasion, and his country was fortunate in possessing a statesman of such ability

—whose mind seemed — "*nec laboribus minuendus, nec difficultatibus extinguendus.*"

The long impending blow was now to be struck, and the collected armies of Schwartzenberg and Blucher, amounting to two hundred thousand men, advancing directly against Paris, *entered that city (credite, posteri)* on the 31st of March. Whilst the national guards, with that versatility peculiar to the French, cleared the streets of the metropolis for the very troops with whom they had been just contending on the heights of Belleville; and the Parisians, who had in the morning been clamorous for arms that they might exterminate their *invaders,* hailed them in the afternoon as *friends and deliverers.* Perhaps at the moment these feelings might have been felt, but they were certainly of no long duration; for the entry of Louis XVIII. into his capital in the May following, was not suffered to pass without expressions of resentment against those who had maintained his cause.

The *French Senate* being convened on the 1st of April, they placed Talleyrand at

the head of a Provisional Government;—they declared the reign of Buonaparte (who had reproached them with even exceeding his desires) at an end; and that the nation and the army were absolved from their allegiance to him. On the 6th the plan of a new constitution was accepted, and the restoration of Louis XVIII. decreed.

Buonaparte's project of abdicating, in favour of his son being rejected, he concluded a treaty with the allied powers, which secured the sovereignty of Elba to himself, the Duchies of Parma and Placentia to the Empress Maria Louisa, and ample pensions to his family. In his journey from Fontainebleau to his new sovereignty, we see this extraordinary character in a singular point of view; but his apprehensions of popular violence, and the proceedings on this occasion, have been related so *fully* as to preclude the necessity of my recapitulating them. But whilst the world could scarcely yet believe that his power was really overthrown, it is extraordinary to find the Ex-Emperor, (like *Sylla* when he had abdicated the Dictatorship,) planning those schemes of inactive enjoyment

which were totally inconsistent with his nature.

Whilst Buonaparte was on his way to Elba, the Pope, whom he had long treated with such severity, being restored to liberty, proceeded to resume his former sovereignty, and was every where received with the most distinguished honours.

It is melancholy to have to relate the useless effusion of blood, which took place after the abdication of Buonaparte near Thoulouse, which is to be attributed to the enmity entertained by the French against our forces.—They were, however, again defeated by Lord Wellington, who now repaired to Paris, where he was hailed by the allied sovereigns and their generals, with that enthusiasm which was due to his distinguished services.

In the month of June, the Russian and Prussian sovereigns, attended by many warriors whose deeds will long live in the recollection of the world, visited our metropolis, where their presence excited the most sincere pleasure. Nor was any tribute of admiration wanting on the part of those distinguished personages, who could not but admire the greatness of the British

nation, which had enabled its illustrious Prince to contribute so mainly to the general deliverance of Europe.

The subsequent arrival of Lord Wellington in London was also distinguished by the rejoicings of a people, who duly valued his exertions for the peace of Europe. After having taken his seat as a British Duke, his Grace had, on the 7th of July, the honour of bearing before the Prince Regent (who, with the two Houses of Parliament, attended the public thanksgiving at St. Paul's on that day), in a time of peace, the sword of state, judiciously confided to those hands which so successfully wielded the sword of war. The appearance of the Duke in the House of Commons, the feeling manner in which he expressed his thanks to that branch of the Legislature, and the dignified address of the Speaker to his Grace, was indeed one of the most impressive scenes I have witnessed.—To the Duke we may truly say—

" Ad tibi quæ poterit pro tantis civica reddi
Mœnibus, aut quanta pensabunt facta coronæ?"

Thou who hast saved whole crowds, whole towns set free,
What groves, what woods, shall furnish crowns for thee?

Ample provision was made by the liberality of Parliament for those distinguished generals who were now advanced to the peerage; and the timely assistance of the British nation will be long and gratefully remembered by the distressed inhabitants of Russia and Germany.

Louis XVIII. now restored to the throne of his ancestors, was occupied in framing a new constitution for France; and he annulled many of the edicts of the late government, (particularly that concerning education,) which were unfavourable to the morals of the rising generation. On the 30th of May, a treaty was concluded at Paris, by which the allied powers permitted France to retain all the territories she possessed in 1790, together with some inconsiderable additions on the side of Savoy and Flanders. Malta, St. Lucia, Tobago, and the Isle of France, were ceded to England. Her other colonies, particularly Guadaloupe (ransomed by our government from Sweden) were restored to France; but having accomplished so much for the cause of humanity, the British nation regretted that the *immediate* aban-

donment of the slave trade had not been insisted on previously to the surrender of her West India colonies to France.

A Congress was appointed to be held at Vienna for the regulation of the general affairs of Europe: and negociations were commenced at *Ghent*, between the British and American plenipotentiaries. During their progress (which was far from rapid) accounts were received of the *capture of Washington*, by three thousand British soldiers, who defeated about nine thousand Americans; but they soon retired from that capital, after having destroyed its public edifices, whilst the possessions of individuals were respected.

An attack was also made on *Baltimore*, where the distinguished General Ross received a mortal wound. General Prevost was not very successful in opposing the Americans in Canada. But the capture of the American frigate the President, by Captain Hope of the Endymion, raised the spirits of our sailors, who were in some degree dispirited by the casual ill success they had experienced during this war.

On the 24th of December, peace was

finally concluded between Great Britain and America. The points for which the war had been undertaken were passed over in silence. The claims of the Americans to be indemnified for the captures made under our Orders in Council, was relinquished; and the *status quo ante bellum* was maintained by Great Britain and her Indian allies. Thus terminated a war, which far from advancing the interests, or even flattering the pride of the Americans, proved destructive to the one, and continually mortified the other. If the naval advantages obtained by the Americans be fairly examined, they can have no great subject for exultation, their frigates being vessels of far superior force to ours, and often manned by British sailors, rendered desperate by their situation. As to the military exploits of the Americans, Mr. Madison will find but few disposed to join him in extolling them; for their utmost exertions could not deprive England even of a remote colony, whilst their capital was obliged to submit to a British army.

During the spring of 1815, many alarming riots took place in England, the alarm

of a large class of persons being greatly excited by the bill then pending in Parliament, respecting the importation of corn: these apprehensions were, however, unfounded; and it soon became evident, that it was the true policy of a great nation to render itself, if possible, independent of other states, with respect to all articles necessary for subsistence; and that it was not only necessary to secure her own agriculturalists a fair remunerating price, but also to encourage them in extending their tillage.—The only sure way of securing a certain supply of commodity is to aim at a superabundance; and that exact economy which is both practicable and commendable in a *family*, is not perhaps strictly applicable to the subsistence of a nation.

The attention of all Europe was now directed to the Congress assembled at Vienna;—but their deliberations did not proceed with the facility which many politicians seem to have expected.

The French appeared sensibly mortified at the secondary rank to which they now seemed reduced, and regretted the downfall of a ruler who constantly gratified the

vanity of his subjects, although generally at the expense of real advantages.

The cession of Norway to *Sweden* at first excited much dissatisfaction; but that brave people having had their ancient constitution secured to them, acceded to a change which thus became merely nominal. *Denmark* obtained, as we have seen, in compensation for this loss of territory, the Swedish possessions in Pomerania; and subsequently the Duchy of Lawenberg was assigned her, which seemed sufficiently to indicate the moderation of the allied powers towards a state whose political conduct had been so temporizing and abject to the enemy of Europe.

The great losses sustained by *Russia* gave her an irresistible claim to the acquisitions she sought for in Poland, in addition to Finland, which had been previously united to her empire. The extreme difficulty experienced by the united powers of Europe, in confining France within her ancient limits, may be a sufficient evidence of the policy of acceding to the incorporation of the *Grand Duchy of Warsaw* with the Russian empire; as how-

ever much the French politicians may affect to fear from the preponderating influence of the Russians, without much precaution, more serious evils might arise to Europe from their own ascendency.

Austria has perhaps been benefited in a greater degree than any other power by the late arrangements.—She did not, it is true, recover Belgium, but she retained Milan, Venice, Saltzburg, the Tyrol, and other most valuable provinces. The Emperor now, perhaps to reconcile the Italians and Venetians to the loss of the nominal independence they had lately enjoyed, assumed the title of King of Lombardy and Venice.

Prussia had sustained great losses; and, to repair these, she sought an indemnity in the adjoining kingdom of Saxony, whose sovereign had certainly no claim to the favour of the allies. The opposition raised against this measure occasioned its abandonment, and Prussia received by no means an adequate indemnity for her Polish provinces, in several considerable, although disjointed, territories, which extended as far as the banks of the Meuse.

The interests of the house of Orange

were not forgotten on this occasion, and the Belgic provinces, which had been so long disunited, were consolidated under the government of that family, with the title of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The Pope, the Grand Duke of Tuscany, the Duke of Modena, and the King of Sardinia, were restored to their dominions. But the Genoese loudly complained of being placed under the government of the last mentioned Prince; and the Queen of Etruria protested against the inadequacy of Lucca, as an indemnity to her family for the loss of Parma, assigned to the Archduchess Maria Louisa.

Nor were the Germans satisfied with the arrangement which confirmed the *independence* of their various princes; and they regretted the nominal union and control which was consequent upon the ancient government of their extended country. The British government obtained much popularity for their supposed interference to prevent the union of Saxony with Prussia; and we find it observed on this occasion—"*Tant qu'il y aura un Parlement d'Angleterre, il y aura un tribune pour tout l'Europe.*"

Before, however, the labours of the Congress of Vienna had been completed, the astonishment of Europe was excited by the re-appearance of Buonaparte *(the sad genius of the coming storm)* on that political theatre, which it was hoped he had quitted for ever. His progress to Paris rather resembled the triumph of a legitimate prince than the return of a deposed usurper; and on the 20th of March, 1815, Louis XVIII. who had remained at his post whilst any hope remained of his cause being supported, quitted Paris, and his palace was in a few hours afterwards occupied by Buonaparte.

The treachery of Louis XVIII.'s ministers was most evident.—Educated in the school of revolution, they hated any government which had legitimacy for its basis; and Fouché, who perhaps had been admitted into the royal cabinet as much from necessity as from choice, now zealously assisted the usurpation of his former master, and declared—*that the justest of revolutions had hurled the Bourbon dynasty from the throne of France.*

The short government of Louis had

been distiguished by violent dissensions, —nice distinctions being made between *discontent* and *conspiracy*,—between *being Revolutionary*, and being *a man of the Revolution*.

Those who had attended to the progress of the Revolution concluded that the struggle would end in the ascendency of the *ultra-royalists*, (who professed their intention of preventing the King from making any concessions to the *constitutional party*, even in spite of his own wish). They argued that first the *ultra-philosophers* had the ascendency,—the Condorcets and Brissots; next the *ultra-jacobins*,—the Robespierres, Carnots, and Fouchés; then the *ultra-military despots*,—the Buonapartes, Caulincourts, and Neys; and lastly, to complete the circle, the *ultra-royalists* would have their day, which it did not seem probable they would use either with prudence or moderation.

But although Louis had fled from his capital unregretted, yet the military alone seemed to exult in the re-establishment of Buonaparte's authority; and he found himself, as the instrument of the jacobins, re-

duced to a situation which necessity alone could oblige him to endure. Buonaparte soon found by the declaration of the allied powers, that he was to be treated as *the enemy and disturber of the tranquillity of the world;* he therefore assumed a constrained tone of moderation (his motto being now "*Secura et parvula laudo*"). But Europe was not to be again deceived; and on the 25th of April, the Sovereigns of Russia, Austria, England, and Prussia, concluded an engagement to bring each a disposable force of one hundred and fifty thousand men into the field against Buonaparte, who, being aware he could not obtain the sanction of the allies to his usurpation, was busily employed in re-organizing the French army, which had been reduced by the policy of the Bourbons: and whilst he annulled all the enactments of Louis XVIII. Buonaparte had recourse to those *jacobinical means of excitement*, which he had been early trained in; but which, although they may have answered a momentary purpose, both alarmed and displeased those who recollected the early scenes of the Revolution.

The magnitude of the preparations for the effectual overthrow of Buonaparte necessarily occasioned a considerable delay: but hostilities had already commenced in Italy, where *Murat*, who appears to have acted in concert with his former master, endeavoured to raise the Italians against the Austrians; but his cause was not supported by any considerable party, and soon became perfectly hopeless. In the South of France some movements took place in favour of the Bourbons; the Duchess of Angoulême was received with much joy at Bourdeaux; but that city was soon afterwards obliged to submit to the vengeance of Buonaparte. The month of May passed like that of April, in a state of *implied war*, whilst the note of military preparation, which was heard on all sides, announced the speedy commencement of the dreadful struggle. The chief command of the principal army which approached the frontiers of France, was entrusted to the victorious Wellington, whilst Blucher possessed too generous a mind to lament being second to such a general.

Buonaparte having previously amused the Parisians with the parade of accepting

a new constitution, set out in the month of June to place himself at the head of an army composed of one hundred thousand of the best French soldiers, his intention being to attack the British army before the junction of their allies; and it must be confessed, that although the blow was long impending, it fell at last with unexampled violence.

On the 15th, Buonaparte having entered Belgium, compelled the British outposts to retreat. Next morning the contest was renewed between the French and Prussians, supported by some British troops; but although they maintained their position during the action, yet they were finally obliged to retire, and the Prussians (who had lost about sixteen thousand men) took up a position at *Wavre*; as did the British army at *Waterloo*, where they were attacked by Buonaparte early on the morning of the 18th, and during nine hours a succession of furious attacks were made on the British line, which stood immovable. Towards the close of the day a most tremendous charge was made by Buonaparte, at the head of his chosen troops, on the British guards; but the Duke of

Wellington having formed them into a hollow square, and placed himself in their centre, the enemy was repulsed, and obliged to fly with precipitation from the field of battle.—One hundred and fifty pieces of cannon were captured; whilst night only prevented the destruction of this once formidable army. On the first receipt of the intelligence that the action had commenced at Waterloo, Blucher, although confined with a contusion, did not delay in hastening to co-operate with our army.—He arrived at the moment the enemy were retreating, and following them with his usual activity, he captured a vast quantity of military stores and cannon (many of which had been removed from the French ships to supply the destruction of the late campaigns). On the 19th seven thousand prisoners were in the possession of our army, whose loss was indeed lamentably great.—In the battles of the 16th, 17th, and 18th, the loss of the British and Hanoverians was two thousand four hundred and sixty-two killed, three thousand four hundred and twenty-seven wounded, one thousand eight hundred and seventy-five missing;—the French loss was about sixty thou-

sand. The public exultation at this most decisive victory was diminished by the severe afflictions of individuals, (and you are aware of the *sad extent* of the loss which I sustained on this occasion, as well as previously in Portugal); but our departed relatives have fallen in a glorious cause,—they have died for the repose of Europe, and their memories will be cherished with perpetual admiration from *that day to the ending of the world.*

Amongst the general officers, who fell on this occasion, were the Duke of Brunswick, Sir T. Picton, and Sir W. Ponsonby. All anticipation, however, falls short of the consequences of this victory, which occasioned the abdication of Buonaparte, and which he describes as *so glorious to the French army and so fatal to France.* It was indeed a triumph, not of *arms only*, but of *freedom* over *tyranny*, and of *justice* over *oppression*;—it will be recorded as the brightest in the British annals; and it may be said to the heroes of that day, with as much truth as to any of the heroes of antiquity—

"Quæ vobis, quæ digna viri, pro talibus ausis,
Præmia posse rear solvi? Pulcherrima primum,
Dii moresque dabunt vestri."———

LETTER XXIV.

THE jacobin adherents of Buonaparte seemed to have indulged the hope that his abdication would have arrested the progress of the allied armies, and preserved the capital of France from the disgrace of being a second time occupied by foreign soldiers.—In this, however, they were deceived, for the allied armies did not for a moment delay in advancing upon Paris; and on the eighteenth day from the commencement of the campaign Louis XVIII. was again at the Thuilleries, as the allies were convinced that his restoration to the throne of his ancestors, however unpalatable it might be to a considerable part of the French nation, was yet essential to the permanent tranquillity of Europe. Protected, as he was, by such powerful allies, it was certainly a matter of astonishment, to find the King of France again confiding the management of his affairs to traitors,

and endeavouring to conciliate the troops which had so recently betrayed him. It was observed that *Fouché* (who now possessed the chief authority in France) *had forgiven the King, instead of having been obliged to supplicate pardon from his Sovereign.* This singular character, who, until 1796, was considered as a *terrorist*, was suspected, but employed by Buonaparte. Treacherous to all parties, he endeavoured to make himself necessary to all. After the battle of Waterloo, he was entrusted with the conduct of the negociations; and it is said, that when reproached with having falsely asserted to the Chamber of Deputies, that the allies *insisted* on the restoration of the King, he replied—"*Que voulez-vous de plus, le Roi n'est il pas dans son palais? C'est tout ce qu'il faut.*"

It is astonishing that those men who had been the principal actors in a revolution which had conducted so many to the scaffold, and had at last seated one of its votaries on a throne, should have so little profited by the memorable lessons of the past, and should have acted so rashly, as many of these politicians appear to have done.

The conduct of *Talleyrand* is supposed to have proceeded from that callous and immoral contempt, with which he regards humanity, considering life but as a game of chance.—Resentment to Buonaparte prompted him to place Louis on the throne, and, like another *Warwick*, he proposed to precipitate him from it should he prove ungrateful: and having before escaped so many storms, he did not seem to dread the inexperienced efforts of those who might endeavour to excite new ones.

The conduct of *Fouché* may be ascribed to different motives; he seems to have been weary of revolutions, and to have sought oblivion for the past, and security for the future. To preserve the riches he had accumulated might indeed require some treason, perjury, and bloodshed, but nothing remained in comparison of the ocean he had already waded through. He therefore determined to throw his weighty influence into the scale of the Bourbons; but being deceived by the treacherous serenity of the political horizon, he exhibited another instance that a dazzling fortune is often succeeded by the most dire reverses. The

downfall of such men proves, that however profound and artful any combinations may appear, still nothing can be *durable* which has not morality for its basis; and *Barrow* truly tells us, that in politics, not less than in religion and mathematics, the *straight* line is always to be preferred.

Louis XVIII. had now recourse to some measures of necessary severity, several military men being condemned and executed as traitors.

It appears that the celebrated Marshal *Ney* would have died with as little sense of religion as he had lived, had not a soldier (of the old French service) who had been often his companion in arms, but was now his guard, awakened in his mind some sense of his awful situation, and induced him at last to call for the consolations of religion. Those who had been brought up in the principles of the Revolution had imbibed such a fatal aversion to things *commonly respected* by mankind, that they seem to have laid aside even *common sense*, —else how can we account for their dreadful mental darkness?

The conduct of Louis was considered as

arbitrary by those who exulted in being the vassals of Buonaparte.—*Burke*, however, tells us, that "licentiousness produces the necessity of despotism, and that kings must become tyrants from *policy*, when their subjects have learned to be traitors upon principle." It is to be apprehended that it is to peace and tranquillity that the French really object, and that Louis XVIII. might yet be popular could he adopt the principles of Buonaparte.

Let us now for the last time avert to the history of Buonaparte, who having finally quitted Paris on the 30th of June, exclaimed (and I most sincerely hope with truth) "*my political life is ended.*" He declined putting himself at the head of a considerable army which was still hostile to the Bourbons, and repaired to Rochfort, whence he hoped to escape to America, (and it is said he caused several large casks to be constructed with the intention of escaping in one of them). Finding himself, however, in danger of falling into the power of Louis XVIII. and despairing of escaping the British cruisers, he surrendered himself a prisoner to Captain Mait-

land of the Bellerophon, and arrived on board that vessel off Torbay on the 24th of July.

Having formed very sanguine expectations as to the result of his application to the Prince Regent, for liberty to establish himself in England, the indignation of the Ex-Emperor was strongly expressed when informed that *St. Helena* (which he has named the Isle of Mists and Desolations) was destined to be his future abode,—a fit abode indeed for a man whose active life had been but a continual violation of the laws of society and of nations.

As perhaps you may not have met with the curious volume of *M. de Pradt*, (*" Du Congrès de Vienne,"*) I shall beg leave to cite a few of his remarks.—Speaking of his former master he describes him as " the greatest warrior, and the most powerful monarch who has appeared on earth, and his fall is, we are assured, not to be attributed to *the Coalition*, but to the *liberality* of his ideas." He proceeds to tell us the Emperor was a man of extremes, and of extremes absolutely contradictory, and that he has said of himself " *qu'il avoit*

le cœur à la tête." This contrariety of character it was, which induced him to invade France with six hundred men, and to fly from it when he might still have commanded one hundred thousand soldiers. Some have designated Buonaparte as a "*Robespierre à cheval;*" and others have called him the "*Night-mare of the world,*" the absence of which, it is presumed, will be regretted by few persons, whatever *M. de Pradt* may affirm to the contrary.

We are further informed that the manners, habits, and language of Buonaparte displayed the same contrarieties as his mind; they vacillated between majesty and meanness, and he was by fits so liberal and so sordid, that avarice and ambition each held a string of his purse. He equally envied *Alexander* his empire, and *Talma* the applause of the theatre; and his character exhibited alternately all that is most noble and most sordid in human nature, the greatest majesty of manner, and the boldest decision of command, with the most ignoble submissiveness, and the most dastardly pusillanimity.

A curious conversation is quoted between

Buonaparte and his minister, in which he is said to have asserted, that "only for one man he would have been master of the world,"—and that man was himself.

We must, however, look elsewhere for a correct delineation of Buonaparte's character, as although he may be admitted to have possessed great talents, and to have met with uncommon success, yet it may be questioned, whether the impartial historian will give him the appellation of a *great man.* His views indeed were boundless, but his feelings were certainly narrow and confined: the first passion of his soul was ambition, and the first quality of his mind audacity; but they were both controlled by a predominating selfishness.

It has been truly remarked that that restlessness of disposition which forbad the possibility of his quiescence, (for he never for a moment admitted the truth of *Staglia*'s motto, "QUIESCENDO SAPIMUS,") was at once the main spring both of his fortune and his fate. Conqueror of Italy and of Egypt, he was still unsatisfied; nor did his subsequent dignities of Consul and Emperor of France, President of the Italian Repub-

lic, King of Italy, Protector of the Confederation of the Rhine, and Mediator of Switzerland, content him. Then followed Spanish, Austrian, Prussian, and Russian wars, *Elba*, and *Waterloo*, and *St. Helena*.

Claim leads to claim, and pow'r advances pow'r,
Still to new heights his restless wishes tow'r,
Till conquest unresisted ceas'd to please,
And rights submitted left him none to seize.

Extreme agitation thus seems to have been the *nature* of Buonaparte; nor did *education* produce much alteration in his mind—indeed we find it asserted even by his advocate, *M. de Pradt*, that he was *supremely ignorant*; that he considered the usual modes of acquiring knowledge as fitted only for ordinary men, being incapable of any application which required repose, and that of the arts which he affected to protect, he knew next to nothing.

But enough has been said on this subject, —and that *state of peace* which we now happily enjoy, when contrasted with the troubles we have passed, cannot surely fail to awaken the liveliest gratitude in our

hearts to the Giver of every good and perfect gift.

The National Deputies of the French departments assembled in September 1815, and much of the future prosperity of that country must depend upon their conduct. They will have to restore that general confidence, which, during a long period, was nearly annihilated by the spies of an arbitrary power, which had closed against its subjects the most ordinary channels of information. If, indeed, the deputies rally round their King, and establish *rational liberty* on its only sure foundation, the *empire of the law,* and promote the diffusion of those moral and religious habits, so long banished from their country, France may yet be a flourishing and a happy nation; of late she has indeed appeared in the most unfavourable light; but if the genius of her sons be but *properly directed,* we need not despair of again finding some amongst them who may not disgrace the country of a *Fenelon* and a *Bossuet.*

Much indeed may be expected from the administration of the Duke of Richelieu; and those results, which could never have

been brought about by the statesmen of the Revolution, may be perhaps accomplished under a more moral agency.

The reign of misrule had so long existed in France, and the principles of that people had been so completely perverted, that the restoration, to their rightful owners, of the works of art, which had been forcibly collected at the Louvre, instead of being considered as an act of justice which every Frenchman ought to have desired to assist in performing, was deemed a subject both of regret and humiliation; and the indignation of the Parisians was at its height, when they were refused admittance into the Place Carousel during the removal of the celebrated bronze horses from the triumphal arch on which they had been placed; and they could not but feel that the remaining figure of *Victory* was no longer an appropriate decoration for their city. The vengeance of *Blücher* would have destroyed the column which recorded the victories of the French in Germany, as well as the bridge of Jena, had not the Emperor of Russia's interference been obtained to stop those proceedings.

On the 20th of November a new treaty of peace was concluded between France and the allied powers, which confirmed the treaties of the 30th of May, 1814, and of the 15th of June, 1815; and further stipulated that one hundred and fifty thousand of the troops of the allied sovereigns should remain in possession of some of the principal fortresses of France for five years, or until the sum of seven hundred millions of francs, (about twenty-five millions sterling,) should be paid the allied powers by the French government.

The *immediate* abolition of the *slave trade* was now agreed to by the French, who restored to the King of Sardinia the part of Savoy they had been formerly permitted to retain; and ceded the country of *Gex* to the canton of Geneva, that territory having formerly separated it from the rest of Switzerland. Some other inconsiderable districts were likewise relinquished by France on the frontiers of Belgium.

The independence of the republic of the Seven Ionian Islands was confirmed, and they were placed under the protection of Great Britain.

About the same time a treaty was concluded between England, Russia, Austria, and Prussia, by which the contracting parties again bound themselves to maintain the tranquillity of Europe. We must not, however, here omit to notice the *secret treaty*, or *christian alliance*, signed at Paris, by the Emperors of Austria and Russia, and the King of Prussia, which was afterwards acceded to by several other powers; and the Prince Regent of England is said to have expressed his full approbation of the principles of the contracting parties, although he could not constitutionally become a member of the alliance.

The conclusion of this treaty seemed at first to excite alarm rather than confidence; but when its principles were understood it afforded the gratifying spectacle of several Christian sovereigns, although differing in their respective religious tenets, yet binding themselves to adopt the precepts of that Gospel whose divine authority they thus emphatically and reverently acknowledged.

Thus, after a long season of war and

persecution, has religion triumphed. — "The kings of the earth have indeed stood up, and its rulers have taken counsel together;"—not, however, as heretofore, —"against the Lord, and against his anointed," but to acknowledge the authority of the Gospel, and to extend its influence "unto the uttermost parts of the earth."

But whilst strenuous exertions were making in England for the conversion of the Jews, it was painful to find they were in many parts of Europe (particularly at Lubeck) subjected to the most unjust and impolitic treatment:—their wandering condition is of itself sufficiently melancholy to excite compassion—for to treat men as if they were incapable of virtue is to force them to be vicious. The almighty Disposer of all things has in his wisdom declared them to be wanderers and outcasts, but he has not authorised their persecution; and a moment's reflection must convince those who advocate the severe treatment they have commonly experienced, (having often received the punishment of guilt, without

the actual commission of crime,) that they thus alienate them from us, instead of disposing their minds in favour of Christianity.

The great progress which education has made during the last few years encourages the hope that more liberal ideas, and more tolerant principles may ultimately prevail.

Much attention has been lately excited by the system of education introduced by *Pestalozzi,* at the Institute of *Yerdun.* My own stay at that place was not sufficiently long to enable me to understand his system completely; but a highly respected friend, who has resided for a considerable length of time under the roof of the venerable Pestalozzi, has been so fully convinced of its utility, that he has published* a short statement of the plan upon which it is founded; of which it may be observed, that *Madame de Stael* approves so highly, as to express it as her opinion that the

* This little tract, (which is only the first of a series of works on that subject,) the profits of which are intended to contribute to the furtherance of Pestalozzi's system, is published and sold by M. KEENE, *College Green, Dublin.*

nation where this system (which seems to accord with the ideas of Lord Bacon, by exciting in a peculiar degree the latent energies of the human mind,) is first generally adopted, will become the greatest and most powerful in the world.

In France much indeed remains to be accomplished in the way of improvement in education; but the erroneous principles which both promoted and perpetuated the misfortunes of that country must be first counteracted, and the nation restored to a sounder state of mind, before any really beneficial change can be effected. As yet the numerous French authors do not seem aware of the paramount duty which they owe their country,—of endeavouring to inculcate, with assiduity and perseverance, the necessity and advantages of those moral and religious impressions, almost exploded by revolutionary principles;—of attempting to convince their countrymen of the folly of placing their whole delight in military renown and false glory;—and of aiming on all occasions, not to diminish principles already relaxed, but to give confidence to virtue, and dignity to truth. The political

horizon of France is now serene, and under the mild and pacific government of Louis XVIII. the French have *leisure* afforded them, provided they have but the *inclination* to be good. But we may in vain expect any beneficial change, if the chief arbiters of the public opinion do not exert themselves to inculcate a due respect for those *essential principles*, which the sad experience of the last twenty-five years must convince us constitute the only sound basis of the happiness, both of individuals and of nations.

Let us now take our final leave of the volatile people, whose eventful story we have been so long engaged with; but not altogether without indulging the hope (however little it may seem to have been hitherto warranted) that the errors, the follies, and the dangers they have witnessed may sink deep into their hearts, producing internal happiness and tranquillity to France, as well as permanent repose to Europe.

But before I finally conclude the correspondence which you have encouraged me to trouble you with, I wish to advert

for a few moments to the state of our own country;—and many subjects of congratulation are surely to be suggested by the restoration of peace with all foreign powers,—by the late auspicious union of Her Royal Highness the Princess Charlotte of Wales with the highly estimable Prince Leopold of Saxe Coburg; as well as by the signal victory obtained by our navy over the Algerines. These are subjects which cannot fail to rejoice every well-wisher to the stability of the British government; but still, it is too evident not to be confessed, that the sudden transition from that state of war to which the nation was so long inured, to a state of profound peace, has involved us in many serious and lamentable difficulties. The landed interest has experienced great losses, the artificer and the labourer find it difficult to procure employment, and the magnitude of that debt, which has been for years accumulating, is now most severely felt by the country.

Under these difficulties, which require to be met with firmness and equanimity, many appear to have sunk, and to have adopted the most gloomy forebodings as to

our future prospects. We are assured that bankruptcy and ruin are approaching, and as assertions confidently repeated are often believed only on that account; so, on the present occasion, it is difficult to remove those impressions which confidence and perseverance only have succeeded in impressing.

If our situation be fairly considered, I trust the fallacy of these alarming statements will become evident; nor can I conceive that those persons, who have by advancing their fortunes on the national security enabled this country to preserve its own independence, and to have had the noble privilege of restoring peace to the world, have any reasonable ground to apprehend that that public faith, which has been hitherto so inviolably preserved, will be violated in the particular instance, where so many motives concur to prevent such a disgraceful proceeding.

The existing system of the poor laws is, perhaps, the most serious evil under which the people of England labour; they are alike burthensome to the land-owner, and unsatisfactory to the numerous class who

depend on them for support. These rates have, since the year 1760, increased from one million and a half to above ten millions; and it is calculated that between eleven and twelve hundred thousand persons are dependent on them.—Should this system be persevered in, the moral character of that "*peasantry,*" which has beeen so justly described as "*its country's pride,*" must be eventually destroyed. It is indeed a far easier task to point out an evil than to prescribe an efficient remedy; but surely the justice of raising the wages of the lower classes, so as to enable them to subsist their families without parochial aid (except in particular cases of age or infirmity) must be admitted, and the measure might be so adjusted as to regulate the price of labour by the price of the necessary articles of subsistence.

We have been led to hope by competent judges, that our present embarrassments are not produced by any actual *loss* or *impoverishment* of the springs and fountains of our prosperity, but rather from a sudden alteration in their course, which for a time presents a changed aspect of affairs, but

can hardly be considered as indicative of that ruin which some speculators prognosticate. The arduous contest in which we were involved is now happily terminated, and a temporary languor has succeeded our strenuous exertions; but still we should not indulge the "*Spe lentus pavidusque futuri.*"—

"For justice, liberty, and equal laws,
Their voices raise in Britain's glorious cause.
For her success enfranchis'd nations pray,
And hail of happier times the coming day."

No consideration can, however, tend in a greater degree to enable us to bear up against the difficulties under which we now labour, than a comparison of the present situation of our couutry with its state after the conclusion of the American war in 1783. The difficulties of the nation were then confessedly more alarming than those consequent upon the late peace, the public expenditure then exceeding the revenue by above two millions, and after the termination of the war, new taxes being imposed to the annual amount of nine hundred and thirty thousand pounds.

At present (1816) there is a considerable overplus of revenue beyond our expenditure, and instead of any new taxes being imposed, many have been altogether removed, and every disposition seems manifested to promote a laudable spirit of economy.

These are, certainly, strong facts; and whilst the internal energies of our system continue to preserve their vigour, an increased action will be soon communicated to all its extremities, however they may for a time be paralysed, and however assiduously those who endeavour to disturb the public tranquillity may magnify and misrepresent the causes which have led to our present difficulties.

If the war, which has just been terminated, has left us incumbrances to be discharged, it has also left us an ascertained and acknowledged capability of finally extricating ourselves from those incumbrances; and the greatness of the exertions which England has already made, may render us the more confident of her future capabilities.

After a war, destructive beyond any recorded in our annals, we are left with an

increased population; and after an expenditure of money beyond what it was even possible for us, some years ago, to have imagined or anticipated, we are still possessed of all the advantages of *public credit*, and of all the powers requisite to increase our public wealth. The progress of the British empire in the arts,—its advance in useful knowledge, and its tendency to general improvement, surely warn its inhabitants of the great debt of gratitude which they owe to the Sovereign Disposer of all events, who, whilst the Continent of Europe was convulsed with commotions, and *destruction on destruction was cried* throughout the world, yet visited us with a comparatively light affliction, and rather admonished us "*to take heed unto our ways*," through the sufferings of other nations, than by any immediate judgment upon our own land. Surely, then, if ever there existed a people who could look back upon the past with thankfulness and gratitude, and look towards the future with undiminished hope, and with increased confidence in that Providence which has hitherto so signally protected them,—it is

the people of *this United Kingdom*, "The Lord is King! the isles may be glad thereof, yea the multitude of the isles may be glad thereof."

With many thanks for the kind indulgence you have shewn me, as well as excuses for the imperfect Sketch I have here submitted to you of the Revolutionary War, believe me to remain,

Yours, &c.

FINIS.

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