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GEORGE IV.—Vol. vi. *Frontispiece.*

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THE POPULAR

HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

BY

CHARLES KNIGHT.

VOLUME VI.

FROM THE DEFENCE OF THE COUNTRY BY FOREIGN TROOPS,
1756, TO THE ASSASSINATION OF MARAT BY
CHARLOTTE CORDAY, 1793.

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POPULAR HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

CHAPTER I.

Dread of invasion.—Defence of the country by foreign troops.—French fleet at *Minorca*.—Admiral Byng.—Surrender of *St. Philip*, in *Minorca*.—Popular rage against Byng.—Commencement of the Seven Years' War.—Successes of Frederick of Prussia.—Household of George, prince of Wales.—Changes of Ministry.—Newcastle retires.—Administration of the duke of Devonshire and Mr. Pitt.—Altered tone of the king's speech.—Militia Bill.—Foreign troops sent home.—Subsidy to the king of Prussia.—Trial of Byng.—His execution.—Pitt and Legge dismissed from their employments.—National feeling.—Coalition of Newcastle and Pitt.—Affairs of India.—Black *Hold* at *Calcutta*.—*Surajah Dowlah* occupies *Calcutta*.—It is re-taken by Clive and Watson.—The battle of *Plassey*.—*Surajah Dowlah* deposed and killed.—*Meer Jaffier Subahdar* of Bengal.—Establishment of the British ascendancy in India.

IN a fortnight after his dismissal from office, Pitt, from his place in parliament, sent forth a voice whose echoes would be heard throughout the land. The nation was dreading a French invasion—sullenly trembling at the possible consequences of an assault upon the capital, and without confidence in the government to which the public defence was entrusted. Pitt seconded the motion of the Secretary of War, for an army of thirty-four thousand men, being an increase of fifteen thousand. He had wanted even a larger increase in the previous year. The king's speech of the preceding Session had lulled the nation into a fallacious dream of repose. "He wanted to call this country out of that enervate state, that twenty thousand men from France could shake it. The maxims of our government were degenerated, not our natives." An opinion had gone forth, which in 1757 was embodied in a book of extraordinary popularity, alluded to by Cowper:—

"The inestimable Estimate of Brown
Rose like a paper-kite, and charm'd the town."*

The nation was told, "We are rolling to the brink of a precipice that must destroy us." † Effeminacy, Vanity, Luxury, Rapacity

* "Table Talk."

† "Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times," ed. 1758, p. 15.

universally prevailed. Religion was despised. The principle of honour was lost or totally corrupted. The national capacity was lowered. The national spirit of defence was impaired. There were no better fighting men upon earth than the common people of England; but in the better sort there was "such a general defect in the spirit of Defence as would alarm any people who were not lost to all sense of danger." * The danger was from an outward enemy. "The French, in land armies, are far our superiors. They are making large and dreadful strides towards us in naval power. . . . Should the French possess themselves of North America, what eye can be so weak as not to see the consequence? Must not a naval power come down upon us, equal, if not superior, to our own?" † A diminished population had accompanied increasing commerce. Excess of trade and overflow of wealth had impaired our bodily strength.‡ It is easy to detect the fallacies of this course of reasoning; but there can be little doubt that the nation required to be roused from its lethargy. Happily there was a man capable of rousing it. Pitt, in his speech of the 5th of December, had expressed his earnest wish to "see that breed restored, which under our old principles had carried our glory so high." The king, on the 23rd of March, announced the probability of an invasion, and informed the Houses that he had made a requisition for a body of Hessian troops, in pursuance of the treaty recently concluded. Both Houses acknowledged with gratitude his majesty's care for the national defence. On the 29th of March, Mr. Fox moved, "that an humble Address be presented to his majesty, that, for the more effectual defence of this island, and for the better security of the religion and liberties of his subjects, against the threatened attacks by a foreign enemy, he would be graciously pleased to order twelve battalions of his electoral troops, together with the usual detachment of artillery, to be forthwith brought into this kingdom." The Address was voted by the large ministerial majority; but not without strong dissatisfaction. That State alone, exclaimed Pitt, is a sovereign State, "quis suis stat viribus, non alieno pendet arbitrio —which stands by its own strength, not by the help of another country. The Hanoverians and Hessians came, and were encamped in various parts of the kingdom. Yet the common people of England were ready to deserve the eulogium of Brown as to their capacity for fighting. They enlisted freely, when called upon. Hogarth's print of the recruit who wanted to add "a cubit to his stature" is an evidence of this disposition.

* "Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times," ed. 1758, p. 89.

† *Ibid.*, p. 144.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 189.

For half a century Great Britain had held possession of the island of Minorca, which general Stanhope and admiral Leake had conquered during the palmy time of the War of the Succession. Port-Mahon, the best harbour of the Mediterranean, was thought a more important British possession even than Gibraltar. The English ministers had received intimation very early in the spring of 1756, that a formidable expedition was in preparation at Toulon, not provisioned for a long voyage. They shut their eyes to the exposed state of the island that lay within a few days' sail from the shores of Provence. The defence of Port-Mahon was entrusted to a small garrison, commanded by an aged and infirm general. The government was at last alarmed. They dispatched admiral Byng (son of lord Torrington, the admiral Byng of queen Anne's time,) with ten ships, from Spithead, on the 7th of April. On the 10th of April, the French fleet, of twelve ships of the line, sailed from Toulon, with transports, having sixteen thousand troops on board. They were off the coast of Minorca on the 18th, and began to disembark at the port of Ciudadella. The only chance of defence against such an armament was in the strong castle of St. Philip. General Blakeney got together between two and three thousand troops, the officers of the English regiments being, for the most part, absent; and he prepared for resistance. The natural and artificial strength of the fortress prevented the French from proceeding in the siege without much cautious delay. On the 19th of May admiral Byng's fleet, having been joined by two more men-of-war, arrived within a view of St. Philip, whilst the batteries of the French were carrying on their fire against the fort, where the flag of England was still flying. Byng, who had touched at Gibraltar, had written home to explain that he could obtain no necessaries at that station; that the place was so neglected that he was unable to clean the foul ships with which he had sailed from England; and that if he had been sent earlier he might have been able to have prevented the landing of the French in Minorca, whereas it was now very doubtful whether any good could arise from an attempt to reinforce the garrison. This was something like an anticipation of failure, with an indication of the neglect which made success difficult. On the 21st of May, De la Galissonnière, the French admiral, bore down upon the British fleet. Byng did not engage with that alacrity which the naval traditions of our country point out as the first duty of an admiral, even with a doubtful advantage. Rear-admiral West, on the contrary, with his portion of the squadron, had attacked with impetuosity, and had driven some of the French vessels out of their line of battle. Byng was scarcely en-

gaged, except at the beginning of the action, when his own ship; being damaged in the rigging, became for a short time unmanageable. He hesitated about advancing, for fear of breaking his line. De la Galissonnière leisurely retired. Byng called a council of war; represented that he was inferior to the enemy in number of men and weight of metal, and proposed to return to Gibraltar. The council agreed to the proposal. The admiral sent home his dispatches; and on the 16th of June, sir Edward Hawke and admiral Saunders were ordered to supersede Byng and his second in command. The unfortunate admiral was taken home under arrest; and was committed as a prisoner to an apartment in Greenwich Hospital. Admiral West was received with favour at St. James's. After a defence as resolute as it was possible to make against an overwhelming force, St. Philip was surrendered, after an assault on the 27th of June headed by the duke de Richelieu. The garrison marched out with the honours of war, and were conveyed to Gibraltar. A tempest of popular fury had arisen, such as had rarely been witnessed in England. The news of Byng's return to Gibraltar, without having attempted to relieve the garrison in St. Philip, first came to London through the French admiral's dispatch to his government. "It is necessary," says Walpole, "to be well acquainted with the disposition of a free, proud, fickle, and violent people, before one can conceive the indignation occasioned by this intelligence." * But when Byng's own dispatch came, in which he assumed the triumphant tone of a man who had done his duty, his effigy was burnt in all the great towns. Every ballad-singer had a ditty in which he was execrated. When he arrived at Portsmouth he was saved with difficulty from being torn in pieces by the mob. A chap-book related "A Rueful Story, by a broken-hearted sailor." A coarse print exhibited Byng hanging in chains. A medal was struck, having a figure of the admiral, with the inscription. "Was Minorca sold for French gold?" Addresses went up to the throne from London, and from almost every county and city, calling for inquiry and signal punishment. To the Address of the City, the king was made to pledge his royal word that he would save no delinquent from justice. Newcastle, "with a volubility of timorous folly, when a deputation from the City had made representations to him against the admiral, blurted out, 'Oh! indeed he shall be tried immediately—he shall be hanged directly.'" † The fate of the unhappy man was not determined until the spring of the following year.

In closing the Session of Parliament on the 27th of May, the

* "Memoirs of the Reign of George II.," vol. ii. p. 215.

† *Ibid.*, p. 230.

king announced that the injuries his subjects had sustained from the French having been followed by the invasion of Minorca, which had been guaranteed to the British crown by all the great powers of Europe, he had formally declared war against France. Important changes had taken place since, in the previous summer, the king had negotiated for a subsidy to Russia, to protect his Hanoverian possessions against the probable attacks of Prussia. George II. and Frederick II. were not exactly fitted for any cordial friendship. They had been fighting on opposite sides for eight years in the war of the Austrian Succession. George took the side of Maria Theresa, and—to use the words of Mr. Carlyle—“needed to begin by assuring his parliament and newspapers, profoundly dark on the matter, that Frederick was a robber and villain for taking the other side.” * Frederick cared little for what parliaments or newspapers might say of him. Perhaps to those who have followed his last historian in tracing the origin of the claims upon Silesia, he may be thought to have had justice upon his side—that sort of justice which encourages sovereigns to imperil the happiness of millions for the assertion of personal rights. The war of the Succession came to an end, and Frederick got Silesia guaranteed to him. Beyond the public differences of George and Frederick, the Prussian king had indulged his unhappy talent of sarcasm; and his sharp sayings about his Britannic majesty were not easily to be forgiven. But the time was come when they became politically necessary to each other. A treaty was concluded at Westminster on the 16th January, 1756, by which the king of Great Britain and the king of Prussia, fearing that the peace of Europe might be disturbed in consequence of the disputes in America, entered upon a convention of neutrality, by which they were each bound not to suffer any foreign troops to enter Germany, and their several dominions were reciprocally guaranteed. The scheme of subsidizing Russia was thus renounced. Some old money differences were at the same time adjusted. This treaty was not submitted to Parliament till the close of 1756. In the meantime the terrible contest known as the Seven Year's War had commenced. The loss of Silesia was the one great grief of Maria Theresa. From the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle her dominant thought, which almost became a ruling passion, was the hope of its recovery. If France could be induced to take part with Austria,—if each could forget the hatreds of two centuries,—Prussia would return to her old insignificance in the affairs of Europe. The ridicule which king George felt it politic to overlook in his satirical nephew, rankled in the heart of the

* “Friedrich II.,” vol. i. p. 15.

real ruler of France, Madame de Pompadour. Louis XV. had himself writhed under this hornet's sting. The profligate Bourbon resolved to make common cause with Maria Theresa. The Czarina Elizabeth of Russia joined the coalition, with a similar sense of personal affronts. Augustus, king of Poland and elector of Saxony, and the king of Sweden, entered into the same concert. The king of Prussia saw that his enemies were gathering on every side, and that his sole friend was England.

Frederick, at the commencement of the Seven Years' War, was in his forty-fourth year. He had enjoyed ten years of repose since the peace of Dresden in 1746, during which period, by his wisdom as a financier, and his strictness as a military disciplinarian, he was prepared to go to war with a full treasury and a well trained army. His will was law amongst his five millions of subjects; and, except in his military code, he was a merciful and just despot. Arbitrary sovereigns, with eager troops waiting upon their nod, are not retarded in their movements by the hesitations of counsellors, or the scruples of parliaments. Sir Andrew Mitchell, the English envoy at Berlin, was endeavouring to dissuade Frederick from immediate hostilities. "What, sir!" exclaimed the king. "What do you see in my face? Was my nose made, do you think, to receive fillips?"* Frederick had demanded an explanation of her views from the empress of Austria, and had received no specific answer. He would not receive an answer, he had said, "in the style of an oracle." He was perfectly informed of the confederacy against himself, and he resolved to anticipate its hostile movements. Towards the end of August, he whispered Mitchell, who was at a court supper, to come to him at three o'clock the next morning. Frederick carried the envoy to his camp, and told him, "there were a hundred thousand men setting out that instant, they knew not whither; and bade him write to his master, that he was going to defend his majesty's dominions and his own."† To the most feeble of his antagonists, the elector of Saxony and king of Poland, Frederick allowed no breathing time. He was in possession of Dresden on the 10th of September. The Saxon army was in the fortified camp of Pirna,—a position which Frederick deemed impregnable, and therefore was contented to blockade it. He called himself Protector of Saxony, but in truth was its conqueror. Yet, although helping himself to the military stores of the arsenals, and dealing with public money as if it were his own, he exhibited one species of moderation which the conqueror of the next great period

* "Frederick the Great and his Times," edited by Thomas Campbell, vol. ii. p. 426.

† Walpole— "Memoirs of George II.," vol. ii. p. 240.

of European warfare had the self-denial to imitate at Dresden, whatever was his plunder of other cities. Frederick visited the famous picture-gallery. The director of the gallery trembled, as he saw the master of the capital, and of all its treasures, pause before some of the great works of art which were the pride of the electorate. In his imagination, the *Madonna di San Sisto* of Raffaele, the *Notte* of Correggio, were destined to be packed off to Berlin. "Sir," said Frederick to the director, "I suppose I may be permitted to have copies." The king of Prussia was not so moderate or courteous when his greater interests were concerned. It was important that he should obtain possession of the State Papers which would prove the designs of the confederacy against him. Augustus was at the camp of Pirna. Maria Josepha of Austria, his consort, was at Dresden. The spirited lady refused to give them up, except by force; and, according to some accounts, sat upon the trunk in which they were contained, which had been carried to her bed-chamber;—according to other accounts, placed her back against the door of the muniment-room in which they were. The Prussian commandant of Dresden did obtain them by force. The discourtesy was long remembered to Frederick's disadvantage; but by the publication of these papers, he showed to Europe that in striking the first blow against the coalesced powers he was justified by the necessity of self-preservation. The military operations which followed secured to him Saxony. An Austrian army, commanded by marshal Browne, was advancing from Bohemia. Frederick left the camp of Pirna to be dealt with by prince Ferdinand; and, with a force of twenty-five thousand men, defeated the Austrian army of forty thousand, in the plain of Losowitz. This battle, which was most severely contested, took place on the 1st of October. Frederick returned to Dresden. The Saxon army in Pirna, strictly blockaded, had only the prospect of famine or of surrender. They surrendered unconditionally. Some of these seventeen thousand men were compelled, and some were persuaded, to enter into the Prussian service. The elector retired to Warsaw; and Frederick went into winter quarters in the capital of the country that had, in a few months, been reduced to the condition of an enslaved province.

On the 4th of June, 1756, George, prince of Wales, completed his eighteenth year,—the period determined by the Regency Act as that of his majority in case his grandfather had been dead. The king wished to give the prince a separate establishment, with an allowance of 40,000*l.* a year, thus removing him from the control of the Princess Dowager. The young prince entreated the

king not to separate him from his mother, although he was deeply grateful for the proposed royal bounty. They were both anxious that lord Bute should be Groom of the Stole in the new Household. Lord Waldegrave relates that he was present at a Cabinet Council, for the consideration of this appointment; when the Chancellor, lord Hardwicke, said "he would not give credit to some very extraordinary reports; but that many sober and respectable persons would think it indecent." * The court scandal, which Walpole dwells upon with peculiar gusto, continued some time after prince George came to the throne, and was one of the misfortunes of the early part of his reign. Bute, in spite of the "extraordinary reports"—which are now held by most unprejudiced inquirers to have had their origin in party virulence and vulgar credulity—was appointed to the office in the Household, very reluctantly on the part of the king. In this influential position, the favourite of the heir apparent, he had considerable participation in the politics of the time. One curious example of the mode in which lord Bute kept the future before the view of great parliamentary leaders, may be seen in a passage of a letter to Mr. Pitt, during that first short time of his power, which we shall have presently to notice: "I am certain the firm support and countenance of *him* who is some day to reap the fruits of my friend's unwearied endeavours for the public safety, would make him perfectly easy under the frowns of prejudiced, deluded, fluctuating men." †

Mr. Fox had held the seals of Secretary of State about ten months, during which period a heavy burden of obloquy had to be borne by the ministry. In October, 1756, he resigned his office. He probably was justified in abandoning his colleagues to the approaching censures of parliament in regard to measures of which he had been allowed no direction. The popular indignation about the loss of Minorca was taking a new direction. In September, "the whole city of Westminster was disturbed by the song of a hundred ballad-singers, the burthen of which was, 'to the block with Newcastle, and the yard-arm with Byng.'" ‡ In October, "Poor Byng is the phrase in every mouth, and then comes the hackneyed simile of the Scapegoat." § The resignation of the Secretary of State was a sudden blow to Newcastle, "who meant that Fox should have continued in a responsible office; with a double portion of dangers and abuse, but without any share of

* "Memoirs," p. 67.

† "Chatham Correspondence," March 2, 1757, vol. i. p. 223.

‡ Potter to Grenville—"Grenville Papers," vol. i. p. 172.

§ Wilkes to Grenville, *Ibid.*, p. 176.

power.”* The prime minister was left without any support in the House of Commons. Murray, the Attorney-General, insisted upon being appointed Lord Chief Justice, a vacancy having occurred by the death of Sir Dudley Ryder. Newcastle offered the great lawyer the choice of sinecures of fabulous amount—a pension—any terms, if he would remain in the House of Commons. Murray was immoveable, and, to the enduring advantage of the nation, became Chief Justice, and lord Mansfield. Pitt stood alone without a rival,—“no orator to oppose him, who had courage even to look him in the face.”† Newcastle, in his extremity, induced the king to consent that an overture should be made to the awful Commoner. Pitt refused to treat, saying that “a plain man, unpractised in the policy of a court, could never be the associate of so experienced a minister.”‡ The unhappy duke went about exploring this nobleman and that commoner to take the seals. “No man would stand in the gap,” says Waldegrave. At last Newcastle himself resigned. “Perfidy, after thirty years, had an intermission,” writes Walpole. Lord Hardwicke, the learned and able Chancellor, who desired retirement, followed his old friend. A coalition was proposed between Fox and Pitt, which Pitt refused to agree to. At last, in November, the duke of Devonshire was appointed First Commissioner of the Treasury; Pitt, Secretary of State; his brother-in-law, Temple, at the head of the Admiralty; Legge, Chancellor of the Exchequer.

On the 2nd of December, the Parliament was opened with a Speech from the Throne, “which,” says lord Waldegrave, “by its style and substance, appeared to be the work of a new speech-maker.” Never was a vital change of policy more boldly indicated. It declared that the succour and preservation of America “demand resolutions of vigour and dispatch.” That, for a firm defence at home, “a national militia may in time become one good resource.” “Relying with pleasure on the spirit and zeal of my people,” said the king, “the body of my electoral troops, which I ordered hither at the desire of my Parliament, I have directed to return to my dominions in Germany.” Finally, his majesty said, “Unprosperous events of war in the Mediterranean have drawn from my subjects signal proofs how dearly they tender my honour and that of my crown.” To recommend a militia, which his majesty had always ridiculed; to trust to the British people for the defence of their country, instead of trusting to the Hessians and Hanoverians; to call uncourtly addresses and popular clamour signal proofs of affection—these were indeed evidences of a new speech-maker.

* Waldegrave, “Memoirs,” p. 82.

† *Ibid.*

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

The king, says Waldegrave, "in common conversation made a frank declaration of his real sentiments." A spurious Speech had been circulated in town and country. This production was burnt by the common hangman, and the printer was ordered to be prosecuted. George, who sometimes displayed a quaint sarcastic humour, "hoped the man's punishment would be of the mildest sort, because he had read both speeches, and, as far as he understood either of them, he liked the spurious speech better than his own." *

The electoral troops were sent home. A Militia Bill was now passed, although a similar Bill had been rejected in the previous Session. Under this Act thirty-two thousand men were to be called out in England and Wales. The measure was received with popular approbation, until it began to interfere with individual ease and freedom. The Protestant dissenters in London and the provinces remonstrated against the possible insertion of a clause in the Bill that the militia might be exercised on Sundays; but the notion, although it did not appear to excite any displeasure amongst the clergy of the established church, was very wisely given up. Reinforcements were sent to the earl of Loudoun, who now commanded in America. The regular army had been increased to 45,000 men; and Pitt, at this time, adopted the politic suggestion made by Duncan Forbes in 1738, that the Highlanders should be enlisted in the service of the State, instead of being prompted to disaffection by needy chiefs. Two Highland regiments were raised, the command of one being given to Simon Fraser, son of lord Lovat; of the other to Archibald Montgomery, brother of lord Eglinton. Twenty years afterwards, in one of his great speeches, in which Chatham urged conciliation towards "our brethren in America," he looked back upon the success of this first measure of his bold statesmanship: "I remember, after an unnatural rebellion had been extinguished in the northern parts of this island, that I employed these very rebels in the service and defence of their country. They were reclaimed by this means; they fought our battles; they cheerfully bled in defence of those liberties which they attempted to overthrow but a few years before." † As the war minister of George II., Mr. Pitt had to modify some of his former opinions with regard to continental alliances. He brought down a message from the king on the 17th of February, to ask from his faithful Commons that they would assist his majesty in maintaining an army of observation to protect his electoral dominions, and

* Waldegrave, "Memoirs," p. 89.

† Thackeray—"History of William Pitt," jun., vol. ii. p. 339.

to fulfil his engagements with his good ally the king of Prussia. This was the first day that Pitt had entered the House of Commons since his accession to office. His appearance there had been delayed by continued illness. He followed this demonstration of his individual opinions, by moving a grant of 200,000*l.* in compliance with the message. Fox twitted his rival with a saying of the previous year, that "German measures would be a mill-stone about the neck of the minister." Yet Pitt was not inconsistent in proposing this measure. He had told lord Hardwicke, in September, 1755, that "he thought that regard ought to be had to Hanover, if it should be attacked on our account."* Lord Mahon has very justly defended Pitt against the sneer of Fox. "The French were preparing to invade the Electorate, not from any injury, real or pretended, which the Electorate had done them, but notoriously and avowedly as a side-blow against George II.,—as a retaliation for the measures which his majesty had adopted in British America." † Hanover was about to be attacked on our account. Walpole, with reference to the Prussian subsidy, bitterly remarks, "One cannot say which was most ridiculous,—the richest prince in Europe [Frederick] begging alms for his own country, or the great foe of that country [George] becoming its mendicant almoner." ‡ Frederick of Prussia commissioned the British envoy to express his thanks to Mr. Pitt for his speech of the 18th of February; and to inform him that he regarded the resolutions of Parliament as the strongest assurances that can be given of the favourable and friendly disposition of the British nation towards him. Pitt, in his reply, expressed his "sentiments of veneration and zeal for a prince, who stands the unshaken bulwark of Europe, against the most powerful and malignant confederacy that ever yet has threatened the independence of mankind." §

Amongst the difficult questions which the recently formed Administration had to deal with, was that of the fate of admiral Byng. A Court-Martial upon the unfortunate officer commenced at Portsmouth on the 28th of December. In every town and village through which the admiral was conveyed from Greenwich, escorted by horse-guards, he was insulted by the populace. The trial lasted till nearly the end of January. Before the close of the proceedings, the Court-Martial had submitted a question to the Admiralty—whether they were at liberty to mitigate the 12th Article of War, which was in these words: "Every person in the

* Doddington—"Diary," Sept. 2, 1755.

† History, vol. iv. p. 196.

‡ "Memoirs of George II.," vol. ii. p. 314.

§ "Chatham Correspondence," vol. i. p. 224 and p. 226.

fleet, who through cowardice, negligence, or disaffection, shall, in time of action, withdraw or keep back, or not come into the fight or engagement, or shall not do his utmost to take or destroy every ship which it shall be his duty to engage, and to assist and relieve all and every of his majesty's ships, or those of his allies, which it shall be his duty to assist and relieve, every such person so offending, and being convicted thereof by the sentence of a court-martial, shall suffer death." The Admiralty returned for answer that the Court could not modify the Article of War. The unanimous verdict was, that admiral Byng had not come under that Article by treachery or disaffection; but that he had not done his utmost to relieve the castle of St. Philip, or to defeat the French fleet; and he was therefore adjudged to be shot to death. But the Court also agreed to recommend the admiral to the mercy of the Crown. Byng, rejoiced at being acquitted of cowardice, heard his sentence with composure. It was perhaps difficult for the Crown to exercise its prerogative of mercy, amidst the popular clamour for the execution of the sentence. "Pitt and lord Temple," says Waldegrave, were desirous to save Byng; "but to avoid the odium of protecting a man who had been hanged in effigy in every town in England, they wanted the king to pardon him without their seeming to interfere." The king, he adds, "not choosing to be their dupe, obliged them to pull off the mask, and the sentence against the admiral was not carried into execution till, by their behaviour in Parliament, they had given public proof of their partiality." It is a singular commendation of the king, that he wished to damage his ministers by exhibiting them opposed to a popular cry. They had the House of Commons with them, in their desire for mercy. Pitt told this to his sovereign. "Sir," said George, "you have taught me to look for the sense of my subjects in another place than the House of Commons." Every effort to save Byng was made in vain. His execution was delayed, whilst a Bill passed the Commons to absolve the members of the Court-Martial from their oath of secrecy, as it was alleged that they had something of importance to say with regard to their sentence. The Bill was sent to the Upper House. But the law lords, Hardwicke and Mansfield, having examined all the members of the Court-Martial upon oath, and finding that they could not declare their knowledge of anything which had passed previous to the sentence which would show it to be unjust, or of any undue practice or motive to influence the sentence, the Bill was rejected. The 14th of March was fixed for the execution of admiral Byng. He was shot on the quarter-deck of the *Monarque*, in which he had been confined; and to the last

he displayed a calmness and resolution which were sufficient of themselves to exonerate him from the charge that, in his neglect of his duty, he had acted from a want of that courage which is the most essential, as it is the commonest, attribute of every sailor and every soldier, whatever rank he may hold in the service of his country.

At the beginning of April, 1757, Pitt, Temple, and Legge, were suddenly dismissed from their high offices. The nation could not understand this. One feeling, however, prevailed—that these ministers had laboured to benefit the nation, and that pitiful court intrigues had been too powerful for them. Smollett, whose “Continuation” of his History was nearly contemporaneous, speaks very vaguely of “the old junto,” who had “found the new associates very unfit for their purposes.” The Memoirs of the earl of Waldegrave, which were not published till 1821, throw light upon the proceedings of the royal closet. In February this nobleman saw the king; who expressed his dislike to Pitt and Temple in very strong terms. The Secretary, his majesty said, made him long speeches, which might be very fine, but were above his comprehension. Temple was pert, sometimes insolent, and when he meant to be civil was troublesome. “Go to Newcastle,” said George; “tell him I do not look upon myself as a king whilst I am in the hands of these scoundrels; that I am determined to get rid of them at any rate; that I expect his assistance, and that he may depend on my favour and protection.” Newcastle was quite ready to second the king’s wishes; but he thought it more prudent to get the supplies first, and obtain an acquittal of himself and his colleagues of 1756, under the Inquiry pending in Parliament.* The duke of Cumberland, Waldegrave says, pressed the king very strongly that Pitt and Temple should be turned out without further deliberation; and that a new Administration should be formed, before he went to Hanover to take the command of the electoral forces. To depend on Pitt for supplies; to have the popularity of Pitt ravish half his laurels, if fortune should once smile upon him,—were apprehensions, as Walpole alleges, which made the duke urge his royal father to take such a perilous step. When the dismissal of the ministers was known, without any official delinquency or public misfortune being made a charge against them, the voice of the nation was expressed in the most unequivocal manner. Pitt and Legge received the freedom of London from the Common Council, presented in gold boxes. A dozen corporations of great cities followed the example. “It rained gold boxes,”

* Waldegrave, “Memoirs,” p. 96.

says Walpole. Pitt kept very quiet. He took no decided part in the Inquiry about Minorca, which resulted, not in a vote of approbation or a vote of censure, but in a long recapitulation of the circumstances, ending in declaring that no more ships and no more troops could have been sent on that service. Twelve weeks were now spent in negotiations for the formation of a government. Newcastle was sent for. The duke, dreading Pitt's popularity, wished to coalesce with him. Pitt would not accept office, without the entire direction of the war. Newcastle then told the king, under a solemn promise, that he would have nothing to do with so intractable a man. The old scheme of Newcastle and "his footmen," as the king termed the duke's ministerial dependents, was then resorted to. That would not answer; and Newcastle and Pitt were brought together again, by the mediation of lord Chesterfield and lord Bute. The king was enraged that Pitt had once more been applied to, under the violation of Newcastle's pledge. George then tried his own hand at making a ministry; and proposed to associate his personal friend, lord Waldegrave, with Mr. Fox. Lord Holderness, one of the Secretaries of State, and the remaining powerful body of the Newcastle "footmen,"—powerful in their votes, if not in their abilities,—threatened to resign. There was no resource. Pitt saw that if his magnificent boast, "I am sure that I can save this country, and that nobody else can,"—if that grand ambition was to be realized,—he must not trust alone to oratory or popularity; he must command parliamentary support. Newcastle could bring that capital into a political partnership. The king had no choice. He empowered lord Hardwicke to negotiate with Newcastle and Pitt. The eloquent Commoner again became Secretary of State upon his own terms. The influential duke returned to the head of the Treasury, without any real power in the direction of the great affairs of the nation, at a memorable crisis in its fate. On the 29th of June, commenced what is emphatically termed "Mr. Pitt's Administration." It mattered not to contemporaries or to posterity, who was First Lord of the Treasury, or who presided over the Admiralty, or who was Commander-in-chief. It was "Mr. Pitt's Administration."

From the Midsummer of 1756 to the Midsummer of 1757, whilst England was lying under the dread of foreign invasion; calling for vengeance on those who had lost Minorca; distracted by political rivalries,—events were taking place in the most distant settlement of the East India Company, of which the nation had no instant cognizance, but which were as important to its future destiny as the changes to be produced by the altered character of its government.

There first came, slowly travelling for months from the Ganges to the Thames, the news of a terrible atrocity of oriental despotism, which filled every heart with grief and indignation. Six months later the report came of a swift retribution, inflicted by the hero of Arcot; and six months after that, the great intelligence arrived, that a victory had been won—the victory of Plassey, which raised the British merchant-settlers of India into the condition of conquerors and dictators, and laid the foundation of an empire which can scarcely be contemplated by us at this day without a mixed feeling of awe and pride. The fearful tragedy known as that of the Black Hole of Calcutta took place on the 20th of June, 1756, after the city had been taken by the Subahdar of Bengal. Calcutta was retaken by Clive on the 2nd of January, 1757. The battle of Plassey was won by Clive on the 23rd of June of the same year. We must briefly relate these consecutive events.

The rulers of Bengal, Orissa, and Bahar, called Subahdars, or Nabobs, professed to hold allegiance to the Great Mogul, but really exercised all the powers of sovereignty. They dwelt at their capital city of Moorshedabad. In April, 1756, Surajah Dowlah, a cruel, debauched, and ignorant boy of nineteen, succeeded his grandfather as the lord of these vast provinces. He coveted the wealth which he imagined was accumulated in the British factory of Calcutta; and he marched from Moorshedabad to Fort William with a great army. The governor, and the English captain in command, escaped in terror, and left the defence of the factory to the servants of the Company. The Subahdar having bombarded the fort for two days, further resistance was unavailing. Mr. Holwell, a civil officer of the Company, who had been chosen to act as a commander during the two days of their defence, was called before the despot. He was dissatisfied to have found only fifty thousand rupees as his prize; but he assured Mr. Holwell that the lives of himself and of his fellow-prisoners should be spared. There were a hundred and forty-five men and one woman, of this devoted company. They were to be secured for the night in a dungeon of the fort. Into that den, eighteen feet by fourteen, with two small windows, were these hundred and forty-six adults forced by the ferocious guard that the tyrant had set over them; and the door was closed. Mr. Holwell spoke from the window to an old officer, who appeared to have some human pity, promising a reward of a thousand rupees if a portion of the prisoners by his influence could be removed to another room. The officer went to make his humane attempt. He returned to say that the Nabob was asleep, and could not be disturbed. Of that night of horror, the relation given

by Mr. Holwell is one of the most powerful narratives of the extremity of suffering which was ever penned.* The expedient of the prisoners to obtain more room and air, some sitting down never to rise again, through their companions falling upon them; the calling out to the guard to fire and relieve them from their misery; the raging thirst; the delirium; the stupefaction; the many dead trampled upon by the few living,—these are horrors without a parallel in history or fiction. An order for the release of the prisoners came from the Subahdar at six o'clock in the morning. One hundred and twenty-three had been released by death. The English lady survived, to endure the harder fate of being consigned to the haram of the Subahdar. Surajah Dowlah called for Mr. Holwell. Unable to stand, he was borne before the despot, who exhibited no remorse for the acts of his murderous guards. All he talked of was buried treasure. He sent Mr. Holwell and two of the chiefs of the factory to his capital as prisoners; the others were set at liberty. Fort William was occupied by a Mohammedan garrison of three thousand men; and the victor returned to Moorshedabad, and decreed that, in honour of his triumph, Calcutta should be called by the name which signified the Port of God.

Colonel Clive, upon his return to India, had co-operated with admiral Watson, who was in command of a British squadron off Bombay, to effect the destruction of a formidable body of pirates, who issued from their fortified headland of Gheriah, to the terror of every merchant vessel on the Indian Ocean. This stronghold was taken without much effort. Clive returned to his command as governor of Fort St. David, in June. It was not till August that the news of the terrible occurrences at Calcutta reached Madras. Admiral Watson was at anchor in the roads. Clive was sent for by the Presidency, and the command of an expedition was offered to him. There was a struggle about the claims of a senior officer, who thought that his rank, whatever was his inexperience of Indian warfare, ought to outweigh the deference paid to a young man who had captured and defended Arcot, and won the great victory of Arnee. The Presidency were firm; and so was the jealous colonel Adlercron. The Council of Madras gave the command to Clive. The colonel, who had the control of the king's stores, refused him the royal artillery. With nine hundred Europeans—which number included the 39th regiment,—that regiment which, after many glorious campaigns, proudly bears on its colours the suggestive inscription, "Primus in Indis,"—the armament set sail. The winds

* Printed first in the "Annual Register" for 1753.

were contrary. Two months elapsed before they entered the Hooghly. Calcutta was taken on the 2nd of January, with little trouble. At the head of forty thousand men, Surajah Dowlah marched from Moorshedabad, and encamped near Fort William. Clive went forth to a night attack upon the camp, but retired, after some loss, having been embarrassed by a thick fog. Yet the Subahdar, terrified by this exhibition of prowess sought to conclude a peace with the English, and yielded to every condition that was proposed for the future security of Calcutta. There was no satisfaction for the murders of the 20th of June. Clive even consented to a treaty of alliance with this miscreant. The honest admiral refused to sign this agreement. The Calcutta merchants had pressed it upon Clive, as they thought the alliance would enable them to get rid of the rival French station at Chandernagore. The Subahdar gave a doubtful answer to their proposal to attack this settlement, which Clive interpreted as an assent. The French were overpowered, and surrendered their fort. Surajah Dowlah was now indignant against his recent allies; and sought the friendship of the French officers. Clive, called by the natives "the daring in war," was also the most adroit, and,—for the truth cannot be disguised,—the most unscrupulous in policy. The English resident at the Court of Moorshedabad, under Clive's instructions, encouraged a conspiracy to depose the Subahdar, and to raise his general, Meer Jaffier, to the supreme power. A Hindoo of great wealth and influence, Omichund, engaged in this conspiracy. After it had proceeded so far as to become the subject of a treaty between a select Committee at Calcutta and Meer Jaffier, Omichund demanded that a condition should be inserted in that treaty to pay him thirty lacs of rupees as a reward for his service. The merchants at Calcutta desired the largest share of any donation from Meer Jaffier, as a consideration for themselves, and were by no means willing that three hundred thousand pounds should go to a crafty Hindoo. Clive suggested an expedient to secure Omichund's fidelity, and yet not to comply with his demands—to have two treaties drawn; a real one on red paper, a fictitious one on white. The white treaty was to be shown to Omichund, and he was to see with his own eyes that he had been properly cared for. Clive and the Committee signed this; as well as the red treaty, which was to go to Meer Jaffier. Admiral Watson refused to sign the treacherous document. On the 19th of May, 1773, Clive stood up in his place in the House of Commons, to defend himself upon this charge against him, amongst other accusations. He boldly acknowledged that the stratagem of the two treaties was his invention;—that admiral Watson did not

sign it; but that he should have thought himself authorised to sign for him in consequence of a conversation; that the person who did sign thought he had sufficient authority for so doing. "He [Clive] forged admiral Watson's name," says lord Macaulay. Clive thus defended his conduct: "The treaty was immediately sent to Omichund, who did not suspect the stratagem. The event took place, and success attended it. The House, I am fully persuaded, will agree with me, that when the very existence of the Company was at stake, and the lives of these people [the conspirators] so precariously situated, and so certain to be destroyed, it was a matter of true policy and justice to deceive such a villain."* The courage, the perseverance, the unconquerable energy of Clive have furnished examples to many in India who have emulated his true glory. Thank God, the innate integrity of the British character has, for the most part, preserved us from such exhibitions of "true policy and justice."

The English resident, Mr. Watts, left Moorshedabad. Clive wrote a letter of defiance to Surajah Dowlah, and marched towards his capital. The Subahdar had come forth from his city, as populous as the London of a century ago, to annihilate the paltry army of a thousand English, and their two thousand Sepoys disciplined by English officers, who dared to encounter his sixty thousand. He reached the village of Plassey with all the panoply of original warfare. His artillery alone appeared sufficient to sweep away those who brought only eight field pieces and two howitzers to meet his fifty heavy guns. Each gun was drawn by forty yoke of oxen; and a trained elephant was behind each gun to urge it over rough ground or up steep ascents. Meer Jaffier had not performed his promise to join the English with a division of the Subahdar's army. It was a time of terrible anxiety with the English commander. Should he venture to give battle without the aid of a native force? He submitted his doubt to a Council of War. Twelve officers, himself amongst the number, voted for delay. Seven voted for instant action. Clive reviewed the arguments on each side, and finally cast away his doubts. He determined to fight, without which departure from the opinion of the majority, he afterwards said, the English would never have been masters of Bengal. On the 22nd of June, his little army marched fifteen miles, passed the Hooghly, and at one o'clock of the morning of the 23rd rested under the mangoe-trees of Plassey. As the day broke, the vast legions of the Subahdar,—fifteen thousand cavalry, forty-five thousand infantry,—some armed with muskets, some with

* "Parliamentary History," vol. xvii. col. 873.

bows and arrows, began to surround the mangoe-grove and the hunting-lodge where Clive had watched through the night. There was a cannonade for several hours. The great guns of Surajah Dowlah did little execution. The small field-pieces of Clive were well served. One of the chief Mohammedan leaders having fallen, disorder ensued, and the Subahdar was advised to retreat. He himself fled upon a swift camel to Moorshedabad. When the British forces began to pursue, the victory became complete. Meer Jaffier joined the conquerors the next day. Surajah Dowlah did not consider himself safe in his capital; and he preferred to seek the protection of a French detachment at Patna. He escaped from his palace disguised; ascended the Ganges in a small boat; and fancied himself secure. A peasant whose ears he had cut off recognised his oppressor, and with some soldiers brought him back to Moorshedabad. In his presence-chamber now sat Meer Jaffier, to whose knees the wretched youth crawled for mercy. That night Surajah Dowlah was murdered in his prison, by the orders of Meer Jaffier's son, a boy as blood-thirsty as himself. At the installation of Meer Jaffier, as Subahdar of Bengal, Clive conducted him to the seat of honour. His gratitude was not withheld from those who had raised him to his power. Under the treaty made before the battle of Plassey, large concessions were to be made to the Presidency of Calcutta; and money amounting to two millions and three-quarters sterling was now granted as a payment to the fleet, the troops, and the Committee, by whose agency this revolution was effected. Clive was content with something under three hundred thousand pounds. He subsequently declared in the House of Commons, that when he walked through the Treasury at Moorshedabad, and saw gold and silver and jewels piled up to the right and the left, he might have helped himself to what he pleased. He added, with an oath, "at this moment do I stand astonished at my own moderation." When Omichund was denied his expected gratuity, and was told of the disgraceful fraud that had been practised upon him, he fainted, and was carried home, to exhibit during the small remainder of his days, an impaired intellect, and to die a broken-hearted idiot.

A statue of Clive has recently been erected in Whitehall. It is highly characteristic of a man of strong will and undaunted courage—"not a man to do anything by halves." Macaulay uses this phrase in speaking of Clive's participation in the fraud and forgery by which Omichund was deceived. But this determination to do nothing by halves, though it betrayed Clive into a dishonourable action, made him a "heaven-born general," as Pitt called

him. His wondrous energy led him, after he had placed Meer Jaffier on the throne of Bengal, never to rest until the ascendancy of the English Company in that province was supreme, undisturbed by French or Dutch rivalry. Exactly a year after the battle of Plassey, a Commission arrived at Bengal from London, remodelling the Presidency, and not including Clive in the nomination of officers. The news of the great victory had not reached the India House when the Court of Directors thus threw a slight upon the only man who could preserve their ascendancy. But the members of the Presidency at Bengal had the good sense to request Clive to take the government upon himself. By his exertions, and through his example, the French were gradually driven from every stronghold; and in six months after the accession of George III. not a vestige of the supremacy which Dupleix and Bussy and Lally had won for them, remained in the peninsula.

CHAPTER II.

The Administration.—Pitt's sole conduct of the war and of foreign affairs.—Frederick's second campaign.—Victory of Prague.—Defeat at Kolin.—Failure at Rochefort.—Convention of Closter-Seven.—Failure of expedition against Louisbourg.—Riots about the Militia Act.—Frederick's victory of Rosbach.—Subsidy to Prussia.—Cherbourg taken, and its works demolished.—St. Maloes.—Operations on the African coast.—Successful expedition against Louisbourg.—The turning point in Pitt's Administration.—Frederick's third campaign.—Zorndorf.—Hochkirchen.—Wolfe appointed to command an expedition to Quebec.—The battle of Minden.—Canada.—Operations in North America.—Wolfe in the St. Lawrence.—His desponding letter.—Heights of Abraham.—Death of Wolfe.—Quebec surrendered.—Hawke's victory in Quiberon Bay.—Death of George the Second.

THE appointments of several of Mr. Pitt's political friends to high offices, in the final arrangement of the Administration, excited no surprise. Earl Temple became Lord Privy Seal, and Mr. Legge, Chancellor of the Exchequer. But the re-appointment of lord Anson to the Admiralty—unpopular as he was, abused as he had been by those who were now to be his associates—was regarded as “a most surprising phenomenon.”* He had been himself a wretched administrator—“an incapable object,” as Walpole terms him. It is stated that Pitt took effectual means to neutralize Anson's incapacity. He stipulated with the king that the correspondence with naval commanders should be in his own hands, and that the Board of Admiralty should sign the dispatches without reading them.† Doubtful as this statement may appear, it is unquestionable that Pitt, from the hour of his triumphant return to that post which involved the whole conduct of foreign affairs and of the war, determined that no coadjutor should interfere with his plans. The prospect before him was not very brilliant. The nation was committed to its alliance with Frederick II. ; and at the very moment when the new ministry had entered upon their duties, came the news of a great disaster—“the reversal of all the king of Prussia's triumphs.”‡ Frederick had commenced his second campaign at the end of April. Even in the days of Marlborough, Europe had not seen such a vast array of mighty armies moving in every direction—Austrians, troops of the Empire, French, Swedes—four hundred and thirty thousand men gathering together to crush the prince of a small German state, who had only a hun-

* Waldegrave—“Memoirs,” p. 155.

† Thackeray—“Life of Chatham,” vol. i. p. 293. ‡ Walpole to Mann, July 3.

dred and fifty thousand men in the field to encounter this overwhelming allied force. The Russians in the campaign of 1757 were merely committing ravages in the provinces beyond the Vistula. The English and Hanoverian army, commanded by the duke of Cumberland, was relied upon to prevent the French attacking Prussia. There were vast odds against the success of Frederick, according to ordinary calculations. The great writer and statesman, Edmund Burke, who at this time influenced public opinion, not from his place in Parliament but from Messrs. Dodsley's shop in Pall-Mall, thus describes the one resource that enabled Frederick "to sustain the violence of so many shocks"—his vast powers of mind: "His astonishing economy, the incomparable order of his finances, the discipline of his armies beyond all praise, a sagacity that foresaw everything, a constancy that no labour could subdue, a courage that no danger could dismay, an intuitive glance that catches the decisive moment—all these seemed to form a sort of balance to the vast weight against him, turned the wishes of his friends into hopes, and made them depend upon resources that are not within the power of calculation."* At the opening of this campaign Frederick saw that he should first have to encounter Austria. He marched from Saxony into Bohemia by four different mountain passes; purposing to unite his detachments in the environs of Prague. Before this city the Austrian marshal, Browne, was encamped, in a position almost impregnable. Frederick waited for his gallant companion-in-arms, marshal Schwerin, to join him; and then, on the 6th of May, he fought one of the most sanguinary battles on record. The conflict lasted eleven hours; the Prussians losing eighteen thousand men, and the Austrians twenty-four thousand. The brave old marshal fell, leading his regiment, which had given way, to the thick of the battle, waving the national standard of the black eagle which he had snatched from an ensign. The Austrian commander, marshal Browne, was also mortally wounded. The king displayed that personal intrepidity which never failed him after his first battle of Molwitz. His victory was complete. Prague was then bombarded, and for three weeks did its unfortunate inhabitants endure the horrors of war, with more than its usual calamities. Twelve thousand famished victims, whose houses had been destroyed, were turned out of the gates of Prague, that more food might be left to its defenders. They were driven back again by the un pitying Prussians. The city resolutely held out.

* "Annual Register" for 1758—the first of the series. There is no more spirited, or, in the main, more correct narrative of this eventful period, than in the annual miscellany which the genius of Burke at once raised to a high reputation.

A great division of the Austrian army under marshal Daun was advancing for its relief. On the 17th of June, Frederick fought the battle of Kolin, with an inadequate force; and he was defeated with the loss of thirteen thousand men. Six times did he lead his cavalry to the charge against the Austrian position. He was advancing the seventh time, with only forty men, when an English officer said to him, "Is your majesty going to storm the battery by yourself?" He at last ordered the retreat; and riding off alone, he was found seated by the side of a well, drawing figures in the sand with his stick. The siege of Prague was raised; and the Prussians hastily marched out of Bohemia.

Under this great reverse of their one ally, the English government turned its attention to naval enterprises. Something, indeed, might be expected from the army under the duke of Cumberland; and a great success on the coast of France would raise the spirits of the people, who were lamenting over the fatal day of Kolin. Such an enterprise would operate as an important diversion of the French from the war in Germany. An expedition was sent out, in September, under the command of sir Edward Hawke and sir John Mordaunt. Sixteen ships of the line and ten regiments of foot were destined for an attack on the great arsenal of Rochefort. The French coast was without many troops for its defence. Louis XV., when he heard of the arrival of an English armament at the mouth of the Charente, was fully convinced that Rochefort would fall. The fortified island of Aix was attacked by captain Howe, who anchored his ship within fifty yards of the fort, and after an hour silenced the French batteries. General Conway took possession of the citadel.* After a week spent in councils of war, it was agreed that the expedition should return home. Mordaunt and Hawke were at issue. The general required to be assured by the admiral, that if any mishap occurred in the attack upon Rochefort, such arrangements could be made as would allow the troops to re-embark. Hawke said, that must depend upon wind and weather. We have a letter of general Conway, in which he writes to his brother about "resolutions and irresolutions." . . . "I am sorry to say that I think, on the whole, we make a pitiful figure in not attempting anything. . . . For the only time of my life I dread to come back to England." † Colonel Wolfe, when these miserable discussions were going on between the commanders, said, that if they would give him three ships and five hundred men he would take Rochefort. Pitt, when he wanted such a soldier,

* Captain Rodney's Letter of Sept. 23, in "Grenville Papers."

† MS. collection of "Conway's Letters."

did not forget Wolfe. Mordaunt was acquitted by a court-martial. Other evil tidings had travelled to England, thick and fast. The news had come that the duke de Richelieu had compelled the duke of Cumberland, after a series of retreats, to leave Hanover to the mercy of the French; and being pursued to Stade, he had agreed to a capitulation, known as the Convention of Closter-Seven; under which all his Hessians and Brunswickers were to be disbanded, and all his Hanoverians were to be sent into various cantonments. The duke was insulted by his father when he came home, and resigned his post as commander-in-chief. George had turned his back upon his favourite son when they first met, and said aloud, "He has ruined me and disgraced himself." The indignation of the English people was extreme. They associated in their minds the retreat from Rochefort, and the surrender at Stade, as the result of some treachery or court intrigue. "The people will not be persuaded that this pacific disposition [at Rochefort] was not a preliminary for the convention of Stade."* The public discontent was at its height when the intelligence arrived that lord Loudoun, having the command of a force of twelve thousand men, furnished by large reinforcements from home, had shrunk from attacking Louisbourg; and that admiral Holbourne, the naval commander, hesitated about imperilling his squadron of eighteen ships of the line in an attack upon the French squadron of nineteen ships of the line. When this account came, Horace Walpole might well write, "It is time for England to slip her cables, and float away into some unknown ocean."† To crown the misfortunes of the first three months of Pitt's administration, there were serious disturbances in various parts of the country about the Militia Act, which came into operation at that time. The people were persuaded that, when enrolled, they were liable to be draughted into the king's forces and be sent abroad. It was in vain to urge the precise words of the Statute. Yeomen, farmers, and labourers were obstinately incredulous; and in some places the timid magistrates were obliged to postpone their meetings for enrolling men, to prevent the violence which the ignorant multitudes threatened. Such were the blessings produced by the want of publicity for parliamentary proceedings; and by the utter deficiency of ability in the conductors of provincial newspapers to treat any social question as a matter for elucidation."‡ Their local "Accidents and Offences,"

* Potter to Pitt—"Chatham Correspondence," vol. i. p. 277.

† Letter to Mann, Sept. 3.

‡ Mr. Edward Baines in the *Life of his father*, says—speaking of the Leeds paper which for half a century has held so distinguished a place amongst Journals—"Up to the year 1801, the 'Mercury,' like almost every other provincial paper, had no editorial comments whatever."

the appointment of the parish beadle, or the marriage of the squire's daughter, constituted their notion of public instruction.

At the end of October, Pitt wrote to Grenville, "The king of Prussia keeps the field, and his cause is still alive. An event or two may yet change the gloomy prospect. Immense expense I see is unavoidable, and the heavier load of national dishonour threatens to sink us with double weight of misfortune."* An event did come which did change the gloomy prospect. On the 15th of November Pitt wrote to Grenville, "The king of Prussia has gained a complete victory over the prince de Soubise, near Weisenfels in Saxony." † Wondrous change of fortune, produced by the unshaken constancy of one man surrounded by dangers on every side. The Russians were desolating Frederick's eastern provinces. Silesia was filled with Austrians. He was under the ban of the Empire, every German State being forbidden to give him aid. A letter published in the English papers at the end of August, says, "many persons who saw the king of Prussia, when he passed lately through Leipsic, cannot express how much he is altered. They say he is so much worn away that they scarce knew him." ‡ The final catastrophe—a ruin as complete as that of Charles the Twelfth at Pultowa—seemed fast approaching. The prince de Soubise, with an army of forty thousand French, and twenty thousand troops of the Empire, was encamped near Mucheln. Frederick, with twenty-two thousand of his Prussians, had marched to encounter this unequal force. After some changes of position on either side, on the 5th of November, Soubise was suddenly attacked, when he thought that the king was retreating. Never was victory more complete than in this short battle of Rosbach. It was one universal rout. The French and the Imperial troops vied with each other in the swiftness of their flight. They left seven thousand prisoners, guns, colours, baggage—all that could manifest the extent of their humiliation. Before the battle, Soubise had sent a dispatch to Louis to announce that he might be expected soon to arrive in Paris with the king of Prussia as his captive. The French officers looked upon the little Prussian army, and laughed at the presumption of Monsieur le Marquis de Brandenburg. Frederick indulged himself, as was his custom whether victorious or defeated, by writing some very indifferent occasional verses to bid farewell to the runaway French. He then turned to real business. He would recover Silesia before the approaching winter should prevent any military operations. By forced marches he reached the neighbour-

* "Grenville Papers," vol. i. p. 227.

† *Ibid.*, p. 229.

‡ "Annual Register," 1758, p. 20.

hood of Breslau. Here prince Charles of Lorraine was at the head of an army of Austrians, exceeding sixty thousand men. They met at the village of Leuthen, near the woods of Lissa, on the 5th of December; and thus this greatest of Frederick's battles is known by either name. This was no sudden rout like that of Rosbach. The Austrians fought bravely; but the genius of the Prussian leader gave him a mighty victory, which Napoleon said was of itself sufficient to place Frederick in the rank of the greatest generals. When this wonderful campaign shall come to be described by a historian equal to the theme, we may perhaps understand the meaning of the words, "there were great kings before Napoleon." The writer to whom this task is allotted, has briefly told us what he thinks of Rosbach and Leuthen: "Austerlitz and Wagram shot away more gunpowder—gunpowder probably in the proportion of ten to one, or a hundred to one; but neither of them was tenth-part such a beating to your enemy as that of Rosbach, brought about by strategic art, human ingenuity, and intrepidity, and the loss of four hundred and seventy-eight men. Leuthen too, the battle of Leuthen (though so few English readers ever heard of it) may very well hold up its head beside any victory gained by Napoleon or another. For the odds were not far from three to one; the soldiers were of not far from equal quality; and only the General was consummately superior, and the defeat a destruction."* The English people of 1757 did know something of Rosbach and of Leuthen. They forgot their own national misfortunes and disgraces in the triumphs of their great ally, the king of Prussia. "All England has kept his birth-day," writes Walpole. "The people, I believe, begin to think that Prussia is some part of Old England."

The defeat of the French at Rosbach led the king of England to refuse to ratify the Convention of Closter-Seven. "Some trifling infractions of the neutrality on the part of the French," according to Walpole, "were pretended to cover this notorious breach of faith." † Others hold that these "trifling infractions of the neutrality" consisted in the grossest cruelties and extortions exercised by the French on the Electorate. Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick, a distinguished officer in the Prussian army, was recommended by Frederick to assume the command of the Hanoverian troops, who were thus freed to take part in the campaign of 1758. The Session of the English Parliament was opened on the 1st of December. The king recommended that his "good brother and ally," the king

* Carlyle—"Friedrich II." vol. i. p. 10.

† "Memoirs of George II.," vol. iii. p. 81.

of Prussia, "should receive all the support which his magnanimity deserved." A subsidy of £670,000 was voted, with only one dissentient voice. His majesty by a message announced that the army formed in his electoral dominions was "to be put again into motion" to act in concert with the king of Prussia; and a present supply for the payment of that army was asked, in consideration of "the exhausted and ruined state of the Electorate." £100,000 was immediately voted. The votes for supplies amounted to ten millions. Pitt rarely went to the House of Commons, being laid up with the gout; but whether confined to his chair or his bed, he issued his orders for the manning of fleets or the movement of armies, in every quarter of the globe. Some of his plans were successful; others were failures. He had not yet trodden down the system under which family connections and parliamentary influences were the paramount considerations in the choice of generals and admirals to command expeditions. Early in the Session Pitt had hurled his thunderbolts against lord Loudoun, who, he said, might have recovered affairs in America if he had not loitered from the 9th of July to the 5th of August, inquiring whether or no the French force was superior. "Our ill success has hurt my quiet and tainted my health." He had again to bear a repetition of ineffectual proceedings on the French coast, imputed by some to his want of knowledge of the defences of the place to be attacked—St. Maloes. An armament sailed on the 1st of June. The fleet was commanded by lord Anson; the troops by the duke of Marlborough. At St. Maloes a landing was effected without opposition. A number of small vessels were burnt, and then the soldiers re-embarked. "The French learned," writes Walpole, "that they were not to be conquered by every duke of Marlborough."* The success, such as it was, was called by Mr. Fox "breaking windows with guineas." On the 8th of August, Cherbourg was taken without opposition; its forts and basin were destroyed, with its hundred and seventy iron guns. Its brass guns were brought to the Tower of London. From Cherbourg, the same expedition proceeded to make another attempt upon St. Maloes. The place was found too strong for assault; and the English troops, who were in a wretched state of discipline, disgraced themselves by their excesses as they wandered about in the district. A large French force was coming down upon them. All was hurry to rejoin the ships in the bay of St. Cas; but the rear-guard of fifteen hundred men was cut off, and a thousand were killed or made prisoners. There needed some decided success to counteract the influence of these misfortunes.

* "Memoirs of George II.," vol iii. p. 185.

The French were dispossessed of their settlements on the African coast. An expedition sent against Fort Louis, on the Senegal river—a project suggested to Pitt by Thomas Camming, a commercial Quaker, who hoped that the French might be deprived of their monopoly of the gun trade without shedding a drop of blood. He went with the expedition, and Fort Louis was taken without slaughter. Goree surrendered to a stronger armament, but not without many broadsides from our ships, which showed Pitt's "good and worthy Friend," as the minister addressed him, that gentle warfare was not a possible thing. There were greater conquests in America. Pitt had not only publicly censured the earl of Loudoun; he did what was more effectual—he recalled him. He now chose his commanders, not by seniority, but by their reputation for ability. General Amherst was dispatched to take the command of the troops, with Wolfe as his second in seniority, with the rank of brigadier-general. Admiral Boscawen was to command the fleet. There were now an admiral and a general who would co-operate. On the 2nd of June a fleet of a hundred and fifty ships, bearing twelve thousand troops, appeared off Louisbourg. The soldiers were conveyed to the shore in boats; and Wolfe was the first to jump into the surf, and lead his men to the attack of the French who were drawn up to oppose their landing. The defences were very strong; and it was nearly the end of July before Louisbourg capitulated, with nearly six thousand prisoners of war. Cape Breton once more formed a part of our dominions. The French fleet in the harbour was utterly destroyed. Throughout England there was universal exultation. This great success was regarded as a proof that the nation was beginning to reap the fruit of vigorous councils. This was the turning point in Mr. Pitt's administration. There came disasters. This boldest of war ministers had a vast scheme of operations, each portion of which had reference to some ultimate object. He was already looking to the conquest of Québec, and proposed to general Abercrombie to reduce the French forts on the borders of Lake George and Lake Champlain. An attack upon Ticonderago, a strong fort, was repulsed by the marquis de Montcalm, an experienced French general, with a loss to the British regiments and the American militia of two thousand killed and wounded. In a previous skirmish, lord Howe, who appears to have been "what every man in arms should wish to be," fell at the head of his regiment. The American campaign was concluded by the surrender to the British of fort Duquesne, the original cause of the war. Its name was changed to Pittsburg.

In this year, whilst prince Ferdinand kept the French in check,

Frederick, on the 25th of August, fought the great battle of Zorn-dorf, near Frankfort-on-the-Oder, in which he defeated the Russians with a fearful slaughter. To show the short step from the sublime to the ridiculous, Walpole writes :—" Well ! the king of Prussia is found again—where do you think ? only in Poland, up to the chin in Russians. Was ever such a man ! He was riding home from Olmutz ; they ran and told him of an army of Muscovites, as you would of a covey of partridges ; he galloped thither and shot them." * The smart letter-writer then speaks of the extreme popularity in England of the great Fritz : " The lowest of the people are perfectly acquainted with him ; as I was walking by the river the other night, a bargeman asked me for something to drink the king of Prussia's health." A large portion of the English public,—a portion somewhat above the bargemen on the Thames and the alehouse keepers who set up the head of " the Protestant hero" as their sign—looked with intense interest upon the man who had fought six pitched battles in one year, and, undepressed by failure as he was calm under success, was still fighting for his little kingdom against a host of enemies. They looked with wonder upon the versatility and unconquerable gaiety of this most extraordinary of kings, who gave Europe a poem when he had no materials for a gazette. His poems, translated well or indifferently, unequal as their originals, found their way into popular Miscellanies. When he, in his Epistle to Voltaire, talked of " the insipid farce of tedious state"—" the fickle multitude's caress"—" the thorny pomp of scepter'd care"—critics might believe that there was the affectation of philosophy in all this ; but the general sympathy would acknowledge that Frederick did not claim more for himself than he was entitled to, when he said that he must be,—

" to face the tempest's rage,
In thought, in life, and death, a King." †

He had need of fortitude. He was triumphant over the Russians in August. In October he was surprised by the Austrians in his camp, in a combined operation of general Daun and general Laudohn. As the church clock of Hochkirchen struck five, on a cold and foggy morning of October, Frederick was awakened with the news that his batteries were stormed ; and that a hostile army was in the centre of his camp. His presence of mind saved his troops from complete destruction ; but after fighting five hours he was obliged to abandon his tents, his baggage, and his artillery. He halted about half a league from the field of battle ; but he had

* Letter to Mann, Sept. 9.

† This translation is in the " Annual Register," for 1758.

brought off his men in such good order that the Austrians did not dare again to attack him. The great loss on that day was marshal Keith.

The Parliament met on the 23rd of November. "It is all harmony," says Walpole, "and thinks of nothing but giving away twelve more millions." The lavishness of Pitt has been objected against him; but it must be borne in mind that there can be no greater waste than results from the false economy of what Wellington called "a little war." The official mode of looking at a war-expenditure is thus described, with reference to the period when Pitt entered upon his ministerial career. "The heavy debt of the nation served as an excuse to those who understood nothing but little temporary expedients to preach up our impossibility of making an effectual stand. They were willing to trust that France would be so good as to ruin us by inches."* But Pitt took other means to rescue the nation from its ignoble lethargy and its slow decay, than the common lavishness even of weak ministers. He infused his own energetic spirit into every one whom he entrusted with the execution of his plans. In choosing men for military command, he passed over the ancient formalists "who had grown old on a very small portion of experience." He wanted men who would not shrink from difficulties. On the 22nd of September, 1758, a letter was addressed to the minister by the youthful general who had first leapt into the surf at Louisbourg. Wolfe had returned home in ill health. He was then in his thirty-third year. He informed Mr. Pitt that he had no objection to serve in America, and particularly in the river St. Lawrence, if any operations were to be carried on there. He asked only a little time to recover the injury done to his constitution, that he might be "the better able to go through the business of the next summer." † Pitt at once promoted Wolfe to the rank of major-general, and gave him the command of the projected expedition to Quebec. Lord Mahon has related, upon private authority, a most interesting anecdote of circumstances attending the last interview between the minister and the young soldier to whom he had entrusted so heavy a responsibility. Pitt invited Wolfe to dinner, lord Temple being the only other guest. "As the evening advanced, Wolfe—heated, perhaps, by his own aspiring thoughts, and the unwonted society of statesmen—broke forth into a strain of gasconade and bravado. He drew his sword, he rapped the table with it, he flourished it round the room, he talked of the mighty things which that

* Walpole—"Memoirs of George II.," vol. iii. p. 173.

† "Chatham Correspondence," vol. i. p. 370.

sword was to achieve. The two ministers sat aghast at an exhibition so unusual from any man of real sense and real spirit." * Was there not some other exciting cause than Wolfe's own aspiring thoughts?—some inspiration beyond the ordinary sober talk in the society of statesmen? It is well known that Pitt would harangue in other places than in parliament. He harangued George II. He harangued every one to whom he gave important instructions. It has been said that no officer went into his presence to receive his commands without coming out a bolder man. According to a joke at the court of Louis XV., he so frightened Bussy, the French envoy, by his declamation, that the terrified negotiator jumped out of the window. The bravado of Wolfe might be the almost unconscious tribute of an impulsive nature to the warlike eloquence of Pitt.

The year 1759 is one of the most memorable years in the annals of Britain. On the colours of our 12th, 20th, 23rd, 25th, 37th, and 51st regiments are inscribed the name of "Minden." At the great battle of Minden, on the 1st of August, prince Ferdinand defeated the French generals the duke de Broglie, and the mareschal de Contades, who commanded a force very superior to that of the Hanoverians and English. In the preceding April, Ferdinand had been compelled to retreat before these generals, after having been defeated at Bergen. The electorate of Hanover seemed again ready to be a prey to the rapacity of the French, when another like the duke de Richelieu might build a palace out of its spoils. But the skilful tactics of Ferdinand stood between the French and their expected conquest. Cassel, Munster, and Minden were in their possession. A small detachment of the Hanoverians and English appeared before Minden, exposed, as it appeared to the French officers, to inevitable destruction. De Broglie marched out from his strong position to surround them; when the whole allied army was seen, drawn up in order of battle. De Contades then joined him; and the two, with their cavalry, made repeated attacks upon the solid English and Hanoverian infantry. Again and again they were driven back; and at length the French generals commanded a retreat. The cavalry, under lord George Sackville, had not been engaged. Ferdinand sent him orders to charge the French before they could rally. Sackville would not understand the messages brought to him by three aides-de-camp, two of whom were English. The opportunity was lost for the entire rout of the enemy; although the victory was complete, as far as it went. That evening, the Englishman whom his countrymen were to brand as a

* "History," vol. iv. p. 228.

coward, appeared at Ferdinand's table. Surprise was expressed at the marvellous audacity. In the General Orders issued the next morning, in which the troops and some distinguished officers received the thanks of their commander, the name of Sackville was not mentioned; and the marquis of Granby, the second in command, was referred to as one who, if he had been at the head of the cavalry, would have made the decision of that day more complete and brilliant. Lord George begged to return home and to resign his command. He came to England; was deprived of all his offices; and being tried by court-martial in the following year, was found guilty of disobeying prince Ferdinand's orders, and was declared unfit to serve in any military capacity. The haughty and ambitious man, in despite of public contempt, made his way to civil employment in the next reign. But in spite of Sackville, Minden was a British triumph. Other triumphs succeeded. The French were preparing for our invasion. Pitt sent admiral Rodney to destroy their gunboats in the port of Havre, which service was effectually accomplished. Brest was blockaded. Admiral Boscawen on the 17th of August defeated a French fleet in the bay of Lagos on its way from Toulon to assist in the operations in the Channel. Guadaloupe had capitulated to an English armament in May that was employed in attacks upon the French West India Islands.

The French colony of Canada, in 1759, contained forty thousand souls. Lower Canada, or Canada East, was occupied almost exclusively by the French settlers, who had been established there since 1608, on the spot now occupied by the city of Quebec. The Red Indians ranging over the vast surface of unoccupied country were, for the most part, in friendship with the French, and assisted them, as we have seen, in their inroads upon the British North American colonists. Two millions of civilized men, whether of French or of British descent, incorporated into a great people, now inhabit that fine country of Canada; and, through the sure effect of the wise measures of the imperial government, however tardy, are amongst the most attached of British colonists, sending their surplus population to add to the home defence of the State which they honour. The marquis de Montcalm, in 1759, commanded the French troops in Canada—a brave and honourable man, untainted with the profligacy of the court of Louis XV. The plans of Mr. Pitt for the campaign in America were of a wide but comprehensive character. There were three armaments. Two of these had a field of operations calculated to attain partial advantages in themselves, but intended to combine in one great undertaking. In

the middle of July, a body of the American militia, and of Indians in amity with them, commenced the siege of Niagara, a strong fort on that river, near the Falls. Six hundred men defended the place. A large force, chiefly of Indians, approached to the relief of the garrison; and during the battle which ensued, the Indian war-whoop was heard above the cataract's roar,—a singular contrast to many European battles in which the thunder-clap has mingled with the boom of the gun. The garrison capitulated; and the fall of Niagara was numbered amongst the triumphs of that year. General Amherst had succeeded to the command held by general Abercrombie, who had failed, not without incurring blame, in his attack upon the fortress of Ticonderoga in 1758. In July, Amherst reduced this stronghold, the French retreating to another fort on Lake Champlain, called Crown Point. This place was also secured. But at the upper end of the lake the French had taken up a strong position. The English general had to build boats before he could attempt to dislodge them. He had been instructed, after securing the navigation on Lake Champlain, to march along the river Richelieu, and combine his operations with those of Wolfe on the St. Lawrence. Amherst embarked on Lake Champlain. He was driven back by storms; and then came the winter. Wolfe, with eight thousand men, had sailed in a fleet commanded by admiral Saunders; and by the aid of some charts of the river which had been taken on board a French vessel, the difficult passage of the St. Lawrence was accomplished. On the 27th of July, the small British army landed on the Isle of Orleans, opposite Quebec, where they found abundance to recruit them after their long voyage.

The highest hopes of the English people attended the progress of these operations in North America. The force sent out was large. There was confidence in the skill and bravery of the commanders. On the 14th of October there arrived in London a letter addressed by Wolfe to the earl of Holderness, one of the Secretaries of State, which appeared to annihilate every hope; as did a letter addressed to Mr. Pitt. On the 16th Walpole writes: "Two days ago came letters from Wolfe, despairing, as much as heroes can despair." The letter to Holderness, dated on the 9th of September, "On board the Sutherland, at anchor off Cape Rouge," is singularly interesting; written with great care, and with the solemnity of a brave man who feels that he is likely to fail in doing the State service. Quebec, he says, he could have taken, if Montcalm had shut himself up in the town; "but he has a numerous body of armed men, and the strongest country, per-

haps, in the world to rest the defence of the town and colony upon." He had attacked their entrenchments on the 31st of July; but accidents prevented the success of the attempt; and the post had been so strengthened that another attempt would be too hazardous. The English fleet blocks up the river, but can give no assistance in an attack upon the Canadian army. The heat of the weather, and great fatigue, had thrown him into a fever, and he had begged the generals to consider what was best to be done. They recommended that a considerable corps should be conveyed into the upper river, to draw the enemy from their inaccessible situation, and bring them to an action. "I agreed," he says, "to the proposal; and we are now here with about three thousand six hundred men, waiting an opportunity to attack them, when and wherever they can best be got at." The fleet of transports had carried the army, reduced to this small number, up the St. Lawrence, several miles above Quebec, where they disembarked. "So far recovered as to do business," he waited "an opportunity to attack." Genius makes its own opportunities. The Heights of Abraham form a continuation of the steep ridge of rocks on which Quebec is built—an almost natural barrier against any assaults from troops landing near the city. It was one o'clock in the morning of the 13th of September when the little band were crowded into boats, to float down the broad river with the flowing tide. In darkness and in silence they embarked. Wolfe, who had the poetical element in his composition, repeated in a low voice to his brother officers as they sat in the boat the famous poem which he had retained in his memory—Gray's "Elegy in a Country Churchyard."* They reached a little inlet about two miles above Quebec, now called "Wolfe's Cove." They landed at the foot of a cliff, with one narrow path which led up to a wide table-land. The men struggled up with the aid of boughs and stumps of trees, or clinging to projections in the rock. Foremost amongst those who scaled the cliff was one of the new Highland regiments. A French picquet fired and fled. The height was gained. The troops formed in line; and anxiously waited for another detachment which the boats had gone back to bring. When the day broke a compact army stood, as if brought thither by magic, on the high-ground at the back of Quebec. Montcalm would not believe the intelligence. He saw with his own eyes; and then led his troops

* Strange as this may seem in such a moment of anxiety, it was the relief from the weight of an overwhelming thought; such as Shakspeare has exhibited when he makes Cinna and Casca discuss where the coming day was to break, in the interval that preceded the resolve that Cæsar should die.



DEATH OF WOLFE. — Vol. vi. 46.

forth from their entrenchments. "If I must fight, I will crush them," he said; and prepared for battle.

Wolfe had disposed his little force with admirable judgment. Montcalm was advancing with French and Canadian regiments intermingled, whilst his Indian allies were detached to outflank the British on their left. This left wing was commanded by brigadier-general Townshend, whilst Wolfe was with the right wing, where the hottest work was expected. He had ordered his men not to fire till the enemy came within forty yards. Montcalm's troops had fired as they advanced, and Wolfe had received a shot in his wrist. He bound the wound with his handkerchief. The volley of the British stopped the advance. Wolfe headed his grenadiers to the charge, when another shot struck him in a vital part. Still he issued his orders and pressed on. A third ball hit him in the breast. He fell, and was carried to the rear. His eyes were growing dim as he looked upon the battle. He sank on the ground, when an officer near him exclaimed "They run." The dying man raised himself on his elbow, and asked "Who run?" "The enemy, the enemy." "I am satisfied," said Wolfe. The second in command, general Monkton, had also fallen. General Townshend completed the victory. The brave Montcalm was mortally wounded, and being carried into the city died the next day. Quebec capitulated on the 18th of September.* The hearts of the people were probably never more stirred than by Wolfe's gloomy dispatch of the 9th of September, followed by the intelligence of the capture of Quebec, and of the death of Wolfe, which arrived three days later. "They despaired, they triumphed, and they wept." † The popular admiration of Wolfe was not a passing sentiment. A quarter of a century afterwards, when Cowper published his "Task," it was

"praise enough

To fill the ambition of a private man,
That Chatham's language was his mother tongue,
And Wolfe's great name compatriot with his own.

Parliament was opened by commission on the 13th of November. Peace was talked of; but it was urged that such supplies should be given, as would enable his majesty "to sustain and press, with effect, all our extensive operations against the enemy." In the course of the Session fifteen millions and a half was voted for Supplies—an enormous sum by comparison with the estimates of previous years of war. Pitt on the 20th moved that a public mon-

* An obelisk, erected in the gardens attached to the Government House bears on one side the name of "Wolfe," on the other that of "Montcalm."

† Walpole—"Memoirs," vol. iii. p. 219.

ument should be erected to the memory of general Wolfe. He moved also the thanks of the House to the generals and admirals, "whose merit," he said, "had equalled those who have beaten Armadas—'May I anticipate?' cried he, 'those who *will* beat Armadas.'"* At the hour at which Pitt used this remarkable expression, a naval battle was being fought, which made his anticipation look like some mysterious sympathy which outran the ordinary means of intelligence—the "shadows before" which a sanguine mind sees in "coming events." Admiral Hawke was driven by the equinoctial gales from his blockade of Brest. Conflans, the French admiral, came out with twenty-one ships of the line and four frigates. Admiral Duff was off Quiberon Bay with his squadron; and Conflans hoped to attack him before Hawke could come to the rescue. But Hawke did return; and then Conflans hurried to the mouth of the Vilaine—fancying himself secure amidst the rocks and shoals on that shore to which the Britons sailed to the aid of the Veneti. The danger of a sea-fight in such a perilous navigation had no terrors for Hawke. The pilot pointed out the danger. "Lay me alongside the French admiral," was Hawke's reply to the pilot's remonstrance. "You have done your duty, but now obey my orders." The fight went on till night whilst a tempest was raging. Signal guns of vessels in distress were heard on every side. When the morning came, two British ships were found to be stranded, but their crews were saved. Four of the French fleet had been sunk, among which was the admiral's ship. Two had struck. The rest had fled up the Vilaine. This final victory put an end to all those apprehensions of a descent upon England, which prevailed before Pitt had infused his spirit into commanders by land and sea. The French admiral, Thurot, was to have co-operated with Conflans in an attempt at invasion. He landed in the north of Ireland; attacked Carrickfergus, which was bravely defended by seventy-two men; and then went again to sea, having plundered the town, and carried off the mayor and three other inhabitants as his prisoners.

It was the determination to believe nothing impossible to a strong will, and to think no loss irretrievable, which sustained Frederick of Prussia through the reverses of 1759—the most disastrous of all his campaigns. The defeat by the Russians at Kunersdorf would have annihilated a less resolute man. But he rallied; and he fought through another year of chequered fortune, during which his own territories suffered the extremities of misery, to win the two victories of Legnitz and of Torgau.

* Walpole—"Memoirs," p. 230.

The year 1760 was not a year of excitement to the English people. The war went on; but even the defence of the conquests of 1759 required no great exertions. Quebec was besieged; but the besiegers were compelled to retire, when an English fleet appeared in the St. Lawrence. There was little domestic agitation, except a ministerial difference with the court, which somewhat detracts from the dignity of Pitt, in his exhibition of contempt for that influence which prevented his brother-in-law, earl Temple, from obtaining the Garter. Parliament had little more to do than vote supplies. "Success," said Pitt, "had produced unanimity, not unanimity success." A sudden event came, destined in a short time to change the whole aspect of affairs—to involve England once again in political contest more to be dreaded than the ordinary course of party warfare—more to be dreaded, because other leaders appeared than those of Parliament, and the representatives of the people were not on the popular side. The reign of George II. came suddenly to a close on the 25th of October. The king had risen at his usual hour of six; had taken his cup of chocolate; and had been left alone by his attendants. A noise as of a heavy fall was heard; then a groan. The old man lay on the ground, and never spoke more. The right ventricle of his heart had burst.

CHAPTER III.

Accession of George III.—His education and character.—Lord Bute.—The king's first speech.—Policy of the new reign.—Independence of the Judges.—The new Parliament.—The king's marriage.—Coronation.—Negotiations for peace.—Warlike operations.—Affairs of the Continent.—Frederick of Prussia.—Negotiations broken off.—The Family Compact.—Resignation of Mr. Pitt.—His pension.—Debates in Parliament.—War declared against Spain.—Conquest of the Havannah, and other successes.—Preliminaries of peace signed.—The Peace of Paris.—Conclusion of the Seven Years' War.—The cost of the war, and its uses.

It is related that on the morning of the 25th of October, George, prince of Wales, taking an early ride in the neighbourhood of Kew, where he was residing, a messenger came to him, bearing a note from a German valet-de-chambre who was about the person of George II., which note bore a private mark, as previously agreed, that declared the king was dead. The prince, suddenly become George III., showed no surprise or emotion; dropped no word to indicate what had happened; but, saying his horse was lame, turned back to Kew; and, dismounting, thus addressed his groom:—"I have said this horse is lame; I forbid you to say to the contrary." This is Walpole's relation, and this his comment:—"The first moment of the new reign afforded a symptom of the prince's character; of that cool dissimulation in which he had been so well initiated by his mother, and which comprehended almost the whole of what she had taught him.* We place this gossip of the servants' hall at the commencement of our narrative. It is quoted by lord John Russell as a trifling incident which showed the power which the young king had acquired over his countenance and manner.† It is referred to by Mr. Massey, to show that George III. "was not always scrupulous on the point of veracity."‡ Our readers will form their own opinion of this symptom of the royal character. Princes, as well as others of the higher orders of society, have been immemorially trained not to exhibit emotion; and the artifice by which the pupil of an adroit mother desired to conceal his irregular knowledge of a great fact may be paltry

* "Memoirs of the Reign of King George III. Now first published from the original MSS. Edited by Sir Denis Le Marchant, Bart." 1845. Vol. i. p. 6.

† "Bedford Correspondence."

‡ "History of England during the reign of George III." vol. i. p. 5



GEORGE III. — Vol. vi. 50.



enough, but yet not a manifestation of habitual unveracity. Lord Waldegrave, who had unusual opportunities for studying the character of the prince, assigns to him, in his twenty-first year, qualities which may certainly be traced in his maturer life: "His parts, though not excellent, will be found very tolerable, if ever they are properly exercised. . . . He is strictly honest, but wants that frank and open behaviour which makes honesty appear amiable.

. . . His religion is free from hypocrisy, but is not of the most charitable sort. . . . He has spirit, but not of the active kind; and does not want resolution, but it is mixed with too much obstinacy He has great command of his passions, and will seldom do wrong, except when he mistakes wrong for right; but as often as this shall happen, it will be difficult to undeceive him, because he is unusually indolent, and has strong prejudices. . . . Whenever he is displeased his anger does not break out with heat and violence, but he becomes sullen and silent, and returns to his closet; not to compose his mind by study or contemplation, but merely to indulge the melancholy enjoyment of his own ill-humour. Even when the fit is ended, unfavourable symptoms very frequently return, which indicate that on certain occasions his royal highness has too correct a memory. . . . Though I have mentioned his good and bad qualities, without flattery, and without aggravation, allowances should still be made, on account of his youth, and his bad education."* With regard to the education of the prince his mother told Doddington that it "had given her much pain. His book-learning she was no judge of, though she supposed it small or useless; but she hoped he might have been instructed in the general understandings of things." Speaking of Mr. Stone, the sub-governor, the princess-dowager said, "she once desired him to inform the prince about the constitution; but he declined it, to avoid giving jealousy to the bishop of Norwich."† The bishop had the title of Preceptor. These instructors, according to lord Waldegrave, though men of sense, men of learning, and worthy good men, "had but little weight and influence. The mother and the nursery always prevailed." The partizans of lord Bute, Walpole says, "affected to celebrate the care he had taken of the king's education His majesty had learned nothing but what a man who knew nothing could teach him."‡ It has been, we think, hastily assumed, that this king, in his maturer life, added nothing to his scanty stores of knowledge.

Burke has described, in emphatic words, the state of the coun-

* "Memoirs," p. 8.

† "Diary," August 17, 755.

‡ * "Memoirs of George III." vol. i. p. 55.

try at the period of the death of George II. "He carried the glory, the power; the commerce of England to a height unknown even to this renowned nation in the times of its greatest prosperity; and he left his succession resting on the true and only true foundations of all national and all regal greatness; affection at home, reputation abroad, trust in allies, terror in rival nations." * These triumphs of the last four years of George II.'s reign are thus pointed out, to contrast with the change that had taken place in ten years after the accession of George III. Junius, in the first of his celebrated Letters, holding that "to be acquainted with the merit of a ministry we need only observe the condition of the people," proceeds to say that, if "we see an universal spirit of distrust and dissatisfaction, a rapid decay of trade, dissensions in all parts of the empire, and a total loss of respect in the eyes of foreign powers, we may pronounce, without hesitation, that the government of the country is weak, distracted, and corrupt." † Making every abatement for the party griefs of Burke, and the virulent hostility of Junius, we cannot doubt that during the first decade of the reign of George III. the times were "out of joint;" that a great change in the relations of the Crown to the Aristocracy had been effected; that a change of equal importance in the exercise of the power of the Sovereign, as distinguished from the power of a Ministry, had also been partially accomplished; and that the popular element in the House of Commons had been greatly diluted by the preponderance of the courtly element. Without entering minutely into the vast details which time has accumulated for the history of this period, we shall endeavour to present an impartial view of the events which indicate the policy systematically acted upon from the day of George III.'s accession—not passionately or inconsistently, but with a calm determination which showed that if Mr. Stone had neglected to teach the prince of Wales something about the Constitution, lord Bute had laboured to supply the deficiency. That policy, as set forth by Doddington, was "to recover monarchy from the inveterate usurpation of oligarchy;" and, further, to get rid of the necessary result of that domination, which was expressed in the lamentation of George II. to his Chancellor, "Ministers are the king in this country." These conceptions could not be realised without difficulty and danger. Perhaps the greatest danger was in that partial success which made the House of Commons more odious to the people in its subserviency to the Crown, than was the Crown itself at any past period of its conflicts with the House of Commons.

* "Thoughts on the cause of the present discontents." 1770.

† January 21, 1769.

In these early struggles of his reign, the character of the young prince, as indicated by lord Waldegrave, comes out with tolerable clearness :—an intellect not deficient, but not highly cultivated—honesty without frankness—resolution, approaching to obstinacy—indolence, soon overcome by a strong will—violent prejudices, liable to mistake wrong for right—sullen anger—enduring animosity. But we must not on the other hand forget that the party hostility, and even national dissatisfaction, which George III. provoked in many circumstances of his long reign, did not alienate from him the personal loyalty and even love of his people. They respected the example of his private life—his strong domestic affections; his simple tastes and unostentatious habits; his manly piety, of which no one doubted that it was “free from hypocrisy.” We respect these qualities now; and knowing how much good was effected by the influence of his example, we may speak of his political errors with compassion rather than with virulence. Those errors, as far as the king’s personal character was concerned, were more the subject of animadversion in the first twenty years of his reign, than in the subsequent period in which he exercised the regal authority. That he might possess the power as he advanced in life of correcting some of the original defects of his character, was anticipated by lord Waldegrave, in a passage which is omitted in the printed edition of the “Memoirs,” and which neutralises in some degree the generally unfavourable opinion which the governor had formed of the pupil. “When the prince shall succeed his grandfather, there may possibly be changes of greater consequence.” Lord Waldegrave refers to the confidence in lord Bute which had succeeded the authority of the nursery. “He will soon be sensible that a prince who suffers himself to be led, is not to be allowed the choice of a conductor. His pride will then give battle to his indolence; and having made this first effort, a moderate share of obstinacy will make him persevere.” The pride and resolution of George III. subdued his indolence in a remarkable degree. Never did any ruler work harder, certainly too hard, in the endeavour to understand and influence public affairs. He did his best within the limits of his ability. Lord Waldegrave adds, “His honesty will incline to do what is right; and the means cannot be wanting, where a good disposition of mind is joined with a tolerable capacity; for a superior genius does not seem to be a *sine quâ non* in the composition of a good king.”*

The king for some time did “suffer himself to be led,” and was not “allowed the choice of a conductor.” The earl of Bute pre-

* First given in the “Edinburgh Review,” vol. xxxvii. p. 17.

pared his Majesty's first Address to the Privy Council. The earl of Bute, the Groom of the Stole, was not only named by the king as a member of the Privy Council, but also of the Cabinet.* To Mr. Pitt this nomination must have been especially offensive; for in the king's speech to the Council he alluded to "a bloody and expensive war." The great minister, who had conducted that war to an issue which redeemed even its cost of blood and treasure, by raising England out of her abject prostration to a height which was her safety as well as her glory, was indignant at this tone; and insisted that the passage should go forth to the world as "an expensive but just and necessary war." But the duke of Newcastle and Mr. Pitt continued their alliance as ministers under the new sovereign. They were not very cordial. The influence of Bute was recognized in the smothered cry of "No Scotch favourite;" and the uncertainty of the final preponderance of the rivals for power was expressed in the joking question, whether the king would burn in his chamber, Scotch-coal, Newcastle-coal, or Pit-coal.

On the 18th of November, the king opened the parliament. Lord Hardwicke prepared the Speech, of which he sent the draught to Mr. Pitt. When it was to be settled in the Cabinet, the words were inserted in the king's own writing which were long treasured up in loyal memories: "Born and educated in this country, I glory in the name of Briton; and the peculiar happiness of my life will ever consist in promoting the welfare of a people whose loyalty and warm affection to me I consider as the greatest and most permanent security of my throne." The House of Commons voted a Civil List of 800,000*l.*, upon the king surrendering the hereditary revenue. The annual subsidy to the king of Prussia was renewed. Supplies were given to the extent of twenty millions. The enthusiasm with which the king was greeted by his subjects was in striking contrast with the coldness that had attended the appearance in public of George II. At the play, the whole audience sang "God save the king" in chorus. The few remaining Jacobites gave up their hatred to the House of Hanover, and flocked to St. James's.

How short a time this happy calm was to last may be inferred from the revelations in Bubb Doddington's Diary. This ancient intriguer was now intriguing with Bute against the king's ministers. On the 20th of November they had "much serious and confidential talk." On the 29th Doddington pressed Bute to take the

* Sir Denis Le Marchant has pointed out that this nomination to the Cabinet, and not that to the Privy Council, was the subject of animadversion at the time.—Note to Walpole's "George III."

Secretary's office, and get rid of lord Holderness. On the 20th of December, "we had much talk about setting up a paper." Their great object appears to be embodied in the following passage regarding the ministry, which has especial reference to Pitt: "I think," writes Doddington, on the 2nd of January, 1761, "they will continue the war as long as they can; and keep in, when it is over, as long as they can; and that will be as long as they please, if they are suffered to make peace, which will soon be so necessary to all orders and conditions of men, that all will be glad of it, be it what it will, especially if it comes from those who have all the offices and the powers of office. All which can never end well for the king and lord Bute." How it would end for the nation was not a matter to be considered. Amongst the weapons which this pair devised to damage Pitt in popular estimation, they "agreed upon getting runners," hawkers of pamphlets and bills. Their desire also to return to one of the practices of the good old times is thus indicated: "We wished to have some coffee-house spies, but I do not know how to contrive it."* The habit in which Bute already indulged of using the name of the king as an authoritative recommendation of any political action—even of the nomination of a member for a borough under government influence—must have excited strong doubts of the wisdom of his majesty's constitutional training. Bute informed Doddington, on the 2nd February, "that he had told Anson that room must be made for lord Parker; who replied, that all was engaged; and that he (Bute) said, 'What, my lord! the king's Admiralty boroughs full, and the king not acquainted with it'—that Anson seemed quite disconcerted, and knew not what to say." Within a week after the accession, Walpole wrote, "The favourite took it up in high style." Three months later, the favourite could even venture to proclaim the policy of the new reign, in an insolent message to Pitt. "Mr. Beckford, dropping in conversation that he wished to see the king his own minister, he (lord Bute) replied, that his great friend Mr. Pitt did not desire to see the king his own minister, and he might tell him so, if he pleased, for that it was very indifferent to him (Bute) if every word he said was carried to Mr. Pitt." † One of the consequences of Mr. Beckford's wish was manifest when, in 1770, he, being lord-mayor, harangued the king on the throne in words which assumed that, although the constitutional principle holds that the sovereign can do no wrong, no ministerial responsibility was recognized to shield that sovereign from the reproof of a subject. The lord-mayor had a constitutional right,

* "Diary," January, 9, 1764.

† *Ibid.*, February 21.

which he had exercised, to present the Address of the City to the Sovereign. To that Address the king had read a reply, which reply was the act of his ministers. When Beckford added his personal remarks upon what the king had replied, he forgot that the king could not answer him, according to the theory and practice of the Constitution.

When the king went to Parliament on the 3rd of March, to recommend an alteration in the tenure of office by the judges, he did not assume that the measure then proposed was more than supplementary to a far greater measure of the period of the Revolution. His majesty said: "In consequence of the Act passed in the reign of my late glorious predecessor king William III., for settling the succession to the crown in my family, their commissions have been made during their good behaviour; but notwithstanding that wise provision, their offices have determined upon the demise of the Crown or at the expiration of six months afterwards, in every instance of that nature which has happened." The king recommended that "further provision may be made for securing the judges in the enjoyment of their offices, during their good behaviour, notwithstanding any such demise;" and that their salaries "should be absolutely secured to them during the continuance of their commissions." Lord Hardwicke, on moving the Address of the Peers in reply to the king's Speech, gave that tone of somewhat extravagant eulogy in which it has been customary to speak of this measure. But the great lawyer treated the proposed change, not as the remedy of a crying evil, though admirable as the assertion of a principle—"The judges were sworn to one king, and depended upon a future king in expectancy;—his majesty demonstrated his wisdom in choosing to shut this door." In reviewing historically the operation of the laws affecting the judicial independence, he dwelt upon the evils of the three reigns before the Revolution, when the judges held their office *durante bene placito*. Compared with these times, his majesty found the law in a happy state. Upon the accession of queen Anne, "three judges were left out, and all the rest had new commissions. Upon the demise of George I., the like happened, but only one left out." "A cloud," lord Hardwicke truly said, "might arise *in futuro*." *

On the 21st of March, the Parliament was dissolved by proclamation. Previous to the close of the Session, the Speaker Onslow, who had filled the chair for thirty-three years, announced his intention of retiring. The Commons united in a vote, asking the

* Parliamentary History," vol. xv. col. 1008. Notes of Lord Hardwicke's Speech.

Crown to bestow upon Onslow some signal mark of its favour. He received a pension of 3000*l.* There were changes in the ministry. Legge ceased to be Chancellor of the Exchequer. Holderness was removed from his office of one of the Secretaries of State. The earl of Bute was appointed in his place. That change was made without the knowledge of Pitt, the other Secretary. He bore the neglect patiently. He still directed the conduct of foreign affairs, and of the war. He was listening to overtures made by France to negotiate for peace. But he was also meditating some further enterprises that might result in a success that would give greater weight to the terms upon which he desired to insist. The General Election took place. Venality was never carried further. Mr. Hallam says, "the sale of seats in Parliament, like any other transferable property, is never mentioned in any book that I remember to have seen of an earlier date than 1760."* Bribery, in the approved form of selling a pair of jack-boots for thirty guineas, and a pair of wash-leather breeches for fifty pounds, was notorious enough to be laughed at by Foote. Dr. Johnson maintained that "the statutes against bribery were intended to prevent upstarts with money from getting into parliament." He held that "if he were a gentleman of landed property, he would turn out all his tenants who did not vote for the candidate whom he supported."† The struggle between the "upstarts with money"—the commercial interest—against what Johnson called "the old family interest," was fast becoming a formidable one. Bribery was the readiest weapon in the hands of the weaker of the political combatants of a hundred years ago. The weapon was too powerful to continue in the exclusive hands of one party. It was more efficient even than the intimidation of the owner of "permanent property," which Johnson thought was a proper restraint upon "the privilege of voting." A century of legislation has done little beyond exhibiting the character of the evil. It has probably only lost its shamelessness to become more dangerous.

The intended marriage of the king to the princess Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz was announced in an Extraordinary Gazette of the 8th of July, detailing the communication to the Privy Council of his Majesty's choice of a consort. In the "Annual Register" this document is given; and it is observed, that although the people were desirous of seeing their young sovereign united to a princess worthy of his affection, "a few thought he might find in a subject one every way qualified to wear a crown, and made no difficulty of pointing her out." Lady Sarah Lennox, the sister of

* "Constitutional History," chap. xvi.

† Boswell, under date of April 5, 1775.

the duke of Richmond, was the lady thus glanced at. The king's passion for her was notorious. The mother of the king, and lord Bute, are held to have turned him aside from this beautiful object of his love, to accept a bride chosen from some petty German court. Colonel Græme, a Jacobite, was employed by the princess dowager "to visit various little Protestant courts, and make report of the qualifications of the several unmarried princesses."* On his representation, the princess Charlotte of Mecklenburg was chosen. There was a testimony of more importance to the character of the princess than that of this ambassador, who was congratulated by David Hume "in having exchanged the dangerous employment of making kings for the more lucrative province of making queens."† Frederick of Prussia had sent a letter to George II., which the princess Charlotte, then a girl of sixteen, had addressed to him, when his troops were over-running the territory of her cousin, the duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin. The letter is bold and eloquent. Even conquerors, she says, would weep at the hideous prospect before her. The husbandman and the shepherd have forsaken their occupation; the towns are inhabited only by old men, women, and children. The rival armies insult and oppress the people, even those to whom they might look for redress. She can scarcely congratulate the king of Prussia on his victory, when it has covered her country with desolation. On the 8th of September, the princess arrived at St. James's, and the marriage was celebrated that afternoon. She, who for fifty-seven years was Queen-Consort, and, in many important matters, influenced the destinies of the country, was not to be compared in personal appearance with lady Sarah Lennox, or with another object of early passion, whose name lingered on the lips of the blind and aged king, when his distempered brain called up the ghosts of buried fantasies.‡ Of the queen, as she appeared on her bridal night, Walpole says, "she looks very sensible, cheerful, and is remarkably genteel." Her good sense and cheerfulness appear to have been the characteristics of queen Charlotte through her long and anxious life. We greatly doubt whether she can fairly be described as "of narrow and uncultivated understanding."§ In the experiences of Fanny Burney we may trace many evidences of her quick capacity and her shrewd judgment; with a kindly nature, often breaking through the restraints of courtly etiquette, to be considerate and unaffected. In our own early days at Windsor we heard many anecdotes of queen Charlotte to confirm this view of her character;

* Walpole—"George III.," vol. p. 65.

† See Note in "Quarterly Review," vol. cv. p. 477.

‡ *Ibid.*

§ Massey, vol. i. p. 118.

with not a few stories of her majesty's economical habits, not altogether of a royal complexion.

The Coronation of the king and queen took place on the 22nd of September. More serious considerations were coming upon the government than the omissions in the ceremonial of the banquet—omissions of which the king complained to the Deputy Earl Marshal, and the provident functionary replied, that he had now given such directions that the next coronation would be perfectly well regulated. The negotiations for peace with France were at an end. A more extended war was imminent.

At the beginning of 1761 the foreign affairs of France were under the direction of the duke de Choiseul, who had been first elevated to power by the influence of madame de Pompadour. Louis XV. at that time was still disturbed by those apprehensions of personal danger which had preyed upon him since the attempt of Damiens upon his life in 1757. The country was in a state of great misery, which presented a striking contrast to the extravagance of the Court. France, upon the verge of a general national bankruptcy, was humiliated by the extraordinary successes which had accompanied the administration of Pitt. The duke de Choiseul had proposed a general negotiation for peace, and plenipotentiaries had been named by England and Prussia to treat at a congress at Augsburg. But he also suggested a previous negotiation between France and England. M. de Bussy arrived at London as the French minister; and Mr. Hans Stanley was sent to Paris as the English negotiator. The despatches of Stanley to Pitt detail the progress of these conferences at Paris. The basis of pacification proposed was the *uti possidetis*—the continued possession of whatever territory each of the contracting powers might hold upon a day named;—in Europe, for example, on the 1st of May ensuing,—or an equivalent to such possession. The instructions which Mr. Stanley received were, that he should contend that the *uti possidetis* should date from the day when the treaty was signed. Pitt, as we have said, was looking to further conquests, which would give England a claim for larger equivalents. On the 9th of June, Choiseul told the English minister that Belle-Ile was taken; and “he did not express much concern or any resentment.” The capture of Belle-Ile, an island near the mouth of the Loire, on the west coast of France, could not be regarded by the English government as a conquest of any permanent value. But Pitt, never relaxing from a vigorous conduct of the war until peace was absolutely secured, did not hesitate to send an expedition of nine thousand men to attack the fortresses of these rugged shores, where a

few thousand fishermen obtained a precarious livelihood. There was a great sacrifice of life ; and it was two months before the garrison of Palais capitulated. About the same period, the West Indian island of Dominica had been captured ; and the French dominion in the East Indies had been finally destroyed by the surrender of Pondicherry. These successes gave some additional force to Pitt's demands. He required that Minorca should be restored in exchange for Belle-île. He demanded other concessions, which France was unwilling to yield. With a consistency and firmness highly honourable, he insisted that in making a separate peace with France, England should not be restrained from lending her aid to the king of Prussia. Frederick was truly in a condition to require her aid. The Austrians were in possession of the most important posts in Silesia. In Pomerania the Russians had overpowered his commanders. All his resources were fast failing, except his own indomitable energy. In a remarkable letter which Frederick wrote to Pitt about this time, he declares his resolution to take for his examples, Hannibal after the battle of Cannæ ; Elizabeth, at the time of the Spanish Armada ; Gustavus Vasa, when he drove Christian from Sweden ; the prince of Orange, who founded the republic of the United Provinces. The king of England said Frederick, has to choose one of two courses ; to think only of the interests of England, and forget those of his allies ; or to unite the interests of his own nation with theirs, and thus uphold his good faith and his glory. "I am persuaded," he added to Pitt personally, "that you think like me. All the course of your ministry has been one series of noble and generous actions, and the minds that heaven has made of this temper never belie themselves."* Pitt gave Frederick the assurance of "the constancy of the king my master." Pitt was compelled to leave to others the interpretation of that assurance. The British, the Hanoverians, and the Prussians had been fighting together as allies, in the campaign of 1761. The result of the campaign left the war without any decisive results ; but the skill of prince Ferdinand, and the valour of the British under the Marquis of Granby and general Conway, were signally displayed through a series of difficult operations, and especially in the battle of Kirch-Denkern, on the 15th of July.

As the negotiations advanced between Great Britain and France, the demands of the duke de Choiseul were enlarged and his attitude became more firm. M. de Bussy delivered the *ultimatum* of his court on the 5th of August ; in answer to which Pitt complained that France had not scrupled to interpose new perplex-

* "Chatham Correspondence," vol. ii. p. 107.

ties in opposition to the blessing of peace, "by intermixing, too late, matters so foreign to the present negotiation between the two crowns, as are the discussions between Great Britain and Spain." He had previously written to Bussy in a tone of high indignation that France should "presume a right of intermeddling in any differences between the two crowns." The motive for this intermeddling was soon apparent. On the 15th of August, the duke de Choiseul and the marquis of Grimaldi, the Spanish ambassador at the court of France, signed the treaty known as "The Family Compact;" by which the two branches of the House of Bourbon agreed to consider the enemy of either as the enemy of both; to guarantee each other's territories; to give each other mutual succours by sea and land. Pitt obtained early and precise information upon the subject of this ominous alliance. He broke off the negotiations with France, recalling Mr. Stanley and dismissing M. de Bussy. He contemplated a bolder measure. He could scarcely hope for the cordial approbation of his colleagues when he proposed an immediate declaration of war against Spain; for a considerable number of the Cabinet had been adverse to the strong language he had held to M. de Bussy. But he trusted to the possibility of infusing his own spirit into the temporizing policy which Bute and others advocated. In a debate in the House of Lords in 1770, on the seizure of the Falkland Islands, Lord Chatham alluded to his conduct towards the Spanish ministers in 1761: "After a long experience of their want of candour and good faith, I found myself compelled to talk to them in a peremptory, decisive language. On this principle I submitted my advice to a trembling council for an immediate declaration of a war with Spain."* The scene before that "trembling council" has been recorded by Burke, who had especial means of accurate information. Pitt called upon his colleagues to strike the first blow against Spain, instead of waiting for a joint attack upon Great Britain by Spain and France; he maintained that no new armament was necessary; that the time was propitious for seizing the Spanish treasure-ships, before their arrival in port. Temple was the only minister who stood by Pitt. His proposal, Bute contended, was rash and unadvisable. Newcastle saw that his great coadjutor would be in a minority, and he supported the favourite. Pitt had to succumb, or to quit office. He thus declared himself: "This was the time for humbling the whole house of Bourbon; if this opportunity were let slip, it might never be recovered; and if he could not prevail in this instance, he was resolved that this was the last time he

* "Parliamentary History," vol. xvi. col. 1094.

should sit in that council. He thanked the ministers of the late king for their support; said he was himself called to the ministry by the voice of the people, to whom he considered himself as accountable for his conduct; and that he would no longer remain in a situation which made him responsible for measures he was no longer allowed to guide." Lord Granville (Carteret), the President of the Council, thus replied: "I find the gentleman is determined to leave us, nor can I say I am sorry for it, since he would otherwise have certainly compelled us to leave him; but, if he be resolved to assume the right of advising his majesty, and directing the operations of the war, to what purpose are we called to this council? When he talks of being responsible to the people, he talks the language of the House of Commons, and forgets, that at this board, he is only responsible to the king. However, though he may possibly have convinced himself of his infallibility, still it remains that we should be equally convinced before we can resign our understandings to his direction, or join with him in the measure he proposes."* On the 5th of October, Pitt resigned the seals of Secretary of State; and Temple followed him in his retirement. When Pitt waited on the king to give up the seals, his majesty testified his regret at losing so able a servant; offered him any reward in the power of the crown to bestow; but expressed his concurrence in the decision of the Cabinet. The reply of Pitt was marked by that reverential demeanour with which he always approached the royal person: "I confess, Sir, I had but too much reason to expect your majesty's displeasure. I did not come prepared for this exceeding goodness. Pardon me, Sir,—it overpowers, it oppresses me." † He burst into tears. ‡ The immediate popularity of the great minister was seriously damaged by his acceptance of a pension of 3000*l.* a year, and of a peerage for his wife, who was created Baroness Chatham. Burke says that a torrent of low and illiberal abuse was poured out on this occasion. Pitt, for a little while, became the object of lampoons and caricatures, ascribed to persons "in the interest or pay of Bute." † Great was the rejoicing at the fall of the man who had rescued his country out of the hands of venal and incapable tricksters, to replace her in the position which had been lost by their imbecility and corruption. "The Court," says Walpole, "impatient to notify their triumph, and to blast his popularity at once, could not resist the impulse of publishing, in the very next night's Gazette, Mr. Pitt's acceptance of their boons—the first instance, I believe, of a

* "Annual Register," 1761, pp. 43, 44.

† *Ibid.*, p. 45.

‡ Wright—"House of Hanover," vol. i. p. 395.

pension ever specified in that paper."* Bubb Doddington wrote to congratulate Bute "of being delivered of a most impracticable colleague, his majesty of a most imperious servant, and the country of a most dangerous minister." If Bute, in addition to the announcement in the Gazette of the pension and the peerage, had published the letter in which Pitt acknowledged the court boons, would the public of that day have seen in the "imperious servant" what in our times has been with some slight injustice regarded as an imitation of "the fulsome prostration of queen Elizabeth's courtiers?"† The time was not yet come when even those who rejected and despised the doctrine of the Crown being held by divine right, thought themselves free to regard the constitutional wearer of the crown as only the first civil servant of the state—as any other than as "our sovereign lord the king." What may appear sycophancy to us was the decorum of a century ago. We are inclined to believe that Pitt—who is said to have knelt when he was with George II. in his closet, and to have bowed so low at the *levée* that his hooked nose was seen between his legs—adopted this style systematically and upon principle, to make the compatibility of his strongest objections to the measures of the Crown, with the profoundest reverence for the wearer of the Crown. He might be "prostrated with the bounteous favour of a most benign sovereign and master" ‡ without surrendering the opinions which had compelled him to leave the service of that master. Earl Temple, who carried his political independence to greater extremes than Pitt, said that his brother-in-law would have been the most factious and insolent man living had he waived the offer of his sovereign's favours; that their acceptance bound him to nothing "but to love and honour his majesty . . . He is as much a free man as myself." §

The popularity of Pitt did not sustain any lasting damage by his acceptance of the king's favours. Gray might exclaim, "Oh! that foolishness of great men, that sold his inestimable diamond for a peerage and pension!" || Walpole might talk of the giant who "stalking to seize the Tower of London, stumbled over a silver penny, picked it up, and carried it home to Lady Hester." ¶ But the multitude saw more clearly than the secluded poet or the fashionable satirist. Alderman Beckford wrote to Pitt to entreat him

* Walpole—"George III.," vol. i. p. 83.

† "Quarterly Review," vol. cv. p. 469.

‡ "Chatham Correspondence," vol. ii. p. 149.

§ "Grenville Papers," vol. i. p. 404.

|| Letter to Wharton.

¶ Letter to Countess of Ailesbury.

to come to the lord mayor's dinner at the Mansion House, on the 9th of November, where the king and queen were to go in state. He went with lord Temple; and he has been blamed for going. His reception by the people is thus recorded: "At every step the mob clung about every part of the vehicle, hung upon the wheels, hugged his footmen, and even kissed his horses. There was an universal huzza; and the gentlemen at the windows and in the balconies waved their hats, and the ladies their handkerchiefs."* Lady Chatham recorded in a note upon Beckford's letter, that her husband in this display acted against his better judgment. The hour was fast approaching when the national approbation of the great war-minister would rest upon a more solid foundation than the shouts of the multitude.

The new Parliament met on the 3rd of November. The king's speech promised a vigorous prosecution of the war. Lord Egremont had been appointed Secretary of State in the place of Pitt. George Grenville became leader of the House of Commons, holding the office of Treasurer of the Navy. The chief point of interest was the conduct and demeanour of the minister who had abdicated. Walpole has recorded the debates of this interesting period, and has thus supplied the *hiatus* in our Parliamentary History. † "He had resigned the seals," Pitt said, "in order not to be responsible for measures he was no longer suffered to guide, and from seeing the question of Spain in the light he saw it. He had acted from conviction, as he supposed the great lords who had opposed him had done likewise." He boldly maintained the necessity of continuing the German war. "America had been conquered in Germany." In another debate George Grenville, who had supported Pitt's German policy during his tenure of power, now openly opposed it. A ruder assailant than Grenville was now loosened upon Pitt. Colonel Barré, a new member, denounced him as a profligate minister, who had thrust himself into power on the shoulders of the mob. Attack upon attack was made upon the ex-minister; but he preserved a wonderful calmness. To the rude assaults of Barré he deigned no reply, but turning round to Beckford, asked, pretty loud, "How far the scalping Indians cast their tomahawks?" Walpole regrets that Pitt did not utter a few words, "stating to Barré the indecency of treating an infirm and much older man with such licence; showing him that insult could not be resented when offered in a public assembly, who always interpose; and putting both him and the audience in mind that a man who

* "Annual Register," 1761, p. 237.

† "Memoirs of the Reign of George III." vol. i. pp. 99 to 120.

had gained the hearts of his countrymen by his services, could only forfeit them by his own conduct, and not by the railing of a private individual." The attacks which had been prompted by those who had rejoiced in forcing Pitt from the power which he had wielded so well, contributed to their own confusion; when events which they could not control soon manifested the wisdom of the policy which he had advocated. What he knew, and what in a written paper he had told the Cabinet he knew, of the alliance of Spain and France, became manifest when the opportunity had passed away of striking a great blow at the power of one party to the Family Compact. On the 2nd of January, 1762, the king declared in Council his resolution of making war on Spain. "The ministers, who had driven out Mr. Pitt rather than embrace this necessary measure, were reduced to adopt it at the expense of vindicating him and condemning themselves."* The count de Fuentes, upon being ordered to leave London, attributed the approaching rupture between Great Britain and Spain, "to the pride and to the unmeasurable ambition of him who has held the reins of the government, and who appears still to hold them, although by another hand." There was no other hand to take the helm which Pitt had resigned. But the chart which he had laid down for the course of the state-vessel was found to be the only possible guide, through that perilous sea upon which Bute and his adherents had embarked, in the confidence with which mediocrity sometimes presumes to carry on the work which genius has begun. The ministers adopted the war policy of Pitt with regard to Spain; but they could not see the principle upon which he had endeavoured to make the efforts of England and her allies, in one scene of action, have a corresponding effect upon the particular operations of England in another scene. They could not understand what he meant in declaring that "he had conquered America in Germany." Whilst therefore they prepared to carry out his plans in an attack upon the Havannah, and upon islands in the West Indies, they at the same time alienated for ever the king of Prussia, by meanly evading the annual grant of the subsidy which Pitt had engaged to obtain from Parliament during the continuance of the war. In the king's speech Frederick was "our magnanimous ally;" but Bute took every means to withhold that support which the English nation were eager to recognize as the just tribute to a brave man struggling with misfortune. The king of Prussia finally overcame his host of enemies, and built up the great kingdom which now so largely influences the policy of all European states. But the base deser-

* Walpole—"George III.," vol. i. p. 128.

tion of the Cabinet of George III. in the hour of his need was never forgotten.

With disjointed plans, the government of lord Bute—for he became really supreme long before the retirement of the duke of Newcastle in June 1762—set about the conduct of hostilities. The Parliament met on the 19th of January. The king in his speech announced the war with Spain, resting his cause upon the Family Compact. What the ministry put into the mouth of the king was of less importance than the sentiments uttered by Pitt. He did not shrink from vindicating, but with modesty, his own claims to the honour due to his intelligence and foresight. But the real patriotism of the statesman burst forth when he exclaimed, "What imported it what one man or another had thought three months before? The moment was come when every man ought to show himself for the whole. I do, cruelly as I have been treated in pamphlets and libels. Arm the whole! Be one people! This war, though it has cut deep into our pecuniary means, has augmented our military faculties. Set that against the debt—that spirit which has made us what we are. Forget everything but the public! For the public I forget both my wrongs and my infirmities."* The man who was thus rousing the spirit of England, was the author of projects that were to give new confidence to the heart of the nation by success. Pitt had arranged an expedition against the French island of Martinique, before he quitted office; and he had intended that the same expedition should proceed against Havannah, in the event of a rupture with Spain. Admiral Rodney commanded a fleet, carrying twelve thousand men, under the command of general Moncton. They disembarked at a creek in Martinique on the 7th of January; reduced several strong posts; and the island was speedily surrendered, although some of its works had been deemed impregnable. Grenada, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent were as quickly taken. All men gave Pitt the credit of this triumph. On the 5th of March, an expedition sailed from Portsmouth, under admiral sir George Pocock, with land forces commanded by the earl of Albemarle. At Martinique they were joined by a portion of the forces that had effected the conquest of that island. The British naval force consisted of nineteen ships of the line, with smaller vessels; the transports carried ten thousand troops. The Havannah was finally taken; but with a tremendous sacrifice of life. The city had been strongly fortified. The entrance to the harbour, within which were twelve Spanish ships of the line, was defended by two forts, the Pantal, and the Moro. From the

* Walpole—"George III.," p. 134.

12th of June to the 30th of July, the soldiers and sailors vigorously pursued the siege of Moro, suffering greatly from the climate. On that day the Moro was taken by assault. The Havannah was then besieged; and was finally surrendered on the 12th of August, with all the ships in the harbour. To complete the triumphant operations which Pitt had devised, the Philippine islands were captured by an expedition sent out from Madras.

On the 25th of November, the Session of Parliament was opened with an elaborate speech from the throne. The king reviewed the circumstances in which he found the country upon his accession, "engaged in a bloody and expensive war." He resolved to prosecute it with the utmost vigour; "determined, however, to consent to peace upon just and honourable terms, whenever the events of the war should incline the enemy to the same pacific disposition." His majesty then noticed the failure of negotiations; and the subsequent exertions of national strength. "History cannot furnish examples of greater glory, a greater advantage acquired by the arms of this or any other nation, in so short a period of time." The king then announced, that through these exertions his enemies had been brought to consent to terms of peace, and that the preliminary articles had been signed. "The conditions of these are such that there is not only an immense territory added to the empire of Great Britain, but a solid foundation laid for the increase of trade and commerce." The interests of his majesty's allies had not been forgotten. "I have made peace for the king of Portugal, securing to him all his dominions; * and all the territories of the king of Prussia, as well as of any other allies in Germany and elsewhere, occupied by the armies of France, are to be immediately evacuated." The speech thus concluded: "We could never have carried on this extensive war without the greatest union at home. You will find the same union peculiarly necessary, in order to make use of the great advantages acquired by the peace; and to lay the foundations of that economy which we owe to ourselves and to our posterity; and which can alone relieve this nation from the heavy burthens brought upon it by the necessities of this long and expensive war."

The preliminaries of this peace were signed at Fontainebleau on the 3rd of November. In the previous negotiations lord Bute had manifested an anxiety for an immediate pacification, which exhibited more of the character of a humiliated than a triumphant nation. Whilst the results of the expeditions against the Havan-

* Upon the English rupture with Spain, war had been declared by France and Spain against Portugal, to compel her to depart from her neutrality.

nah and the Philippine islands were as yet unknown, he was willing to consent that they should be restored to Spain without conditions, if the British arms had been successful. The Spanish minister thought the expeditions would fail; and therefore delayed signing the preliminaries, that he might take advantage of a defeat. When the success was known, Bute would have given up Havana and Manilla, without any equivalent. His colleagues differed from him; and Florida, then a very useless possession, was at length accepted, and the great Indian colonies of Spain were restored. The other acquisitions of Great Britain were,—the whole of the French provinces in North America; the West India islands of Tobago, Dominica, St. Vincent, and Granada; Minorca restored in exchange for Belle-Ile. Spain gave up the points in dispute between her and Great Britain, upon which she had ventured to risk a war. As to the contest still continuing in Germany, it was agreed that France and England should withdraw altogether from interference. The definitive treaty of Peace was signed at Paris on the 10th of February, 1763. On the 15th of the same month, peace was concluded between the empress Maria Theresa, the elector of Saxony, and the king of Prussia. The Seven Years' War ended by replacing the parties to this great quarrel in the exact position in regard to territory in which they stood before its commencement.

It is scarcely necessary, now, to enter upon an examination of the question, whether England could have obtained better terms in the final pacification, had Pitt been permitted to carry his great plans onward to their maturity. His complaints against the conditions of the peace were vehemently urged in Parliament. He thought that the House of Bourbon had not been sufficiently humbled. "He prayed for the House of Brunswick; stood on revolution principles alone against France; had a deep-rooted alienation from France; acted on the spirit of king William, on whose maxims, and on the maxims in which they came hither, the House of Brunswick must rest, or could never be secure." * The great Commoner had truly stated the debtor and creditor account of this war, when he proposed to set against its cost "that spirit which has made us what we are." In 1755, the unredeemed capital of the national debt of Great Britain and Ireland was 72,505,572*l.* In 1763 it amounted to 132,716,049*l.* A burden upon posterity had been created by this war of sixty millions. The interest upon the debt in 1755 was 2,650,041*l.* In 1763 it had increased to 5,032,733*l.* Looking to the mere question of figures, we may assume that we are paying at the present hour very nearly two millions and a half

* Walpole—"George III.," vol. i. p. 229.

annually for the glories of Mr. Pitt's administration. The nation at that day scarcely felt the pressure of increased taxation occasioned by the war ; for it was the constant boast of Pitt—a boast which is inscribed upon his monument in Guildhall—that under his administration commerce had flourished in company with war. This is an anomalous prosperity, which may partially stimulate the enterprise of a maritime nation, and irregularly add to its powers of production. But the waste of capital, the necessary imposition of high prices upon the labouring classes, and the heaping up of burdens for a coming generation, are evils which can never be compensated by military glory or territorial acquisitions. But they are compensated when a nation is awakened by war out of a degraded condition ; when the principle of an exalted patriotism and a generous loyalty takes the place of a venal self-seeking and a miserable abnegation of public duty. England was in this apathetic state when Pitt took the direction of her affairs. When he

“ Consulting England's happiness at home,
Secured it by an unforgiving frown
If any wrong'd her.” *

He raised the people to a just appreciation of the spirit in which he had laboured for the elevation of his country. That some of that spirit has been transmitted to us during the lapse of a century may be, even now, a compensation for the two shillings a head that every one of the twenty-five millions of the existing population has annually to pay towards the perpetual burden of taxation created by the war that was terminated by the peace of Paris.

* Cowper—“ Task,” b. 2.

CHAPTER IV.

Lord Bute Prime Minister.—Policy of the Favourite.—John Wilkes.—Lord Bute resigns.—George Grenville's Ministry.—“North Briton,” No. 45.—Arrest of Wilkes.—Negotiations for Mr. Pitt's return to power.—The king's desire to govern.—The Wilkite agitation.—Hogarth, Wilkes, and Churchill.—Wilkes ordered to be prosecuted.—Expelled the House of Commons.—Great Debates on General Warrants.—Officers dismissed for votes in Parliament.—Restrictions on the American Colonies.—Grenville's Resolutions on American Taxation.—The Stamp Act passed.—Resistance in America.—Motives for passing the Stamp Act.

THE influence of Pitt upon the action of the government was at an end, when the war which he had directed, and to which he continued to lend his spirit, came to an end. The policy in the conduct of the internal affairs of Great Britain, which now commenced its development, provoked an opposition, resulting in a conflict, in some respects the most lamentable, if not the most disgraceful, which had been witnessed in previous antagonism of the authority of government and the popular sentiment: The earl of Bute became ostensibly, as he had been for some time in reality, the prime minister, when the duke of Newcastle resigned his office of first lord of the Treasury. There might have been surprise that a Scottish peer, of no marked ability, known only as the favourite of the king's mother, and the chief officer of the household of the young sovereign when he was prince of Wales, should become the supreme director of affairs, and receive the highest honours, such as that of the Garter. But the temper of the nation would not have been blown into a flame, had not the constitutional guardians of public opinion shut up the safety valves which allow that mighty power of a free state harmlessly to exert its irresistible influence. The House of Commons quickly became unpopular; and that unpopularity left the throne open to the rude assaults of a headlong force, which threatened to destroy its claims to respect and obedience. In attempting to restore the influence of prerogative by weakening the power of the oligarchical dispensers of patronage, Bute endangered the success of a scheme in some respects desirable, by failing to cultivate the support of the people. Party contests had been utterly suspended during the triumphant administration of Pitt. When his power was at an end they were renewed with a virulence which it would be difficult perfectly to understand,

if we did not see in this change a natural result of a more deep-seated change in the social organization. From the Revolution of 1688 to the Rebellion of 1745, the contest was between the adherents to the Bill of Rights and to the Act of Settlement, and the gradually decreasing partizans of the Stuarts; and, coincident with the existence with these factions, a perpetual struggle between High Church and Low Church, between Orthodoxy and Dissent. The Crown during the whole period from the Revolution to the death of George II., had, with the exception of the short ministry of Harley and Bolingbroke, chiefly looked for its support to the great Whig party, and their successive phases of administration the popular element necessarily preponderated. There had been at many seasons a fierce struggle for supremacy; but at no period were the notions of prerogative advanced as the principle upon which the monarchy was to be upheld. It was not attempted to be disguised that the new minister of George III., who had supplanted, or was endeavouring to supplant, the old family influences, had resolved to place the power of the Crown upon a border basis—to bring back something of the old ascendancy of prerogative. He had shown his disposition to contend against the force of public opinion, by displacing the popular minister. The portion of history which we have now to trace has been justly described as “equally anomalous and disagreeable.”*

Upon the resignation of the duke of Newcastle in June, 1762,—on the alleged plea of his difference with the Cabinet on the question of continuing a subsidy to the king of Prussia, but more probably from his perception that the parliamentary foundation of his power was to be cut from under his feet,—the earl of Bute left his office of Secretary of State to become the head of the Treasury. George Grenville then became Secretary of State; and sir Francis Dashwood Chancellor of the Exchequer. But whatever were the minor arrangements, the real power of the government was centred in Bute; and upon him fell that storm of popular indignation which Wilkes and Churchill embodied in the bitterest of personal attacks. In June, 1762, the first number appeared of “The North Briton.” This paper, which afterwards acquired such a dangerous celebrity, was set up by John Wilkes, with the assistance of Charles Churchill. It was marked by no great display of talent; but it was daring in its personality. “The North Briton” did not observe the old decorum of giving names by initials. The king was not softened into the K—, nor was Bute pointed to as B—. The minister’s name was not disguised as “The Jack-boot,” nor as the

* Dr. Arnold—“Lectures on History,” p. 263.

“Thane,” as the caricatures exhibited him. More paltry than the assaults upon the favourite’s political character was the attempt to lower him in the estimation of the English as a Scot. Wilkes did this coarsely. Churchill with extraordinary skill, in his “Prophecy of Famine,” which appeared in January 1763. We can read this production as we read Dryden’s “Absalom and Achitophel,” utterly forgetting the partizan to admire the poet. Lord Temple, the friend of Wilkes, deprecated the system pursued in “The North Briton” of “attacking at once the whole nation of Scotland, by wholesale and retail, in so very invidious a manner.”* He shrunk also from having “Lord B.’s name at full length.” Much of the odium that fell upon this minister is to be ascribed rather to the belief that he was a favourite, than to his actions as a statesman. It was to the suspicious circumstances which made him the ruler of Leicester House that the people attributed the confidence placed in him by the young king. The common parallel of the libellers was Mortimer and queen Isabel. That a minion should have displaced such a minister as Pitt, was sufficient to make his name execrable without any very odious acts of power. His precipitation in concluding the peace without obtaining the full advantage of the war, would have been quickly forgotten. But his rash dismissal of three of the greatest amongst the peers from the Lord-Lieutenancies of their counties, for their presumption in offering objections to the conditions of the Peace, indicated a temper in which thinking men saw something like an attempt to go back to arbitrary power. The dislike of Bute became so intense, that in many places a jackboot and a petticoat were publicly burnt, as types of the favourite and his patroness. When a Bill for laying a tax upon cider was passed amidst great opposition, the popular clamour reached its height; and at last the unhappy minister was afraid to appear in the streets without the escort of a gang of bruisers. Suddenly, on the 8th of April, 1763, lord Bute resigned all his official employments. It would seem, from a correspondence between him and George Grenville, that Bute had the sole power of forming a new ministry, previous to his resignation. Upon offering the great post of First Lord of the Treasury to George Grenville, he made use of the phrase “the king’s friends,” in recommending Grenville cordially to take the assistance of those who came under this designation. Grenville became the head of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer; lord Egremont and lord Halifax the two Secretaries of State. Upon the retirement of Bute, Fox was raised to the peerage as lord Holland. Although he ceased to take any

* “Grenville Papers,” vol. i. p. 457.

part in public affairs, he clung to the great sinecure of his office of Paymaster ; and had the gratification of still receiving those vast irregular emoluments which Pitt despised. The voice of public execration might scarcely reach him amidst the fantastic buildings which he raised at Kingsgate, near Margate ; where, though

“Old, and abandon'd by each venal friend,” *

he might hug himself in the satisfaction that he had done as much as any man in his time to play the great game of politics solely with reference to his own private advantage ; and had won by his talents and perseverance the real prize of statesmanship, whilst his eloquent rival had only the barren fame.

On the 19th of April, eleven days after the resignation of lord Bute, the king closed the session of Parliament. His majesty dwelt upon the conditions of the definitive treaty of peace, as advantageous to his own subjects ; and he then added, “My expectations have been fully answered, by the happy effects which the several allies of my crown have derived from this salutary measure. The powers at war with my good brother, the king of Prussia, have been induced to agree to such terms of accommodation as that great prince has approved ; and the success which has attended my negotiation has necessarily, and immediately, diffused the blessing of peace through every part of Europe.” On the 23rd of April came out No. 45 of “The North Briton,” in which the comment of Wilkes upon this passage was considered by some, to use Walpole’s expression, as giving “a flat lie to the king himself.” Wilkes used these words : “The infamous fallacy of this whole sentence is apparent to all mankind ; for it is known that the king of Prussia did not barely approve, but absolutely dictated as conqueror, every article of the terms of peace. No advantage of any kind has accrued to that magnanimous prince from our negotiation ; but he was basely deserted by the Scottish Prime Minister of England.” In this famous “North Briton” Wilkes cautiously abstained from giving the lie to the king himself. It was, he said, “the minister’s speech,”—an imposition as great upon the sovereign, as upon the nation : the sanction of the king’s name was given to the most unjustifiable public doctrines. The proceedings of the Government against Wilkes not only made the witty profligate the most famous man in England ; but rendered him the centre of a constitutional resistance to the Prerogative of the Crown and the Privilege of Parliament which mixed up as it was with the cause of a man in many respects worthless, eventually placed the liberties of the peo-

* Gray—“Impromptu on Kingsgate.”

ple upon a firmer foundation of legal right than had previously been acknowledged. On the 30th of April a "General Warrant" was issued against the authors, printers, and publishers of a seditious and treasonable paper entitled "The North Briton," No. 45, &c. By a "General Warrant" is understood an authority to apprehend any person supposed to be implicated in a particular charge. Balfe, the printer, and Kearsley, the publisher, were taken at once. The king's messengers entered the house of Wilkes at midnight on the 29th, but he protested against their intrusion at such an hour; and they quitted him, to return in the morning. He was carried before the two Secretaries of State, and was by them committed to the Tower; his papers being seized and examined. At first he was closely confined, and was debarred all intercourse with his friends, or the use of pen and paper. When these severe restrictions were laid aside, he was visited by earl Temple and the duke of Grafton. On the 3rd of May, he was brought to the Court of Common Pleas, upon a writ of habeas corpus granted by sir Charles Pratt, the Lord Chief Justice. Serjeant Glynn argued the case, and Wilkes spoke himself with that boldness approaching to effrontery, which was one of his characteristics. The court postponed its decision till the 6th. The crown lawyers had contrived not to have the question then raised of the legality of a General Warrant; but the Chief Justice, speaking in the name of himself and his fellow judges, determined that his privilege as a member of parliament protected Wilkes from arrest. That privilege, Pratt said, held good in all cases except treason, felony, and an actual breach of the peace. A libel was not a breach of the peace, but only tended to such breach. "Let Mr. Wilkes be discharged from his imprisonment." The next day earl Temple was dismissed from the Lord-Lieutenancy of Buckinghamshire, and his name was struck off the list of Privy Councillors. Wilkes was deprived of his commission as a colonel of the Buckinghamshire militia. For seven years did the battle go on—a battle in which every supposed victory of the Government was a real defeat. Of this extraordinary contest, in its various aspects, we shall have to take up the narrative from time to time as we proceed. At every step it will be impossible not to see the weakness and folly of the Ministry and the Parliament; and, however we may despise the reckless audacity of the demagogue over whom public opinion threw its shield, we cannot but rejoice that the eternal principles of justice were asserted from the judgment seat, and that the majesty of the law was not sullied by any such subserviency to power as had disgraced earlier periods of our history.

The interval between the proceedings against Wilkes and the meeting of Parliament in November, was marked by an attempt to call back Mr. Pitt to the direction of affairs. George Grenville had been tried by Bute, and had not given satisfaction. A dry, formal man, with very precise notions of the mode of conducting public business, he could not brook the interference of the ex-minister who had given him his office. Bute was close at the royal ear to give advice to the young sovereign, in the capacity of "the king's friend." Lord Egremont, one of the Secretaries of State, died suddenly of apoplexy. Bute, who, when he got rid of Pitt, had said that the king would never suffer those ministers of the late reign, who had attempted to fetter him, to come again into his service, now advised his majesty to give his confidence to the man whom he used contemptuously to term "the people's darling." On the 27th of August, the well-known sedan-chair of Pitt (built in a singular fashion to accommodate his gouty foot) was moving through the Park to Buckingham House, the king having commanded his attendance. The king was gracious; the great commoner authoritative and firm. Pitt maintained that it would be for his majesty's interest to restore to his confidence those steady friends of the House of Hanover who had been driven from his counsels. The king, according to Pitt's report to lord Hardwicke, appeared to be convinced by his arguments, and desired to see him again on the following Monday, the first interview being on Saturday. In the meantime Bute and Grenville had been with his majesty; and when Pitt had another audience, the king continued to discuss his proposals, as if he had not intimated to Grenville that he was to continue his minister; but finally said, "I see this won't do." Lord Shelburne congratulated Pitt "personally and very sincerely on a negotiation being at an end, which carried through the whole of it such shocking marks of insincerity." The only result of this negotiation was, that it became manifest that Bute still influenced public affairs. Grenville had been affronted by the course which had been taken in endeavouring to supersede him; and he only consented to remain in office upon the condition that there should be no "secret influence." The duke of Bedford became President of the Council, and lord Sandwich Secretary of State.

It is impossible to look upon this extraordinary proceeding on the part of George III. without in some degree regarding it as a manifestation of his peculiar character. He had been brought up with certain notions, and in many respects very proper notions, of his own power and prerogative. As far as he was acquainted with the history of his country, and we have no right to assume that he

was ignorant of it, he had seen no sovereign since the time of William III. who took a direct and active part in the administration of public affairs. So far from indulging the indolence which lord Waldegrave thought was constitutional, he exhibited an amazing anxiety to suggest, to control, to dictate, in every operation of government. He was impatient under the triumphant administration of Pitt, because the personal supremacy of the minister overshadowed the authority of the king. It is possible that he was wearied with the tutelage of Bute, when he thought it possible to call back the greatest man in his kingdom to be the instrument of his will. Pitt's firm bearing, in that memorable audience of the 27th of August, satisfied him that he could not put his government into the hands of a responsible minister who proposed to act as the representative of a great party. When Grenville saw the king on the Sunday evening after his first interview with Pitt, he found him "in the greatest agitation"—the terms, his majesty said, which Pitt had demanded were "too hard." The prevailing desire of George III. to have a ministry moulded to his own views was a constant struggle against the shackles imposed upon a king by the very conditions of a limited monarchy. He had force of character enough to be determined that he should be consulted, and if possible obeyed, in the smaller as well as in the greater affairs of state; but he had not sufficient strength of understanding to know how much to leave to the responsibility of his servants—how far he could safely direct, and at what point he could best defer to the opinions of those to whom he purported to have given his confidence. Through this tendency to govern of himself he weakened his own real power and influence. Lord Brougham has truly said, "It is not to be denied that George III. sought to rule too much; it is not maintained that he had a right to be perpetually sacrificing all other considerations to the preservation or extension of his prerogative. But that he only discharged the duties of his station by thinking for himself, acting according to his conscientious opinion, and using his influence for giving those opinions effect, cannot be denied."* But it was a lamentable circumstance of this constitution and not unreasonable rule of conduct, that the king personally did many harsh acts to mark his resentment of those who differed from him; that though to some of his ministers he was a confiding and even affectionate master, to others he was wayward and distrustful; that during the first nine years of his reign there were six successive administrations, and that, to use the words of Burke, "the question at last was not, who could do the public bus-

* "Statesmen of the time of George III.," vol. i. p. 14.

iness best, but who would undertake to do it at all." * In Burke's parliamentary language, it was "the arbitrary fiat of an all-directing favourite" that prevented men of talents and integrity accepting employments where they could not exercise their judgment or their honesty. But it is now well known that the influence of lord Bute had wholly come to an end after a few years; and we cannot therefore shut our eyes to the fact that the king, however right in his determination not to be a cypher in the State, had not the discretion to prevent that desire becoming a source of national disunion.

The seven years of Wilkite agitation could not have been a pleasant epoch in the life of any friend of rational liberty, and well-balanced authority. The principles of constitutional freedom were mixed up with the quarrel of a profligate demagogue, and the outrages of an unthinking multitude. Sober men naturally turned from the support of such a cause. On the other hand, the course of the government was so paltry, so passionate, so vindictive, so obstinate, that the most strenuous loyalty could scarcely give an honest assistance to measures which transformed a nation's willing obedience into a dull submission to the powers that be. During this period of hateful controversy, there was a perpetual excitement of libels and mobs; the decisions of the law coming in conflict with the desires of the Crown; the will of the people opposed to the votes of the Parliament. The bystanders looked with surprise and alarm upon this extraordinary game, in which statesmen seemed to be puppets moved by some machinery, rather than by their own natural impulses. Time has partially lifted up the curtain, and we see the hands that pulled the strings.

John Wilkes, although filling an influential position—a Buckinghamshire magistrate; a bon vivant in what was called the best society—was a needy man, and a little able of himself to carry on the great legal contest in which he became engaged. His chief friend was earl Temple, who had left office with Pitt, and bore no good will to the influence which had thrust him and his more eminent brother-in-law from high employment. His connexion with Wilkes was not entirely political; for Wilkes was a colonel in lord Temple's militia regiment. But his open support of the writer of the "North Briton" indicated pretty clearly that Temple was in some degree identified with Wilkes; and this led to the immediate revenge of the court, in his dismissal from the Lord-Lieutenancy of Buckinghamshire. From that time the correspondence of Wilkes and the lord of Stowe on the subject of the libellous paper, and

* "Parliamentary History," vol. xvi. col. 879.

the prosecutions connected with it, are very frequent. The patriotic effusions of Wilkes are generally accompanied with requests for the loan of money. "I have this cause at heart, and I feel the spirit of Hampden in it, but I have not his fortune . . . £500 I must contrive to get, and, after your lordship's goodness, I even blush to mention it." * Wilkes adds, "I believe the causes will in time pay themselves." At this time one of the journeymen printers who had been arrested under the General Warrant had obtained a verdict against the Secretary of State, with three hundred pounds damages, for false imprisonment. Chief Justice Pratt had summoned up decidedly for the journeyman printer. Other "causes" of the same character were depending; and Temple gives Wilkes advice as to the course of legal proceedings in "the business of the devils, your friends." † The "North Briton" was now printed at a private press in Wilkes's own house in Great George Street; where other productions were printed, one of which became the object of a movement on the part of the Government, as unwise as the proceedings under the General Warrant.

Whilst an inevitable parliamentary battle in the next Session was in preparation, the town was amused by lampoons and caricatures on both sides of this stirring question. Hogarth had been attacked by Wilkes in an early number of the "North Briton," for Hogarth had published a caricature called "The Times," of which Pitt was the subject. The pictorial satirist took his revenge of the "North Briton" by issuing a portrait, scarcely a caricature, which he had sketched when Wilkes was brought before Chief Justice Pratt. Churchill came to the aid of his friend, and published his bitter "Epistle to William Hogarth." The painter was not to be put down, even by Churchill's compliment to his genius sweetening the assaults upon "the Man." He published his print of "The Bruiser, C. Churchill, once the reverend"—the poet's face moulded into that of a bear, with a pot of porter in one hand, and club in the other. Pitiful were these effusions of personal spite. More pitiful even was the revenge against Wilkes that was being concocted in the highest places. On the 5th of November, the earl of Sandwich writes to Mr. Grenville, to inform him of conferences between his lordship, the Lord Chancellor, and bishop Warburton, on the subject of his proposal to bring before the House of Lords a complaint against Wilkes as the author of a blasphemous and impious work; and he tells Grenville, "I mean to carry the affair into execution; so that I think we have now nothing to do but to settle the mode of bringing it on." ‡ Amongst

* "Grenville Papers," vol. ii. p. 75—Wilkes to Temple, July 9, 1763.

† *Ibid.*, p. 78.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 154.

the profligate nobles of that age, few had obtained a more unenviable reputation than lord Sandwich. A boon companion of Wilkes himself, we have evidence that at the very time at which he was dining with him at a convivial weekly club, Sandwich was employing spies to watch and report all Wilkes's daily movements. * This might be proper official caution; but no official necessity could excuse the baseness of bribing a printer to purloin the proof-sheets of a poem of which Wilkes had printed twelve copies at his press, for private distribution. On the 15th of November, the Parliament was opened. In the House of Lords, before the speech from the throne was taken into consideration, lord Sandwich made a complaint of a printed paper entitled "An Essay on Woman," with notes to which the name of Dr. Warburton was affixed; and of another printed paper entitled "The Veni Creator paraphrased." The "holy Secretary," as Walpole calls him, read many of the atrocious passages, to the great disgust of all decent peers; and the amazement of some who saw the earl of Sandwich employed in the vindication of religion and morality. † The compositor employed by Wilkes in his own house, receiving there 25s. a week, and bed and board, was examined; and he produced some proof-sheets, with corrections in the handwriting of Wilkes, to establish the authorship. The House then resolved to address his majesty to desire that he would give immediate orders for the prosecution of the author or authors of this scandalous and impious libel. The whole force of the State, of Kings, Lords, and Commons was arrayed against one demagogue. In the Lower House, after a series of debates, it was resolved that the "North Briton," No. 45, was a false, scandalous, and seditious libel, and that it should be burnt by the common hangman. A riot took place when this resolution was carried into effect. Meanwhile, in consequence of Mr. Martin, on the first night of the Session, having termed the writer of the "North Briton" a cowardly, malignant, and infamous scoundrel, Wilkes had challenged him; and in a duel the next day was dangerously wounded. The measures contemplated against him were therefore delayed. His position appearing very perilous he sought safety in France before his wound was healed. On the 20th of January he was expelled the House of Commons.

The question of the legality of a General Warrant had been formally decided in an action tried before Chief Justice Pratt, on the 10th of December, 1763. At the time of the arrest of Wilkes,

* See their Report to the Secretaries of State; October 31 to November 13, in "Grenville Papers," vol. ii. p. 155.

† See Chesterfield's Letters.

lord Halifax and lord Egremont were the two Secretaries of State. Egremont died ; and the proceedings which Wilkins had instituted against him were necessarily abated. Halifax, by a series of legal evasions, prevented the action against himself being tried. But the action for false imprisonment against Mr. Wood, the Under Secretary of State, resulted in a verdict against him by a special jury, with damages of a thousand pounds. The opinion of the Chief Justice was now given in the most unequivocal words. "There is no authority in our law-books that mentions this kind of warrants ; but in express terms condemns this. Upon the maturest consideration I am bold to say, this warrant is illegal." This judgment was subsequently affirmed by lord Mansfield upon the arguments on a Bill of Exceptions.* But the legality of General Warrants formed the subject of a series of debates in the House of Commons, conducted with all the energy that is naturally elicited by great constitutional questions. The House, on the 13th of February, examined witnesses and debated this question for eleven hours ; and the next day for seventeen hours. The debate was renewed three days after, and then the ministerial majority was only fourteen. Walpole gives a ludicrous account of the appearance of the House on this occasion : "You would have almost laughed to see the spectres produced on both sides. . . . Votes were brought down in flannels and blankets till the floor of the House looked like the pool of Bethesda." † There was no record of the debate on this occasion except Walpole's letter, until the publication of his "Memoirs of George III.;" where a summary is given of the arguments of many speakers. The ministry went upon precedents for their defence, and alluded to the issue of such warrants during the administration of Mr. Pitt. The great orator boldly said that he knew them to be illegal when he issued them. He preferred the general safety in a time of danger to any personal consideration. He did an extraordinary act at any risk, even of his head, to procure the arrest of a suspicious foreigner, who was concealed at different times in different houses. "What was there in a libel so heinous and terrible as to require this formidable instrument?" Their honest convictions made some of the ordinary supporters of the government vote with the minority on this question of General Warrants. It is pitiable to trace the persevering desire of the king to carry out what he deemed a proper pun-

* The received legal doctrine is thus laid down by Blackstone : "A warrant to apprehend all persons, guilty of a crime therein specified, is no legal warrant ; for the point upon which its authority rests is a fact to be decided on a subsequent trial, namely, whether the person apprehended thereupon be really guilty or not."—Kerr's edit., vol. iv. p. 342.

† Letter to Lord Hertford.

ishment for their offence. On the first day of the Session, when the question of parliamentary privilege was discussed, General Conway, the Colonel of a Regiment, voted in the minority. The king immediately wrote to Grenville, "General Conway's conduct is amazing. I am hurt for lord Hertford [brother of Conway, and ambassador at Paris]. I shall propose to Mr. Grenville the dismissing instantly, for in this question I am personally concerned." * On the 25th his majesty urged the dismissal of Conway and others; and that it should be given out "that the next would have the same fate if they do not amend their conduct." † Grenville's Diary shows that he repeatedly advised the king to defer this resolution with regard to Conway; although he supported the king in his determination to take this course of exhibiting his power. On the 18th of February, after the great debate upon General Warrants, the king wrote to Grenville, "firmness and resolution must now be shown, and no one's friend saved who has dared to fly off; this alone can restore order, and save this country from anarchy, by dismissing. . . . I am not to be neglected unpunished." ‡ In April, Conway was dismissed from his regiment and from his office. The same mode of resentment was adopted in the case of lord Shelburne, colonel Barré, and general A'court, as well as towards persons holding civil offices. The disposition of George III. to look at public measures as personal questions was one cause of many serious calamities of his reign. He told Grenville on the 14th of December that he took no notice of lord Shelburne at the levée; "but spoke to two people on each side of him; which, he thought, was the treatment he deserved, for having broke his word and honour with him, having pledged both upon not going into opposition, and then taking the first opportunity to oppose a measure which personally regarded the king." § The dismissal of Conway for a conscientious vote in Parliament,—a man who had distinguished himself in Germany; was remarkable for his fairness, and his aversion to faction; and was a general supporter of the government—is truly described as a step whose boldness was almost unprecedented. Sir Robert Walpole had dismissed three military men from their employments, the famous "cornet of horse" among the number; but they had incurred the penalty "by a personal, violent, and constant opposition." || The dismissal of Conway and others, for their parliamentary conduct, excited considerable alarm as to the arbitrary tendencies of the Court; and it did

* "Grenville Papers," vol. ii. p. 162.

† *Ibid.*, p. 166.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 267.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 238—Diary of Grenville.

|| Walpole—"George III.," vol. i. p. 402.

much to establish that unpopularity which a king, who had many qualities to recommend him to the affection of his people, was by his own manifestations of self-will bringing down upon his head. The question of the proceedings against Wilkes became merged in higher questions. The demagogue was prosecuted for libels; was found guilty; and was outlawed on the 1st of November for non-appearance to receive sentence. But he was now considered a persecuted man. When the Common Council voted thanks to Chief Justice Pratt for his judgment on the question of General Warrants, and requested him to sit for his picture to be placed in Guildhall, they expressed the prevailing opinion even of temperate politicians. The ministry had the sense of the nation against them. The king was not shielded by ministerial responsibility, for he had unwisely exhibited that individual sensitiveness—those resentments and animosities—which are scarcely compatible with the functions of a constitutional sovereign.

We shall see, in a few years, John Wilkes, and all the chorus of his political drama, passing away, “like an insubstantial pageant faded.” Another scene was to be opened, which, devoid of interest as it might at first appear, was to be developed in a series of long continued action which involved not only the interests of England, but eventually the destinies of the Anglo-Saxon family, and incidentally of all the human race. The triumphant administration of Mr. Pitt had given a firmness and compactness to the British empire in North America, which appeared to promise a long continuance of prosperity to the mother-country and her colonies. These colonies were founded upon principles of freedom and toleration, by a race nurtured in those principles, and, in some cases, seeking for a happier field for their establishment than they could find under a temporary suspension of the old English right to be well governed. The colonial Assemblies, or Parliaments, of the thirteen provinces of North America, elected by the people, trained men of industry and ability to the consideration of questions of public policy and local administration. Thus, whatever might be the authority and influence of the Governor of each State appointed by the Crown, there was always an energy and freedom in their discussions which called out those qualities of good sense, and even of eloquence, which are fostered, more or less, by all representative institutions. From these Assemblies complaints often arose against the commercial policy of the mother-country; and especially after the peace of 1763, when the attempt to carry out our Navigation Laws by a rigid prohibition of the contraband trade of the American with the Spanish colonies produced the most seri-

ous dissatisfaction. The trade between Great Britain and her colonies had been always based upon principles wholly opposite to those of commercial freedom. The Englishman was forbidden to smoke any other than Virginian-grown tobacco, and the Virginian could wear no other coat than one of English-made cloth. It was an age of regulation and balance in small matters as well as in great—in commerce as in war. No particular injury was contemplated towards the colonists in the trade regulations; although the monopoly of the English merchants was regarded as the supreme advantage of colonial possessions. From very insignificant beginnings, the North American provinces had become great and prosperous, and contained a population somewhat exceeding two millions. The State regarded these colonists as a happy family of good children, to be kept in order by that paternal authority which knew best what was for their advantage. It was not a very harsh authority, although its exercise was unwise in its persistence. If it vexed them with restrictions, it soothed them with privileges. But the privileges were thought inadequate to the restrictions. At last the parent took up the fancy of compelling the children to pay something in acknowledgment of the heavy cost of past protection, and as a contribution towards the expense of that protection in future. A Stamp Act to raise sixty thousand pounds produced a war that cost a hundred millions.

“What mighty contests rise from trivial things.”

On the 10th of March, 1764, Mr. Grenville moved in the Commons a series of Resolutions, for imposing small duties on certain articles of American commerce; to “be paid into the receipt of his majesty’s exchequer, and there reserved, to be from time to time disposed of by Parliament, towards defraying the necessary expenses of defending, protecting, and securing the British colonies and plantations in America.” Following this resolution for the appropriation of the produce of duties upon the foreign trade of the American colonies, came the 14th of the series, in these words: “That towards further defraying the said expenses, it may be proper to charge certain Stamp Duties in the said colonies and plantations.”* The notion of imposing Stamp Duties on the colonists was considered to have originated with Mr. Jenkinson, the Secretary of the Treasury. But there was found amongst Mr. Grenville’s papers a letter to him from one Henry M’Culloh, dated July 5, 1763, in which he says, that a Stamp Duty on vellum and paper in America would amount to upwards of sixty thousand

* “Parliamentary History,” vol. xv. col. 1427.

pounds sterling per annum.* Mr. Jenkinson writes to the Minister in July, 1764, to urge him forward with the Stamp Act, which had been postponed in the previous Session to obtain "further information on that subject." On the 10th of January, 1765, the Parliament met. The question of General Warrants was again debated in full houses, and again the Ministry had a small majority. The question of taxing America by Stamp Duties produced only a feeble debate and only one division. On the 6th of February, Grenville introduced fifty-five Resolutions, which were to be engrafted into the Stamp Act. Walpole says, "This famous Bill, little understood here at that time, was less attended to. . . . The colonies, in truth, were highly alarmed, and had sent over representations so strong against being taxed here, that it was not thought decent or safe to present their memorial to Parliament." † The colonists could not see in Grenville's proposition for a paltry tax, any other than the beginning of an attempt to tax them largely without their own consent. They denied the right of the House of Commons to tax them unless they had representatives in that House. Grenville had rashly termed his Resolution for a Stamp Act as "an experiment towards further aid." Where was the system, thus begun, to end? The Stamp Act was passed, without a debate or division in the House of Lords; and it received the Royal Assent on the 22nd of March. Benjamin Franklin, as agent for the province of Pennsylvania, had come to London to oppose the passing of the Act. When it was passed, he wrote to a correspondent in America, "We might as well have hindered the sun's setting. That we could not do. But since it is down, my friend, and it may be long before it rises again, let us make as good a night of it as we can. We may still light candles. Frugality and industry will go a great way towards indemnifying us." The prudential submission of Franklin to an evil which he thought inevitable was not the prevailing feeling of the colonists. The Act was to come into operation on the 1st of November. When the enactment first became known, there was a deep expression of grief, but scarcely any manifestation of resentment. But in the State Assemblies, a determination not to submit without remonstrance was quickly manifested. Virginia, the most attached to the monarchy of all the provinces—the most opposed to democratic principles—was the first to demand a repeal of the Statute by which the colonists were taxed without their own consent. The Resolutions of the Assembly of Virginia went forth as an example to the other provinces, many of which passed similar Resolutions. But in Vir-

* "Grenville Papers," vol. ii. p. 374.

† "George III.," vol. ii. p. 68.

ginia there was an orator of no common order. Patrick Henry, who was born in 1736, had received no regular education—had been a farmer and then a shopkeeper,—when he adopted the law as a profession. He obtained a brief in a great public cause; and then manifested qualities which left every competitor far behind. As a member of the House of Burgesses at Williamsburg, he is held by Mr. Jefferson to have given “the earliest impulse to the ball of revolution.” Jefferson, then twenty-two years of age, first heard Patrick Henry in the Assembly in May, 1765, when he brought forward certain resolutions against the Stamp Act; and, fifty years afterwards, Jefferson declared that he never heard such eloquence from any other man.* One specimen of Henry’s oratory on the Stamp Act, in this Assembly, has been preserved: “Cæsar,” he exclaimed, “had his Brutus; Charles the First had his Cromwell; and George the Third”——“Treason,” cried the Speaker; “Treason,” cried many of the members——“may profit by their example,” was the conclusion of the sentence. “If this be treason,” said Henry, “make the most of it.” The House of Burgesses in Virginia was dissolved by the governor of the province; but the torch which had been lighted was carried from state to state; and delegates were appointed by several of the Assemblies for a General Congress to meet at New York.

The cry of “treason” in the Assembly of Virginia, although followed by the strong remonstrance of the burgesses, was a manifestation of the desire which then almost universally prevailed amongst the colonists to regard themselves as bound in allegiance to the British crown. The alienation was a gradual result of a mistaken view of the policy that ought to prevail, between a colony that had grown to a real capacity for independence and the parent State. It was a result, also, of that system of parliamentary corruption and of court influence which at that time entered so largely into the government of England. Walpole says that the Stamp Act “removed the burthen of a tax to distant shoulders;” that Grenville contemplated his measure “in the light of easing and improving an over-burthened country.” † Burke, in his memorable speech on American taxation, on the 19th of April, 1774, exhibited this fact more distinctly. He points out that upon the close of the war, “the necessity was established of keeping up no less than twenty new regiments, with twenty colonels capable of seats in this House. . . . Country gentlemen, the great patrons of economy, and the great resisters of a standing armed force, would not

* Tucker—“Life of Jefferson,” vol. i. p. 40.

† “George III.,” vol. ii. p. 68 and p. 70.

have entered with much alacrity into the vote for so large and expensive an army, if they had been very sure that they were to continue to pay for it. But hopes of another kind were held out to them." He then traces in this speech the policy of Mr. Grenville, and the peculiarities of his character, which led him to think "better of the wisdom and power of legislation than in truth it deserves;" to believe "regulation to be commerce, and taxes to be revenue." The Navigation Act was Grenville's idol. The commerce of America "had filled all its proper channels to the brim." He "turned his eye somewhat less than was just towards the incredible increase of the fair trade; and looked with something of too exquisite a jealousy towards the contraband." The result was, that "the bonds of the Act of Navigation were straitened so much, that America was on the point of having no trade, either contraband or legitimate." The Americans, Burke says, "thought themselves proceeded against as delinquents, or at best as people under suspicion of delinquency." They were irritated enough before the Stamp Act came. They adopted such counter measures as appeared efficient to a people that had not yet begun to feel their own strength, and understand their own resources. They agreed amongst themselves to wear no English manufactured cloth; and to encourage the breed of sheep that they might manufacture cloth from their own wool. They protested against the English monopoly; and they devised, feebly enough, such measures as they thought might overcome it. At last what Burke calls "the scheme of a regular plantation parliamentary revenue" was established—"a revenue not substituted in the place of, but superadded to, a monopoly; which monopoly was enforced at the same time with additional strictness, and the execution put into military hands." It was one of the misfortunes of Mr. Grenville's scheme that his Stamp Act was popular. "Great was the applause of this measure here. In England we cried out for new taxes on America, whilst they cried out that they were nearly crushed with those which the war, and their own grants, had brought upon them." Such was the commencement of a struggle which ended in the independence of the American colonies, and thenceforward in the establishment of an empire which has shown how quickly, in one vast region, might be realised the probable future contemplated by Adam Smith;—when "the inhabitants of all the different quarters of the world may arrive at that equality of courage and force which, by inspiring mutual fear, can alone overawe the injustice of independent nations into some sort of respect for the rights of one another."*

* "Wealth of Nations," book iv. chap. vii.

CHAPTER V.

Illness of the king.—The Regency Bill.—Overtures to Pitt.—He declines office.—Grenville and Bedford.—The Rockingham Administration.—Disturbances in America.—Parliament.—Debates on the Stamp Act.—Pitt contends for its Repeal.—Examination of Dr. Franklin.—Declaratory Bill as to rights over the Colonies.—Repeal of the Stamp Act.—Weakness of the Rockingham Administration.—They quit office.—Pitt created earl of Chatham.—His loss of popularity.—His plans for great measures.—Embargo on Corn.—Chatham's illness.—Disorganisation of his ministry.—Parliament dissolved.

DURING the progress of the Bill for the taxation of the American Colonies, the king was attacked by a serious indisposition. On the nature of that illness the greatest secrecy was maintained. "The king's illness," says Walpole, "had occasioned a general alarm; but, though he escaped the danger, his health was so precarious, and he had such frequent disorders in his breast on taking the least cold, that all sober men wished to see a Regency settled by Parliament in case of his death."* The real nature of the king's malady was not suspected by the politicians of that day, or by the general public. "His majesty had a serious illness—its peculiar character was then unknown, but we have the best authority for believing that it was of the nature of those which thrice after afflicted his majesty, and finally incapacitated him for the duties of government." This is the statement of a gentleman whose means of information, and whose diligence in penetrating into the secret passages of the past, were of more permanent value than his adroitness in the use of the facts he ascertained for the advancement of his own party views.† The family of George III. at that time consisted of George, prince of Wales, born on the 12th of August, 1762; and of Frederick, duke of York, born on the 16th of August, 1763. The differences of opinion between the king and his ministers upon the Regency Bill are of minor importance in a view of public affairs at this distance of time, and require no elaborate detail. The king wished that the power of nominating a Regent should be vested in himself. The Ministry thought it desirable that a Regency during the minority of the successor to the throne should be distinctly named. On the 24th of April, his majesty, in

* "George III." vol. ii. p. 95.

† Mr. Croker, in "Quarterly Review," vol. lxvi. p. 240.

a speech from the throne, proposed, whether, under the present circumstances, it would not be expedient to vest in him the power of appointing, from time to time, by instrument in writing, under his sign-manual, either the queen, or any other person of his royal family, usually residing in Great Britain, as guardian of the person of his successor and as regent of these kingdoms. When a Bill to this effect had passed the Commons, a doubt arose in the Lords, whether the princess-dowager of Wales was included in the term "My Royal Family." Lord Halifax, one of the Secretaries of State, went to the king, and said that the matter ought to be cleared up; but that if the name of his majesty's mother appeared in the Bill, the House of Commons would probably strike it out. The king reluctantly acquiesced, and then the Royal Family was defined as "all the descendants of the late king." Grenville refused to introduce the name of the princess-dowager, as he was urged to do by her friends; and upon this, a member, unconnected with the ministry, made a proposition to that effect. The name of the king's mother was decided to be introduced into the Bill, by the vote of a large majority. The king was now indignant at the conduct of his ministers; sent for his uncle the duke of Cumberland; and commissioned him to negotiate with Mr. Pitt for a return to power. It was an embarrassing time in which to contemplate a change of ministry. America was getting into a flame of anger at the Stamp Act. London was terrified by riots of Spitalfields-weavers, upon the rejection of a Bill which would have prohibited the importation of foreign silks. What Burke calls "the vertigo of the Regency Bill" produced changes which an untoward aspect of national affairs might have failed to effect.

The rumours that the king contemplated a change of ministers produced an opinion in one then unconnected with official life, but who looked upon political affairs, and public men, from a higher elevation than most observers of the shifting scenes of that time. Edmund Burke announced to a friend, with reference to Pitt, that "this crisis will show whether pride or patriotism be predominant in his character." To him, wrote Burke, is open "to come into the service of his country upon any plan of politics he chooses to dictate. . . . A few days will show whether he will take his part, or continue on his back at Hayes, talking fustian." The duke of Cumberland went to Hayes, and there learnt the "plan of politics" which Pitt chose "to dictate." There was no "fustian" in his sensible propositions,—that General Warrants should be repudiated; that dismissed officers should be restored; that Protestant alliances should be formed, to balance the Family Compact of the

Bourbons. There was some difference of opinion about appointments, but these might have been removed. Earl Temple was sent for; and although he was intended for the office of First Lord of the Treasury, he persuaded his brother-in-law to give up the negotiation. He was seeking a ministerial alliance with his brother, George Grenville, to whom he had become reconciled, and he conceived the plan of inducing Pitt to join them; in which union he fancied he saw a power that would enable them to stand alone without the support of ducal Whigs, or courtly Tories. The king was obliged to call back his ministers, Grenville and Bedford. They dictated terms to the king; and Bedford appears to have departed himself in a spirit which may have been grossly exaggerated by Junius, but which is not wholly removed from truth. "The duke of Bedford demanded an audience of the king; reproached him, in plain terms, with duplicity, baseness, falsehood, treachery, and hypocrisy; repeatedly gave him the lie; and left him in strong convulsions." A paper was read, according to Walpole, in which the king was told "that he must smile on his ministers, and frown on their adversaries, whom he was reproached, in no light terms, with having countenanced, contrary to his promise. Invectives against the Princess were not spared; nor threats of bringing lord Bute to the block." The king bowed to the ministers to retire, and said "if he had not broken out into the most profuse sweat he should have been suffocated with indignation."* Pitt was again applied to; and he again declined to take office without lord Temple, who persevered in his resolution, at an audience which both had of the king. The Whig families were again resorted to. The duke of Newcastle again obtained a post of honour in receiving the Privy Seal; the duke of Grafton became one of the Secretaries of State, with general Conway as the other Secretary; and the marquis of Rockingham was named First Lord of the Treasury. Untried colts and worn-out hacks were harnessed together, to drag the state-coach through the sloughs in which it was travelling. They pulled honestly side by side for a brief journey; and then came to a dead stop. This ministry had the lasting credit of bringing one man of extraordinary genius into public life, though in a subordinate situation. The eloquent gratitude of Edmund Burke to the marquis of Rockingham has made us think favourably of the head of this ministry, for "sound principles, enlargement of mind, clear and sagacious sense, and unshaken fortitude."† Such qualities were needed at such a crisis.

* "George III," vol. ii, p. 183.

† Speech on American Taxation.

The Rockingham Administration came into office on the 10th of July. Parliament had been prorogued previous to their appointment; and a few months passed on without any disturbing events. At last came intelligence which demanded grave and anxious consideration. In the autumn of 1765, various letters were received by Mr. Secretary Conway, from official persons in America, relating the particulars of riots at Boston and in the Colony of Rhode Island. At Boston, the effigy of the gentleman who had accepted the office of stamp-distributor was hung upon a tree, which was subsequently called "Liberty Tree;" his house was sacked, and he was compelled to promise to resign his office. These riots went on for a fortnight, with much wanton destruction of property. A letter from New York of the 25th of September, to Conway, says "the general scheme concerted throughout seems to have been, first by menace or force, to oblige the stamp officers to resign their employments, in which they have generally succeeded; and next, to destroy the stamped papers upon their arrival,—that, having no stamps, necessity might be an excuse for the dispatch of business without them."* But more important than the outrages of mobs were the solemn proceedings of a Congress at New York, comprising delegates from nine Assemblies. They continued their sittings for three weeks; and then passed fourteen Resolutions, in which they maintained the right of every British subject to be taxed only by his own consent, or that of his legal representatives and that their only legal representatives were those annually chosen to serve as members of the Assembly of each province.

The Administration was in a position of extreme difficulty. The strong opposition of the Colonial Assemblies was a reason for ministers re-considering the measures of their predecessors; but a submission to the violent resistance to the authority of the imperial legislature would be to manifest an unworthy fear, which might have the effect of encouraging other resistance to the law. But there were consequences arising out of the discontent and resentment of the colonists which were productive of immediate evils, at home, and threatened greater dangers for the future. A petition of the merchants of London trading to North America set forth, so that this commerce, so necessary for the support of multitudes, was under such difficulties that its utter ruin was apprehended; and that several millions sterling, due to the merchants of Great Britain, were withheld by the colonists, on the plea that the taxes and restrictions laid upon them had rendered them unable to meet

* "Papers laid before Parliament, in "Parliamentary History," vol. xvi.

their engagements. Scarcely seeing a way out of the difficulties that surrounded them, the ministers, on the meeting of Parliament on the 14th of January, after the Christmas recess, laid the papers before the two Houses which "give any light into the origin, the progress, or the tendency, of the disturbances which have of late prevailed in some of the northern colonies." Such were the terms of the king's speech. His majesty said, that he had issued orders for the exertion of all powers of government for the suppression of riots and tumults; and added, "Whatever remains to be done on this occasion I commit to your wisdom." A debate ensued in the Commons, which was reported by two members, and printed in Paris,—the Houses still strictly forbidding the publication of their proceedings. On that night Burke made his first speech in parliament; and Pitt, whose voice had not been heard for a year, delivered one of those orations which, however imperfectly recorded, give us a notion of that supremacy that, broken as he was in health, wrapped in flannels, and giving effect to his action with a crutch, he still, above all men, exercised over his contemporaries. In a letter which he wrote from Bath on the 9th, he said "If I can crawl, or be carried, I will deliver my mind and heart upon the state of America." What he then spoke was remembered and repeated as the great contest went on; and by none more diligently than by the colonists. He went with them to the full extent of denying the right of the British Legislature to impose taxes without representation. He touched upon great principles that extended beyond this question of taxing the American Colonies: "There is an idea in some that the Colonies are virtually represented in this House. I would fain know by whom an American is represented here? Is he represented by any knight of the shire, in any county in this kingdom? Would to God that respectable representation was augmented to a greater number! Or will you tell him that he is represented by any representative of a borough—a borough, which, perhaps, its own representative never saw. This is what is called 'the rotten part of the constitution.' It cannot continue the century; if it does not drop, it must be amputated. The idea of a virtual representation of America in this House is the most contemptible idea that ever entered into the head of a man; it does not deserve a serious refutation. The Commons of America, represented in their several Assemblies, have ever been in possession of the exercise of this, their constitutional right, of giving and granting their own money. They would have been slaves if they had not enjoyed it." Grenville replied to Pitt, and defended his Stamp Act: "When I proposed

to tax America, I asked the House, if any gentleman would object to the right. I repeatedly asked it, and no man would attempt to deny it. Protection and obedience are reciprocal. Great Britain protects America; America is bound to yield obedience. If not, tell me when the Americans were emancipated? When they want the protection of this kingdom, they are always very ready to ask it. That protection has always been afforded them in the most full and ample manner. The nation has run itself into an immense debt to give them their protection: and now they are called upon to contribute a small share towards the public expense, an expense arising from themselves, they renounce your authority, insult your officers, and break out, I might almost say, into open rebellion. The seditious spirit of the colonies owes its birth to the factions in this House." Pitt was permitted again to speak, the House being clamorous to hear him. There are passages in his second speech which show how much the House gained in this departure from its ordinary rules. We may give the concluding summary of the orator's opinions: "A great deal has been said without doors, of the power, of the strength, of America. It is a topic that ought to be cautiously meddled with. In a good cause, on a sound bottom, the force of this country can crush America to atoms In such a cause, your success would be hazardous. America, if she fell, would fall like a strong man. She would embrace the pillars of the state, and pull down the constitution along with her. Is this your boasted peace? Not to sheath the sword in its scabbard, but to sheath it in the bowels of your countrymen? . . . The Americans have not acted in all things with prudence and temper. They have been wronged. They have been driven to madness by injustice. Will you punish them for the madness you have occasioned? Rather let prudence and temper come first from this side. I will undertake for America, that she will follow the example. There are two lines in a ballad of Prior's, of a man's behaviour to his wife, so applicable to you and your colonies, that I cannot help repeating them:

' Be to her faults a little blind:
Be to her virtues very kind.'

Upon the whole, I will beg leave to tell the House what is really my opinion. It is, that the Stamp Act be repealed absolutely, totally, and immediately. That the reason for the repeal be assigned, because it was founded on an erroneous principle. At the same time let the sovereign authority of this country over the colonies be asserted in as strong terms as can be devised, and be

made to extend to every point of legislation whatsoever. That we may bind their trade, confine their manufactures, and exercise every power whatsoever, except that of taking their money out of their pockets without their consent."

The petitions against the American Stamp Act, and the papers laid before Parliament, occupied in the Commons the attention of a Committee of the whole House for three weeks. Several persons were also examined, amongst whom was Dr. Benjamin Franklin. The examination of this eminent man afforded much practical information as to the condition of the North American Colonies. He considered that there were about 300,000 white men in North America, from sixteen to sixty years of age; that the inhabitants of all the provinces, taken at a medium, double in about twenty-five years; that the colonists raised, clothed, and paid, during the recent war, near twenty-five thousand men, and spent many millions; that they paid many and heavy taxes amongst themselves, for the support of the civil and military establishments of the country, and to discharge the debt contracted in the war. His answer to the question, "What was the temper of America towards Great Britain before the year 1763?" is very remarkable: "The best in the world. They submitted willingly to the government of the Crown, and paid, in all their courts, obedience to Acts of Parliament. Numerous as the people are in the several old provinces, they cost you nothing in forts, citadels, garrisons, or armies, to keep them in subjection. They were governed by this country at the expense only of a little pen, ink, and paper. They were led by a thread. They had not only a respect, but an affection, for Great Britain; for its laws, its customs and manners, and even a fondness for its fashions, that greatly increased the commerce. Natives of Britain were always treated with particular regard. To be an Old-England man was, of itself, a character of some respect, and gave a kind of rank amongst us." To the question, Whether he thought the people of America would submit to pay the Stamp duty if it was moderated, he boldly answered, "No; never; unless compelled by force of arms." He said it was a prevailing opinion amongst the people in America, that they could not be taxed in a Parliament where they were not represented; but the payment of duties laid by Act of Parliament, as regulations of commerce, was never disputed. They distinguished between external and internal taxes. An external tax was a duty on commodities imported, and it enhanced their price; but the people were not obliged to pay the duty; they might refuse the article. An internal tax is forced from the people without their consent. The Americans could do without British

manufactures. They could do without cloth from England. "I am of opinion," said Franklin, "that before their old clothes are worn out, they will have new ones of their own making." But "can they possibly find wool enough in North America?" he was asked. The answer showed the mettle of the people that he represented: "They have taken steps to increase the wool. They entered into general combination to eat no more lamb, and very few lambs were killed last year. This course, persisted in, will soon make a prodigious difference in the quantity of wool. The establishing of great manufactories, like those in the clothing towns, is not necessary, as it is where the business is to be carried on for the purposes of trade. The people will all spin and work for themselves, in their own houses." To the question, "If the Stamp Act should be repealed, would it induce the Assemblies of America to acknowledge the right of Parliament to tax them, and would they erase their Resolutions?" the answer was, "No, never."

After this examination of papers and witnesses, the repeal of the Stamp Act was recommended by the Committee of the whole House, and a declaratory Resolution was adopted: "That the king's majesty, by and with the consent of the Lords spiritual and temporal, and Commons of Great Britain, in Parliament assembled, had, hath, and of right ought to have, full power and authority to make laws and statutes of sufficient force and validity to bind the colonies and people of America, subjects of the Crown of Great Britain, in all cases whatsoever." The distinction which Pitt had maintained, that Parliament was not competent to pass a law for taxing the Colonies, was set at nought by this Resolution. But it was contended that though the right existed, it was impolitic to exercise it, and therefore the Stamp Act ought to be repealed. Pitt adhered to his opinion, but did not attempt to divide the House. A Declaratory Bill was passed, embodying the principle of the power of Parliament to bind the Colonies "in all cases whatsoever." In the Upper House this Bill was supported by the lord chancellor Northington; but was opposed by lord Camden in a very remarkable speech, in which he explicitly declared that "the British Parliament have no right to tax the Americans Taxation and Representation are inseparably united Taxation and representation are coeval with, and essential to, this constitution." He alluded to Carte's History of England, and to another History "much read and admired" [Hume's], which mischievously endeavoured "to fix the era when the House of Commons began in this kingdom When did the House of Commons first begin? When, my lords? It began with the Constitution, it grew up with the Constitution.

There is not a blade of grass growing in the most obscure corner of the kingdom, which is not, which was not ever, represented since the Constitution began; there is not a blade of grass which, when taxed, was not taxed by the consent of the proprietor." Lord Camden divided the House; but only four Peers voted with him against the Declaratory Bill. Whilst this bill was passing into law, a strong opposition was getting up against the Bill for the repeal of the Stamp Act, which was about to be proposed by the Government. It is painful to look back upon one of the most miserable exhibitions which history can present of "a house divided against itself"—those called the friends of the king intriguing against the king's ministers. Lord Bute, whose honour was never doubted, whatever might have been his political indiscretions, distinctly gave his solemn word, that he had never offered an opinion upon measures, or the disposition of offices, directly or indirectly, since the time when the duke of Cumberland was consulted on the arrangement of a ministry. We may therefore dismiss from our minds the popular belief that lord Bute was the instigator of all the double-dealing that was characteristic of the early years of the reign of George III. Burke has been charged with exaggeration in denouncing the system pursued, "in the idea of weakening the State in order to strengthen the Court;" a system effected by those he calls "the new court corporation."* But there were too many proofs of the evidence of "a reptile species of politicians, never before and never since known in our country."† They worked underground to prevent this repeal of the Stamp Act. Their operations were evinced in a singular misunderstanding between the king and his ministers' in the crisis of the Stamp Act. The most dispassionate relation of the circumstances is in a letter of general Conway to lord Hertford, on the 13th of February: "His majesty had told lord Rockingham and the duke of Grafton that he was for the repeal; but he on Tuesday told lord Strange that he was not so now—that he wished his opinion to be known, and his lordship might declare it. This ran through the House of Commons and the town, and has had an odd effect. Our ministerial lives were not thought worth three days' purchase. His majesty has been pleased to explain himself to us, that he always was for the repeal, when contrasted with enforcing the whole act, but not as compared with modification. We told his Majesty this distinction was unfortunately not explained to us; and that in consequence we had (as he had allowed lord Rockingham particularly to do) declared his

* "Present Discontents."

† Macaulay, in "Edinburgh Review," vol. lxxx. p. 316.

majesty to be for the repeal; and that on all accounts we were engaged and obliged to push that measure. It was very mortifying to us, and very unhappy, that it now appeared to be against his majesty's sentiments, which put us into an odd predicament, being under a necessity of carrying on a great public measure against his majesty's declared sentiments, and with great numbers of his servants acting against us. He was not displeased, he said, with our freedom—thought we acted like honest men—had no design of parting us—always foresaw the difficulties which might attend his business—but that, once over, he hoped all things would go smoothly again. You see that this might branch out into very long details, had I time for them; but this is the substance. 'Tis a whimsical situation, and what will be the event I don't know. I think the Bill of Repeal will probably pass, because our disposition for it is too strong in the House of Commons for anything now to conquer; and the Lords, I think, with submission, dare not resist it."*

The House of Commons came to a decisive vote on the 21st of February, on the Resolution that leave should be given to bring in a Bill for the repeal of the Stamp Act. The Resolution was moved by Conway. He drew a strong picture of the mischiefs that had already ensued. The trade of England was not only stopped, but in danger of being lost. The conflict would ruin both countries. "If we did not repeal the Act, he had no doubt but France and Spain would declare war, and protect the Americans." Grenville exposed the futility of maintaining a right in the Declaratory Bill which the government would not dare to assert. Pitt demanded the repeal as due to the liberty of unrepresented subjects. The scene after the termination of the debate on that February morning has been described by Burke in glowing words; but words not too lofty for the great occasion: "I remember, sir, with a melancholy pleasure, the situation of the honourable gentleman who made the motion for the repeal; in that crisis, when the whole trading interest of this empire, crammed into your lobbies, with a trembling and anxious expectation, waited, almost to a winter's return of light, their fate from your resolutions. When, at length, you had determined in their favour, and your doors, thrown open, showed them the figure of their deliverer in the well-earned triumph of his important victory, from the whole of that grave multitude there arose an involuntary burst of gratitude and transport. They jumped upon him like children on a long absent father. They clung about him as captives about their redeemer. All England,

* MS. collection of "Conway's Letters."

all America, joined to his applause. Nor did he seem insensible to the best of all earthly rewards, the love and admiration of his fellow-citizens. Hope elevated and joy brightened his crest.”* Such was the enthusiasm towards Conway, the mover of the Resolution. Walpole has described the difference in the reception of Pitt and Grenville. When Pitt appeared, the crowd pulled off their hats, huzzaed, and many followed his chair home with shouts and benedictions. Grenville was hissed; and in a rage, seized the nearest man to him by the collar. “Provisionally the fellow had more humour than spleen—‘Well, if I may not hiss,’ said he, ‘at least I may laugh,’ and laughed in his face. The jest caught; had the fellow been surly and resisted, a tragedy had probably ensued.”† The Bill for the repeal finally passed the Commons by a large majority; and the Lords, by a majority of more than thirty.

When Mr. Pitt made his memorable appearance in the House of Commons, on the 14th of January, 1766, to deliver his opinion against the Resolution of the House to tax America, which had passed “when he was ill in bed,” he said: “If I could have endured to be carried in my bed—so great was my agitation for the consequences—I would have had some kind hand to have laid me down on this floor to have borne my testimony against it. It is now an Act that has passed.” But he knew that a ministry had meanwhile come into power who were disposed to repair the evil consequences which he had apprehended. To that ministry he took the earliest opportunity of declaring that he did not give his strenuous support. He had advised some of them, he said, “to engage, but notwithstanding, I cannot give them my confidence. Pardon me, gentlemen, confidence is a plant of slow growth in an aged bosom.” He plainly discovered, he affirmed, “the traces of an over-ruling influence.” He distinctly pointed to the supposed influence of lord Bute. The great Commoner was probably mistaken, but he was undoubtedly sincere. Conway distinctly repelled the charge that the ministry had been subjected to that particular influence. Pitt has been greatly blamed for not allying himself with the Rockingham Administration. He was invited by them with an earnestness that approached to obsequiousness. He turned a deaf ear to their overtures. They fell, from their inability to stand against the unwilling support of the sovereign, and the intrigues of those who arrogated to themselves the exclusive title of the king’s friends. This ministry did popular things. They gave in to the clamour of the weavers, by passing

* Speech on American Taxation, 1774.

† “George III.,” vol. ii. p. 299.

an act for restraining the importation of foreign silks. They repealed the cider tax. They passed Resolutions declaring the illegality of General Warrants, and condemning the seizure of private papers, to discover the authors of libels. Their concessions in some degree indicated their weakness. Several of their minor supporters deserted them. The duke of Grafton left them, resigning his office of Secretary of State, on the ground that they wanted "authority, dignity, and extension;" that he knew but one man who could give them strength and solidity; and that were that person to give his assistance, "he should with pleasure take up the spade and the pickaxe, and dig in the trenches."* A disagreement ensued in the Cabinet; the king was told that the ministry could not go on as they were; and his majesty, in July, resolved to send for Mr. Pitt, and so told his servants. The king wrote him a letter, expressing his desire to have his thoughts "how an able and dignified ministry may be formed." Pitt answered the king—"penetrated with the deepest sense of your majesty's boundless goodness to me, and with a heart overflowing with duty and zeal for the honour and happiness of the most gracious and benign sovereign." Lord Temple was sent for by the king; and his majesty wrote to Mr. Pitt, who was ill, that he had opened a desire to see his lordship in the Treasury; but that "he seems to incline to quarters very heterogeneous to my and your ideas, and almost a total exclusion of the present men." Temple was ambitious. He was indignant at the idea of being "stuck into a ministry as a great cypher at the head of the Treasury, surrounded with other cyphers all named by Mr. Pitt."† The ministry was at length formed. The duke of Grafton became head of the Treasury; general Conway and lord Shelburne, Secretaries of State; lord Camden, Lord Chancellor; Charles Townshend, Chancellor of the Exchequer. Mr. Pitt, to the great surprise of the world, on taking the office of Lord Privy Seal went to the House of Peers as Earl of Chatham.

The transformation of Pitt into Chatham is held to have destroyed his popularity. "That fatal title blasted all the affection which his country had borne to him, and which he had deserved so well. . . . The people, though he had done no act to occasion reproach, thought he had sold them for a title."‡ The City of London declined to present an address on the appointment to office of the man they had idolised. The objectors seem to have forgotten the bodily infirmities which necessarily prevented him

* "Chatham Correspondence," vol. ii. p. 422.

+ *Ibid.*, p. 436 and 438.

‡ Walpole—"George III.," vol. ii. p. 358.

taking the post in the House of Commons which a prime minister was expected to take ; and they scarcely gave him credit for the power which remained to him, of influencing his colleagues by the vigour of his plans, when he could not command a popular assembly by the splendour of his eloquence. He had large projects of statesmanship. He was anxious to cement an alliance with the Protestant States of Europe, to counterbalance the Family Compact of France and Spain, which was leading those powers again to meditate attacks upon England. He sent an ambassador to confer with the Czarina of Russia and Frederick of Prussia ; but Frederick was indignant at the treatment he had received at the peace, and could place no reliance on a policy so subject to the consequences of ministerial change. There is a strong testimony to the rare powers of lord Chatham's mind, at an early period of his administration. Charles Townshend for the first time attended the Cabinet as Chancellor of the Exchequer, when the great statesman developed his views of the position of Europe. "Mr. Townshend," says the duke of Grafton in his Memoirs, "was particularly astonished ; and owned to me, as I was carrying him home in my carriage, that lord Chatham had just shown us what inferior animals we were, and that much as we had seen of him before, he did not conceive till that night his superiority to be so very transcendent." The minister contemplated important changes in the government of Ireland. "To enable himself to contend with the powerful connections there, he proposed to establish himself upon the basis of a just popularity, by shortening the duration of Parliament, and granting other measures which the Irish appeared to have most at heart."* Lord Chatham also had in view organic changes in the constitution of the East India Company—their astonishing dominion having now become an anomaly in the absence of government control, and their vast revenues the means of administering to private rapacity and injustice.

The Administration entered upon its duties at a period of domestic trouble. The season was one of extreme wetness. The harvest failed ; and riots attended the rising price of corn. But the price had not quite reached the point at which exportation was forbidden. By an Order in Council an embargo was laid on exportation. The Parliament had not been called together, as it might have been, to sanction the measure, which came into operation on the 24th of September. Parliament met, according to the date of its prorogation, on the 11th of November. The first ap-

* Letter from Lord Camden ; quoted from the MS. by sir Denis Le Marchant, in note to Walpole's "George III.," vol. iii. p. 111.

pearance of Chatham in the House of Lords was to defend the Order in Council on the ground of public necessity. Camden and others in both Houses maintained its legality. Fierce debates ensued, in which this exercise of the prerogative was compared to former unconstitutional attempts to set up a dispensing power. It was thought essential to mark that such an exertion of the prerogative was not constitutional. An Act of Indemnity was therefore passed to exonerate those who had advised, and acted upon, the Order in Council. A Parliamentary inquiry into the affairs of the East India Company was now forced on by Chatham, in opposition to the wishes of several of his colleagues. He refused to impart to them the nature and extent of his plans. Several of the Rockingham party resolved to secede from him. He had to form new combinations of public men; and to quiet the apprehensions of those who were accused of being despotically governed by him. During the Christmas recess Chatham went to Bath, where he became seriously ill. Parliament assembled, and the prime minister was not in his place. His Cabinet fell into disorder. The fatal effects of the absence of the chief, and his unwillingness to entrust responsibility to his colleagues, were signally manifested, when the Chancellor of the Exchequer commended the Stamp Act, and again proposed to tax the Colonies. Burke has described in his Speech upon American Taxation, this strange disorganization of lord Chatham's ministry. "When his face was hid but for a moment, his whole system was on a wide sea, without chart or compass. . . . As if it were to insult as well as betray him, even long before the close of the first Session of his Administration, when everything was publicly transacted, and with great parade, in his name, they made an Act declaring it highly just and expedient to raise a revenue in America. For even then, sir, even before this splendid orb was entirely set, and while the western horizon was in a blaze with his descending glory, on the opposite quarter of the heavens arose another luminary, and, for his hour, became lord of the ascendant. You understand, to be sure, that I speak of Charles Townshend, officially the reproducer of this fatal scheme."

That portion of the life of Chatham when he was nominally the head of the Administration, but wholly incapable of directing the national affairs, and altogether shrinking from that direction, is as difficult to understand as it is melancholy to contemplate. In the beginning of 1767, when the Parliament met, he was ill at Bath. In the middle of February, the gout had returned so severely upon him as to confine him to his bed at the inn at Marlborough,—as he

writes to lord Shelburne by the hands of his secretary. In that inn he is described by Walpole as "inaccessible and invisible, though surrounded by a train of domestics that occupied the whole inn, and wore the appearance of a little court."* Here he remained a fortnight. The duke of Grafton earnestly entreats to be allowed to come to the earl of Chatham. The answer is, that "until he is able to move towards London, it is by no means practicable to him to enter into discussions of business." On the 2nd of March he came to town, but unable to stir hand or foot. At this time the ministry had been in a minority upon the question whether the Land Tax should be reduced in amount. The king writes to Chatham expressing his reliance upon him "to withstand that evil called connexion," to which his majesty attributes the defeat of the ministry. Chatham responds reverentially. Meanwhile the public business falls into confusion; a violent Opposition, a divided Ministry. From the beginning of April the prime minister had not been allowed to see any one, nor to receive letters. It was in vain that his colleagues desired to visit him. Business, said Chatham, was impossible for him. Again and again the king wrote affectionately to his minister; and at last said, "If you cannot come to me tomorrow, I am ready to call on you." As an interview less to be dreaded, Chatham consented to receive the duke of Grafton. The duke records in his Memoirs that he found him in a different state from what he expected. "His nerves and spirits were affected in a dreadful degree, and the sight of his great mind bowed down and thus weakened by disorder would have filled me with grief and concern, even if I had not long borne a sincere attachment to his person and character." The Session closed on the 2nd of July. The duke of Grafton was now the real minister; although the name of Chatham in some degree upheld the government.

A theory has been proposed, in a review of the Chatham Correspondence, that the illness of the great minister was a long series of pretences—"that the gout, whatever may have been its real severity, was exaggerated in order to excuse a line of conduct, for which, even if true, it would have furnished no excuse;"—that the gout was a frequent pretext;—that the desire of lord Chatham to have a power of attorney prepared in order to enable his lady to transact his private business was a blind;"—that his disappointment at his loss of popularity, and his regret at having descended from his proud position of the Great Commoner, made him reluctant to appear in his new

* "George III.," vol. iii. p. 416. The statement in the "Edinburgh Review," vol. lxxx., that Chatham insisted that during his stay all the waiters and stable-boys of the inn should wear his livery, is contradicted by lord Mahon, on the authority of the late Mr. Thomas Grenville.

character, and that he clung to office till he could find some striking and popular occasion for his resignation.* Never was ingenuity more absurdly exercised for the purpose of damaging a great man's character. The true solution of this mystery is, that the intellect of Chatham was temporarily enfeebled, almost destroyed; that he did not resign office, although incapable of performing its duties, because the ordinary perceptions of his mind were clouded to an extent that left him no power of judgment; and that when he did resign, in October, 1768, on account of "the deplorable state of his health," his mind had to some extent resumed its vigour, though his bodily infirmities were as great as ever. His condition during the continuance of his mental prostration is thus described: "Lord Chatham's state of health is certainly the lowest dejection and debility that mind or body can be in. He sits all the day leaning on his hands, which he supports on the table; does not permit any person to remain in the room; knocks when he wants anything; and having made his wants known, gives a signal, without speaking, to the person who answered his call, to retire."† He had sold his property at Hayes, and was removed to Burton-Pynsent, a valuable estate he had acquired under the will of sir William Pynsent. With the intense eagerness of a mind verging on insanity, his one idea was to re-purchase Hayes. Difficulties were naturally raised; and he resigned himself to his disappointment, saying "That might have saved me." But the re-purchase was effected; and for many months he dwelt there secluded from all mankind. Lord Chatham, according to Walpole, under an attack of the gout, had put himself into the hands of Dr. Addington—"innovating enough in his practice to be justly deemed a quack. . . . If all was not a farce, I should think the physician rather caused the disease; Addington having kept off the gout, and possibly dispersed it through his nerves, or even driven it up to his head."‡ If all was a farce, it was a long farce to occupy more than a year in playing out.

The ministry struggled on with considerable difficulty through the Session of 1768. There had been many changes in its composition. Charles Townshend had died of fever. His brilliant talents were neutralized by his levity; and it was clear that if his ambition had placed him at the head of the government, he would have done some rash things—perhaps precipitated a war with America earlier than the nobleman, lord North, who succeeded Townshend as the Chancellor of Exchequer. The Parliament, now approaching the end of its septennial term, was dissolved on the 11th of March, 1768.

* "Quarterly Review," vol. lxvi. p. 251.

† Letter in Lord Lyttelton's "Memoirs."

‡ "George III.," vol. ii. p. 451.

CHAPTER VI.

New Parliament.—Non-publication of Debates.—Wilkes returned for Middlesex.—Riots.—Sentence upon Wilkes.—His expulsions from Parliament and re-elections.—Debates on the privileges of the Commons.—The letters of Junius.—Personalities of Junius.—His attacks on the duke of Grafton.—Private letters of Junius.—His attack on the duke of Bedford.—Address of Junius to the king.—Opening of Parliament.—Lord Chatham.—Chatham's speech on the Address.—Schism in the Ministry.—Lo. d Camden disclaims their measures.—Resignation of the duke of Grafton.

THE new Parliament was opened on the 10th of May, 1768. In this most important Session the non-publication of debates was enforced with almost unequalled strictness. Horace Walpole has, for some years, been to us the almost only authority for forming any notion of the debating power in an age of real oratory, if we may judge of its rhetorical excellence from the testimony of contemporaries. He is not now a member of "the Thirteenth Parliament of Great Britain." He says, "What traces of debates shall appear hereafter must be mutilated and imperfect, as being received by hearsay from others or taken from notes communicated to me."* The rigid enforcement of the Standing Order for the exclusion of strangers went on from 1768 to 1774—the whole term of the duration of this Parliament, thus known as the "Unreported Parliament." But the debates of the House of Commons in this stirring period were not "unreported." Mr. Cavendish (afterwards sir Henry Cavendish), member for Lostwithiel, not only devoted himself to the task of taking down the heads of speeches, but after some practice, attempted to report them "more at large." These most valuable notes have been the foundation of the collection edited by Mr. J. Wright, as "Sir Henry Cavendish's Debates;" but, probably from inadequate public encouragement, these Reports, in their printed form, do not extend beyond March 27, 1771.†

At the opening of Parliament the ministry comprised lord Camden, Lord Chancellor; the duke of Grafton, First Lord of the Treasury; lord Shelburne, Secretary of State; lord North, Chancellor of the Exchequer. Lord Chatham still held the Privy Seal, but continued unable to discharge any official duties. It was the

* "Memoirs of George III.," vol. iii. p. 180.

† Published in Parts, in 1843, and forming two volumes, the second of which is incomplete.

duke of Grafton's ministry. The new Parliament commenced in a tempest of popular violence, such as had been unwitnessed in England for many years. John Wilkes, an outlaw, suddenly returned from France, at the time when the writs had been issued for a general election, and he declared himself a candidate for the city of London. He was lowest on the poll, there being four aldermen in nomination, who had the suffrages of most decent citizens. Wilkes then proposed himself as a candidate for the county of Middlesex. The ministry were unwilling to proceed against him on his outlawry; and the Whigs, generally, could not well forget that he had been their tool. The demagogue was returned as member for Middlesex; and his triumph was celebrated by illuminations and riots. On the 20th of April, being the first day of term, Wilkes, according to a promise he had given, surrendered to his outlawry, and was committed to custody. A violent mob rescued their favourite from the officers of the court; but he had the prudence to get away from them, and surrender himself at the King's Bench prison. Riots daily took place in the neighbourhood of Wilkes's place of confinement. On the 10th of May, a vast concourse of people assembled in St. George's Fields, to convey the member for Middlesex to his seat in the House, which it was thought he would then take in virtue of his privilege. The riot act was read when the mob assailed the prison-gates; and the military being called in, five or six persons lost their lives, and many were wounded. The magistrate who gave the order to fire was tried and acquitted. On the 11th of May a royal proclamation was issued "for suppressing riots, tumults, and other unlawful assemblies." There were other causes of tumult than the political agitations connected with Wilkes. Seamen from vessels in the Thames were parading the streets, demanding increase of wages; and having interfered with the unloading of colliers, the coalheavers took part against the sailors, and were fighting with them in the public thoroughfares. The coalheavers had their own especial grievance, having by Act of Parliament been subjected to the jurisdiction of the alderman of the ward. An alehouse-keeper of the name of Green had given offence to the coalheavers, who were chiefly Irish; and they vowed his destruction. Walpole relates their proceedings, as "the fiercest and most memorable of all the tumults." His narrative shows the lawlessness of the metropolis ninety years ago. Green, Walpole says, "every night removed his wife and children out of his house. One evening he received notice that the coalheavers were coming to attack him. He had nobody with him but a maid-servant and a sailor, who by accident

was drinking in the house. Green asked the sailor if he would assist him. 'Yes,' answered the generous tar, 'I will defend any man in distress.' At eight the rioters appeared, and fired on the house, lodging in one room above two hundred bullets; and when their ammunition was spent they bought pewter pots, cut them to pieces, and fired them as a ball. At length with an axe they broke out the bottom of the door; but that breach the sailor defended singly; while Green and his maid kept up a constant fire, and killed eighteen of the besiegers. Their powder and ball being at last wasted, Green said he must make his escape; 'for you,' he said to the friendly sailor, 'they will not hurt you.' Green, retiring from the back room of his house, got into a carpenter's yard and was concealed in a sawpit, over which the mob passed in their pursuit of him, being told he was gone forwards." During nine hours, whilst this tumult was going on, no police or military interfered. Green was tried for murder and was acquitted. Seven of the coalheavers were executed; but the revenge of their associates did not cease, for they murdered Green's sister. The brave sailor "never owned himself; never claimed honour or recompense for his generous gallantry." *

The only real business in the first short Session of the new Parliament was to continue the Act prohibiting the exportation of corn and flour. The Houses adjourned after sitting only ten days, and the Parliament was afterwards prorogued. Colonel Luttrell on the 10th of May had moved "that the proper officer of the Crown do inform the House, why the laws were not immediately put in force against John Wilkes, Esq., an outlaw;" but the Speaker held that the motion could not be entertained. The parliament did not re-assemble till the 8th of November; but the case of John Wilkes had been kept alive in the public mind by the legal proceedings against him. Lord Mansfield, in June, delivered judgment in the Court of King's Bench, that the outlawry of Mr. Wilkes was null and void, through a defect in the pleadings; but the original judgment against him for libels was sufficient, and he was sentenced to two years' imprisonment, and to two fines of 500*l.* There were illuminations in the Strand on the 27th of October, in honour of Wilkes's birth-day. On the 2nd of January, 1769, he was elected alderman of the ward of Farringdon Without; and subsequently, some informality having been found in the proceedings, he was re-elected. He was to be raised to the highest pinnacle of popularity by the contest in which the government, acting through the House of Commons, now became engaged with

* "Memoirs of George III.," vol. iii., p. 219.

the prisoner in the King's Bench who had been elected member for Middlesex. On the 14th of November, a petition to the Commons was presented from Mr. Wilkes "for redress of his grievances." The proceedings upon this petition occupied much time; and the House of Commons appeared eager to raise another issue, upon a complaint in the House of Peers of Lord Weymouth, the Secretary of State, that Wilkes had published a libel against himself. The Commons, after a conference with the Lords, took this matter in hand; summoned Wilkes to their bar in custody; and received his defiance in the assertion that he was the author of the paper complained of, and that he gloried in it. The House decided that this was an insolent, scandalous, and seditious libel. On the 3rd of February, lord Barrington moved that John Wilkes, having confessed himself the author of what the House had deemed to be a libel, and being also under sentence for other seditious, obscene, and impious libels, be expelled. The motion was carried by a majority of eighty-two; and a new writ was moved for Middlesex. The sentence of expulsion was resisted by the minority upon constitutional grounds; and upon the same principle Wilkes was re-elected unanimously. The election was declared null and void by a majority in the Commons of a hundred and forty-six. Again the freeholders of Middlesex resolved to set at nought the decision of Parliament. The rights of electors were considered to be violated. Large sums were subscribed to carry on this dangerous battle between the people and their representatives. The whole kingdom was in agitation. Wilkes was a third time elected; and it was voted, that having been expelled the House he was incapacitated for election. The government now provided a candidate who would not shrink from opposing the popular favourite. Colonel Luttrell vacated his seat, and stood for the metropolitan county. On the 13th of April, without any tumult, Wilkes was a fourth time returned by a very large majority. The House of Commons now decided by a majority of fifty-four, that Luttrell should have been returned, and not Wilkes, and that Luttrell should take his seat. The king, in April, 1768, had urged upon lord North the necessity for the expulsion of Wilkes; and on this last decision of the House he congratulated the Chancellor of the Exchequer upon "the very honourable issue of the debate." His majesty added, "the House has, with becoming dignity, supported their own privileges, without which they cannot subsist, and it is now my duty to see the laws obeyed."

King, Lords, and Commons, were now committed to what was deemed a warfare against the people, and a violation of constitu-

tional rights. Sober statesmen were alarmed. Granby and Conway staid away from Parliament on the motion for the expulsion of Wilkes. "Having declared against violent measures they would not concur in it; and disapproving Wilkes's attacks on the government, they would not defend him."* Dunning took the same course. When lord Barrington moved the expulsion, George Grenville, during whose administration Wilkes had been first arrested for the libel in the "North Briton," delivered a speech which may even now be read with admiration for its grave wisdom. He denied, in the strongest terms, the legality and the prudence of the proposed measure.† Burke brought all the force of his eloquence to contend against the manifest disposition of the House. One sentence would not be readily forgotten: "The late hour of the night—the candles—all put me in mind of the representation of the last act of a tragi-comedy, performed by his majesty's servants, by desire of several persons of distinction, for the benefit of Mr. Wilkes, and at the expense of the constitution."‡ The conclusion of his speech pointed to the impending danger: "I dread the consequences of this violent struggle between the two tides of power and popularity." The House went on debating, with more or less energy, on every occasion when the re-election of Wilkes was the subject of controversy. On the 15th of April, upon the motion for declaring colonel Luttrell member for Middlesex, instead of Mr. Wilkes, the discussion was conducted with a heat that manifested how the passions even of temperate men had become committed to this unhappy contest. Alderman Beckford having been interrupted by Mr. Onslow in saying that "he apprehended a Resolution of the House of Commons was not the law of the land," George Grenville rose to the point of order, and with great animation exclaimed, "Sir, the man who will contend that a Resolution of the House of Commons is the law of the land, is a most violent enemy of his country, be he who or what he will." His emotion was so great that on the conclusion of his short speech, "Mr. Grenville spat blood."§ On the same evening, Charles Fox, who had not then attained his majority, made his first speech, in favour of the government. The debut of the "man of the people" of after times was not promising. He said that "the contest was between the House of Commons and the lowest scum of the people." Burke replied, in terms which probably sank deep into the mind of the young man, who was then renowned only

* Walpole—"George III.," vol. iii. p. 317.

† Reported in full in the "Cavendish Debates," vol. i. pp. 159 to 176.

‡ "Cavendish Debates," vol. i. p. 180.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

for his extravagance: "Sir, if party distinction is to be raised up in this country between the gentlemen and those who have this evening been called beggarly—if such a party should ever arise—woe betide the gentlemen! If, dabbling in intrigues, they make themselves contemptible and useless, they will never be respected the active, industrious, those who labour, will get before them."* On the 8th of May, there was a debate on the petition against the return of colonel Luttrell, when the question that he was duly elected was affirmed by a majority of sixty-nine. On that occasion, Mr. Henry Cavendish said, "I lay it down as a principle that no Order of the House of Commons can make a minority a majority; that no Resolution of the House of Commons can ever make Mr. Luttrell the legal representative of the county of Middlesex: for I do, from my soul, abhor, detest, and abjure, as unconstitutional and illegal, that damnable doctrine and position, that a Resolution of the House of Commons can make, alter, suspend, abrogate, or annihilate the law of the land."† The next day, seventy members dined together at the Thatched House Tavern, when one of the toasts was "Mr. Cavendish's creed." Another toast was, "The first edition of Dr. Blackstone's Commentaries on the Laws of England."‡ The allusion was to the debate of the previous night. Blackstone, then Solicitor-General to the queen, had declared that the legal incapacity of Wilkes to sit in that House was established by the Common Law; and Grenville said, "I greatly prefer the opinion given by the learned gentleman in his work on the Laws of England, to what fell from him this evening;" and then quoted a passage from the Commentaries as to the qualifications of persons to be elected.§

Whilst this contest was going on in Parliament, the attention of the town, and very soon of the whole nation, was turned to an anonymous writer in the "Public Advertiser," who, under the signature of "Junius," commenced a series of attacks upon persons of high station, that formed, by their fearlessness as well as their ability, a striking contrast to the ordinary communications to newspapers. There had been many previous letters in the same paper, printed and conducted by Mr. Henry Sampson Woodfall, which, from their personalities, had made some noise. Many of these, signed Poplicola, Anti-Sejanus, jun., Correggio, Mnemon, Lucius, Atticus, have been ascribed to the same writer; but it has been maintained very convincingly, in successive articles in the "Athe-

* "Cavendish Debates," vol. i. p. 383.

† *Ibid.*, p. 428.

‡ "Chatham Correspondence," vol. iii. p. 360.

§ "Cavendish Debates," vol. i. p. 430.

næum," that, although included in the edition of Junius of 1812, the theory of their coming from one and the same pen, is not to be accepted without large qualification. Nevertheless, careful inquirers, amongst whom is lord Mahon, think they would not have appeared in Woodfall's edition without some good authority. These letters abound with very choice figures of speech, which have a remarkable resemblance to the undoubted writings of Junius. Lord Chatham, in the spring of 1767, is "a man purely and perfectly bad,"—"a grand vizier,"—one who had accepted "a share of power under a pernicious court minion." In the autumn, Chatham is "a lunatic brandishing a crutch." Camden is a judge, with the laws of England under his feet, and "before his distorted vision a dagger which marshals him the way to the murder of the constitution." Beastliness and brutality characterize these productions, in many instances. Profaneness is common enough. So far these letters agree with those of Junius. They agree also in the few political principles which we find amidst their scurrility. Those who contended against the justice and policy of taxing the North American colonies, were "a particular set of men base and treacherous enough to have enlisted under the banners of a lunatic, to whom they sacrificed their honour, their conscience, and their country,—the wretched ministers who served at the altar, whilst the high priest himself, with more than frantic fury, offered up his bleeding country a victim to America." On the 5th of April, 1768, the return of Wilkes to England offered a favourable occasion for a new attack to be opened against the ministry of the duke of Grafton, under the signature of C., which Junius adopted in his private correspondence with his printer. Wilkes was now the object of his most rancorous abuse—"a most infamous character in private life." The ministry were responsible for this outlaw being at large. "We are still strong enough to defend our lives and properties against Mr. Wilkes and his banditti." Within a year there was no man more zealous than Junius in an endeavour to stimulate this banditti into those acts of violence which are the natural consequence of writings which rouse the passions by unmeasured personalities. He made no attempts to sustain the people in a temperate assertion of their rights; or to bring the powers of argument to deter those who were invading those rights. His mode of proceeding has its admirers, as we learn from his last idolator: "Junius had a busier mission than that of writing panegyrics on principles,—or didactic essays on axiomatic politics . . . Principle, in those days, if not practised, being at least understood, Junius was, in my judgment, right in applying his vast powers

rather to the chastisement of wrong-doers, than to theoretical disquisitions on wrongs done."*

It is more than forty years ago since the author of this History was induced diligently to read the "Letters of Junius." The elaborate edition by Woodfall was then recently published; but to a youth it was more important that, as a "British Classic," Junius could be carried about as a pocket volume. Little more than forty years had passed since the victims of Junius were guiding the destinies of the nation. The "great personage" whom he had assailed with unexampled boldness was still alive, although utterly insensible to what opinions might be held of the honesty of his arch-enemy. Probably the study of Junius as a master of invective was seriously damaging to our capacity for forming a correct judgment of the public men of a very remarkable period. Certainly it required a much more intimate acquaintance with the real materials for an impartial view of national affairs than were then open to us, to divest ourselves of a lingering confidence that these brilliant epigrams of an anonymous assailant of the great had not only a broad foundation of truth to rest upon, but were substantially true. Unquestionably it demanded a strong exercise of the reasoning faculty not to be seduced by the fascination of the mystery which had so long defied an absolute solution. It was more than difficult not to believe that this man in the mask was some grand and awful magician, endued with all-penetrating knowledge, wondrous ability, and irresistible power. The tardy conviction at length arrived that, whether of high rank or of humble, a senator or a garreteer, a minister of state or an eavesdropper, a noble lord in a blue ribbon or an office clerk, he was, taken all in all, one of the most abandoned of anonymous literary assassins; that no writer ever more abused the power of the press for the gratification of his "envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness." Again we read Junius, now that we have to write of Grafton, Mansfield, Bedford, whom he made his quarry. When we now see that his elaborately pointed periods are really the vehicle of anything higher than temporary personalities of the dirtiest character such as a gentleman would scorn, and of dastardly insinuations such as none but a coward could utter in disguise, we care not to trouble ourselves about the solution of the riddle which has engaged so many acute minds—*Who* was Junius? We are content with asking, *What* was Junius? If that question be answered in accordance with our opinion of his character, we may arrive at one safe conclusion—*Who* Junius was *not*.

"William Burke the Author of Junius." By J. C. Symons. 1859.

Horace Walpole has a remark upon the author of Junius, which appears to have been overlooked by some who think that the literary merit of these Letters will keep their moral turpitude in the back-ground. "Men," he says, "wondered how any one possessed of such talents could have the forbearance to write in a manner so desperate as to prevent his ever receiving personal applause for his writings: the venom was too black not to disgrace even his ashes."* The representatives of Sir Philip Francis have paraded his claims to be Junius, as if he, in that belief, were to be honoured in the dust. The letter of lady Francis to lord Campbell is an earnest pleading that the renown of being the author of Junius shall be allotted to her deceased husband. † When the able editor of the "Grenville Papers," then librarian to the late duke of Buckingham suggested to his grace "the possibility that lord Temple might have been the author of Junius," although the duke had not heard it as a family tradition, he "did not discourage the supposition." The librarian at Stowe, with whom the honour of the Grenvilles must have had some weight, thus encouraged, writes upwards of two hundred pages of "Notes on the Authorship of Junius," which he thus concludes: "It is my firm and deliberate conviction, that if lord Temple were not the author of Junius, then the author has never yet been publicly named." ‡ The writer of a very interesting article in the "Quarterly Review," seeks to identify Junius with Thomas lord Lyttelton—the "profligate lord Lyttelton" as he was called,—not more by the remarkable talents of this young nobleman, than by his unquestionable familiarity with the gross excesses and base insinuations in which Junius delighted to indulge; by the love of Junius for private scandal, picked up in "the haunts of refined blackguardism" which Thomas Lyttelton frequented.§ If "the venom of Junius was too black not to disgrace his ashes;" if that vanity which led Junius to hold that his Letters would descend to posterity in company with the Bible had some counterpart in the intense vanity of sir Philip Francis; if one of the resemblances between Junius and Temple was, that the most scurrilous pamphlets were written under the direction of this malignant friend of Wilkes; if to be plunged in the grossest sensuality was one proof that Lyttelton was Junius—how will these attributes support the theory of some of his contemporaries that Burke was the real Junius;—or the modified hypothesis now put forward,

* "Memoirs of George III.," vol. iii. p. 402.

† Printed in Campbell's "Chancellors," vol. iv.—and given also in Bohn's edition of Junius, vol. ii. p. lxii.

‡ "Grenville Papers," vol. iii. p. ccxxxviii.

§ "Quarterly Review," vol. xc.

that "Edmund Burke in all probability aided William in writing Junius."*

In noticing, perhaps more fully than they intrinsically deserve, the Letters of Junius, it is our chief duty to regard them as bearing upon, and in connection with, the history of their time. There can be no doubt that they had some influence upon the movements of party; terrified a few persons of high station; made others more obstinate in their contempt even of the truths uttered by a systematic libeller. That they produced any real and permanent benefit to the country can scarcely be pretended, even by those who shut their eyes to the monstrous evil of that system of personality which they carried to its utmost limit—a system which was the disgrace of the literature of that period, and which only died out when anonymous writers accepted their position of secrecy as one that imposed as heavy, perhaps heavier, responsibilities than belonged to acknowledged authorship. Junius waged no chivalric war. In "complete steel" he was fighting with naked men. Sir Nathaniel Wraxall, amongst his gossiping anecdotes, says that Mr. Bradshaw, the Secretary of the Treasury, made no secret "of the agony into which the duke of Grafton was thrown by these productions. Such was their effect and operation on his mind, as sometimes utterly to incapacitate him during whole days for the ministerial duties of his office."† It was "the venom of the shaft rather than the vigour of the bow"‡ which made the prime minister sick, "as a sick girl," under these skin-deep wounds from a foe in ambush.

The first especial attack of Junius on the duke of Grafton was in connection with an event which was associated with the Wilkite agitation. Mr. Cooke, the member who had been returned for Middlesex at the same time with Wilkes, having died, Serjeant Glynn had been elected in December, with the recommendation to popular favour of having been counsel for Wilkes. The court had also put a candidate in nomination. The "roughs" at this period were mostly chairmen, of whom the greater number were Irish. The mob, whether hirelings or volunteers, engaged in a fierce battle, which ended in the death of Mr. Clarke, one of the friends of the popular candidate. Two chairmen, whose names were Macquirk and Balfe, had a verdict of Wilful Murder returned against them on a coroner's inquest; and they were tried at the Old Bailey, and found guilty, in January. The feeling of the populace was manifested by the shouts and clapping of hands which

* "William Burke, the Author of Junius," p. 6.

† "Historical Memoirs," vol. i. p. 454.

‡ Johnson—"Falkland Islands."

arose in the gallery, when the verdict was given. They were left for execution, although one had been recommended to mercy by the jury, and there were circumstances which invalidated the proof that these men, however engaged in the riot, had struck the deceased. Walpole relates that two members of the House of Commons, who saw "the glaring cruelty of putting two men to death who had neither counselled the deed nor meditated it," expressed their opinion in the House of Commons; that there was not a dissenting voice on the recommendation that they should be pardoned; and that consequently the criminals were respited during pleasure. At the desire of the Secretary of State, the College of Surgeons entered upon an examination of witnesses, and gave as their unanimous opinion that the blow which was described on the trial was not the cause of Clarke's death. The men accordingly received the King's free pardon. Burke, on the 15th of April, spoke strongly against this proceeding: "After a jury, upon legal evidence, have given their verdict—the court of judicature has determined, the judges have approved, and the party is under sentence,—the mercy of the Crown interposes: 'No, no,' say the government, 'we must get a jury of surgeons; of that kind of judicature we must avail ourselves;' and the man receives the royal pardon." * The orator complains of this mode of setting aside a solemn verdict by an irregular inquiry; but he does not make his complaint the vehicle for a personal attack upon the prime minister or any member of the government. Junius, on the contrary, writes thus to the duke of Grafton: "When the laws have given you the means of making an example, in every sense unexceptionable, and by far the most likely to awe the multitude, you pardon the offence, and are not ashamed to give the sanction of government to the riots you complain of, and even to future murders. You are partial, perhaps, to the military mode of execution; and had rather see a score of these wretches butchered by the guards, than one of them suffer death by regular course of law." The object of Burke is to complain of an irregular ministerial act: the purpose of Junius is to damage an individual.

The one paramount desire of Junius was to destroy the administration of the duke of Grafton. He had no large conception of a general policy that should unite a great party in the conduct of affairs if that administration were destroyed. The two questions which absorbed the thoughts, and divided the opinions, of all public men, were the contest between Parliamentary Privilege and Wilkes, and the more perplexing quarrel between the mother coun-

* "Cavendish Debates," vol. i. p. 382.

try and the North American Colonies. It was known that the king held the most decided opinions on both these questions—that he would have pursued Wilkes to the utmost reach of power whatever might be the unpopularity; and that he would assert the right of taxation over the Colonies, whatever might be the danger of rebellion and war. The ministry of the duke of Grafton was committed, in a great degree, to an agreement with the will of the sovereign, less perhaps from conviction than from an imperfect view of the consequences of persisting in a doubtful career. At this juncture lord Chatham, having ceased to be at the head of affairs, was free to pursue his own declared sentiments on the subject of American taxation, and to form an independent judgment on the case of Wilkes. He had become reconciled to his brother-in-law, lord Temple, and was looked upon as having joined the Grenville party. But though he agreed with George Grenville on the unconstitutional proceedings of the House of Commons in the matter of the Middlesex election, he was totally opposed to him on the subject of America. The Rockingham party, of whose policy Burke was now the great parliamentary expositor, held fast to the popular principles in the dispute with the freeholders of Middlesex, but repudiated any such assertion of authority over the Colonies as George Grenville had maintained. Junius not only supported but prompted Wilkes in every act that could damage the ministry. But he also spoke in the most contemptuous terms of any individual or any party that deemed the Colonists anything but rebels, to be trodden down as troublesome vermin. Ostensibly he was an adherent of George Grenville. Had he any real principles? He was not a politician, in the higher sense of the word. He had some selfish ambition to gratify; he had some private grievances to revenge. He might be a writing puppet, moved by some one of higher mark—a Francis, or a Iyer, prompted by a Temple. He might be a man of noble birth, mining like a mole; whose vanity was gratified by the notoriety which he demanded,—pleased with acquiring another self-consciousness than that which belonged to his proper person. Whoever he was, he had essentially a paltry mind. He had not the mind of any man that had won or was winning a great name—a Chatham or a Burke, even a Barré or a Shelburne. He was “a good hater;” but his dislikes had more of the real meanness than of the false grandeur of hatred. His true nature was disclosed in his private letters to his printer. Of Mansfield, the lord chief justice, he says, “I will never rest till I have destroyed or expelled that wretch.” Mr. Chamier, a member of the club which Johnson, Reynolds, Burke, and Goldsmith

made illustrious, is "to be run down," to annoy lord Barrington, the secretary-at-war, who had appointed him his deputy. With the airs of an aristocrat he writes to Garrick, "Mark me, vagabond. Keep to your pantomimes, or be assured you shall hear of it." With the determination of an assassin, he says of the duke of Bedford, "I am sure I can threaten him privately with such a storm as would make him tremble even in his grave." In consonance with his whole system, he recommends Woodfall to deny the authenticity of one of his letters which had been printed: "Suppose you were to say—We have some reason to suspect that the last letter signed Junius in this paper was not written by the real Junius." To show how the coward trembled even in his triple armour of concealment, we have only to quote from one letter to his publisher: "I must be more cautious than ever. I am sure I should not survive a discovery three days; or, if I did, they would attain me by bill. I am persuaded you are too honest a man to contribute in any way to my destruction." Attain him by bill! as if he were a Bolingbroke or an Ormonde. He was a man of rank, and had their penalties of forfeiture in his mind, according to the belief of one who has looked carefully into the subject.* In our view, the fear of attainder was only one of the many pretences by which an inordinately vain man sought to raise his personal importance in the eyes of the humble friend to whom he left all the real peril consequent upon his own audacity. "I hope these papers have reimbursed you. I never will send you anything that I think dangerous; but the risque is yours, and you must determine for yourself."

The duke of Grafton, in 1769, was thirty-four years of age. He had the misfortune to be divorced from his wife by no fault of his own; and he subsequently made no secret of keeping a mistress—the great of that day not having been shamed into decency by the decorum of the Court. These circumstances are paraded by Junius without reserve. His descent from Charles II. was objected to him as a crime. But there was a greater sin which Grafton had just committed. He had quitted Nancy Parsons, and married a niece of the duchess of Bedford. The family union was the symptom of political union; and the hatred of Junius to the two ducal houses strengthened with their strength. His letter to the duke of Bedford appeared immediately after outrages committed upon the duke at Exeter and at Honiton. Bull-dogs were set upon him, as he rode through the latter town, and he was pelted with stones by an outrageous mob, who cried "Wilkes and Liberty,"—"the Peace

* "Quarterly Review," vol. xc. p. 101.

maker."* Junius took up the hint. The duke was assaulted on the 30th of July. On the 19th of September appeared a letter in which "the Peacemaker," who as ambassador to France negotiated the Peace of Paris, was accused of having made disadvantageous terms for his country upon the receipt of pecuniary compensations. With reference to the Devonshire outrages, we have this passage: "Your friends will ask, perhaps, whither shall this unhappy old man retire? Can he remain in the metropolis, where his life has been often threatened, and his palace so often attacked? If he returns to Woburn, scorn and mockery await him. He must create a solitude round his estate, if he would avoid the face of reproach and d erision. At Plymouth his destruction would be more than probable; at Exeter, inevitable." Lord Brougham has devoted a paper to the vindication of the character of John, fourth duke of Bedford,—“to rescue the memory of an able, an amiable, and an honourable man, long engaged in the public service, both as a minister, a negociator, and a viceroy—long filling, like all his illustrious house, in every age of our history, an exalted place among the champions of our free constitution—from the obloquy with which a licentious press loaded him when living.” Lord Brougham makes the complete refutation which he gives to the falsehoods of Junius, a test of “the claims of a noted slanderer to public confidence.”†

The celebrated Address of Junius to the king may properly close our notice of this over-estimated writer. Of that depth of political information which it has been the fashion to attribute to Junius, this address exhibits no trace. It is a tedious homily, displaying no accurate perception of the character of George III., and touching none of the points on which he was really open to animadversion. He is blamed for his encouragement of “the natives of Scotland;” for removing on his accession the ablest servants of the crown for “a little personal motive of pique and resentment”—not alluding to the design of governing by “the king’s friends;” of hastily concluding a peace with “the natural enemies of this country.” The contest with Wilkes is gone over, without any stronger argument than very dull sarcasm upon the king’s ministers. Allusion is made to Charles I., but only to point to the treachery of his Scotch subjects. The peroration is like the bounce at the end of a squib: “The name of Stuart, of itself, is only contemptible; armed with the sovereign authority, their principles are formidable. The prince who imitates their conduct should be

* Journal of the Duke—in “Cavendish Debates,” p. 620.

† “Sketches of Statesmen who flourished in the time of George III.”

warned by examples ; and, while he plumes himself upon the security of his title to the crown, should remember that, as it was acquired by one revolution, it may be lost by another." Mr. Woodfall was prosecuted for this Address ; and was tried before lord Mansfield, in June 1770. The jury had been charged to consider first, the printing and publishing the paper ; secondly, the sense and meaning of it. But the Chief-justice told them that as to the charge of its being malicious, seditious, &c., these were inferences in law about which no evidence need be given. The jury returned a verdict of " Guilty of printing and publishing only." The Court of King's Bench decided that a new trial should be granted, but the original newspaper not being produced, the proceedings fell to the ground. Out of this trial grew a material alleviation of the Libel Law.

On the 9th of May, the Parliament was prorogued. It was the day after the final decision on the Middlesex election. In the speech from the throne the members were exhorted, " with more than ordinary earnestness," to exert their utmost efforts for the maintenance of the public peace. The excitement throughout the country was considerable, but it rarely took the form of tumult. It was manifest, however, that the supposed victory of the government would not give the nation that quiet which sanguine courtiers anticipated. Lord Chatham came forth from his long retirement, and attended the king's levée on the 7th of July—" he himself, *in propria personâ*, and not in a strait waistcoat," as Walpole writes. From the MS. Memoirs of the duke of Grafton we find that Chatham, when called by the king into his closet, objected to the course which had been pursued in the case of Wilkes, and stated " that he doubted whether his health would ever again allow him to attend Parliament, but if it did, and if he should give his dissent to any measure, that his majesty would be indulgent enough to believe that it would not arise from any personal consideration."

On the 9th of January, 1770, the Parliament was opened by the king. With a singular want of perception of the ridiculous, the first words of the royal speech were these : " My Lords and Gentlemen,—It is with much concern that I find myself obliged to open the Session of Parliament with acquainting you, that the distemper among the horned cattle has lately broke out in this kingdom." The petitions which had been presented from corporations and counties received no notice in this speech. Junius, with some justice, said to the duke of Grafton, " While the whole kingdom was agitated with anxious expectation upon one great point, you meanly evaded the question ; and instead of the firmness and de-

cision of a king, gave us nothing but the misery of a ruined grazier." But a voice more terrible than that of Junius was to rouse the government from its seeming unconcern. In the House of Lords, Chatham moved an amendment to the Address, pledging the peers that they would take into their most serious consideration the causes of the discontents which so generally prevailed, and particularly the late proceedings in the House of Commons touching the incapacity of John Wilkes, Esq., to be elected a member of the present Parliament. The scene in the Upper House on this occasion must have been as exciting as any in the history of our country. The speech by which Chatham introduced the amendment, as well as the speech of lord Mansfield, and lord Chatham's reply, were first published in 1792, from a report of Mr. Francis, afterwards sir Philip Francis, upon whom rests the prevailing opinion that he was Junius. We may judge by the following passage of the tendency of Chatham's speech: "The liberty of the subject is invaded, not only in the provinces, but here at home! The English people are loud in their complaints; they demand redress; and, depend upon it, my lords, that, one way or another, they will have redress. They will never return to a state of tranquillity till they are redressed. Nor ought they. For in my judgment, my lords, and I speak it boldly, it were better for them to perish in a glorious contention for their rights, than to purchase a slavish tranquillity at the expense of a single iota of the Constitution." Lord Mansfield spoke, contending that the proposed amendment was an attack upon the privileges of the other House of Parliament. This produced a reply from lord Chatham. When men speak of the eloquence of this wondrous orator, they quote such passages of this speech as the following.

On the usurpation of power by the House of Commons:—"The Constitution of this country has been openly invaded in fact; and I have heard, with horror and astonishment, that very invasion defended upon principle. What is this mysterious power, undefined by law, unknown to the subject, which we must not approach without awe, nor speak of without reverence,—which no man may question, and to which all men must submit? My lords, I thought the slavish doctrine of passive obedience had long since been exploded; and, when our kings were obliged to confess that their title to the Crown, and the rule of their government, had no other foundation than the known laws of the land, I never expected to hear a divine right, or a divine infallibility, attributed to any other branch of the Legislature. My lords, I beg to be understood. No man respects the House of Commons more than I do,

or would contend more strenuously than I would, to preserve to them their just and legal authority. Within the bounds prescribed by the Constitution, that authority is necessary for the well-being of the people. Beyond that line every exertion of power is arbitrary, is illegal; it threatens tyranny to the people, and destruction to the state. Power without right is the most odious and detestable object that can be offered to the human imagination. It is not only pernicious to those who are subject to it, but tends to its own destruction. The House of Commons, we are told, have a supreme jurisdiction, and there is no appeal from their sentence; and that wherever they are competent judges, their decision must be received and submitted to, as, *ipso facto*, the law of the land. My lords, I am a plain man, and have been brought up in a religious reverence for the original simplicity of the laws of England. By what sophistry they have been perverted, by what artifices they have been involved in obscurity, is not for me to explain. The principles, however, of the English laws are still sufficiently clear; they are founded in reason, and are the masterpiece of the human understanding; but it is in the text that I would look for a direction to my judgment, not in the commentaries of modern professors. The noble lord assures us that he knows not in what code the law of Parliament is to be found; that the House of Commons, when they act as judges, have no law to direct them but their own wisdom; that their decision is law; and if they determine wrong, the subject has no appeal but to Heaven. What then, my lords? Are all the generous efforts of our ancestors, are all those glorious contentions, by which they meant to secure to themselves, and to transmit to their posterity, a known law, a certain rule of living, reduced to this conclusion, that instead of the arbitrary power of a King, we must submit to the arbitrary power of the House of Commons? If this be true, what benefit do we derive from the exchange? Tyranny, my lords, is detestable in every shape, but in none so formidable as when it is assumed and exercised by a number of tyrants. But, my lords, this is not the fact; this is not the Constitution. We *have* a law of Parliament. We have a code in which every honest man may find it. We have Magna Charta. We have the Statute Book, and the Bill of Rights."

Could the mischief of the decision of the House of Commons not be redressed:—"If we are to believe the noble lord, this great grievance, this manifest violation of the first principles of the Constitution, will not admit of a remedy. It is not even capable of redress, unless we appeal at once to Heaven! My lords, I have better hopes of the Constitution, and a firmer confidence in the

wisdom and constitutional authority of this House. It is to *your* ancestors, my lords, it is to the English barons, that we are indebted for the laws and Constitution we possess. Their virtues were rude and uncultivated, but they were great and sincere. Their understandings were as little polished as their manners, but they had hearts to distinguish right from wrong; they had heads to distinguish truth from falsehood; they understood the rights of humanity, and they had spirit to maintain them. My lords, I think that history has not done justice to their conduct, when they obtained from their sovereign that great acknowledgment of national rights contained in Magna Charta: they did not confine it to themselves alone, but delivered it as a common blessing to the whole people. They did not say, these are the rights of the great barons, or these are the rights of the great prelates. No, my lords, they said, in the simple Latin of the times, 'nullus liber homo' [no free man], and provided as carefully for the meanest subject as for the greatest. These are uncouth words, and sound but poorly in the ears of scholars, neither are they addressed to the criticism of scholars, but to the hearts of free men. These three words, 'nullus liber homo,' have a meaning which interests us all. They deserve to be remembered,—they deserve to be inculcated in our minds,—they are worth all the classics. Let us not, then, degenerate from the glorious example of our ancestors. Those iron barons (for so I may call them when compared with silken barons of modern days) were the guardians of the people; yet their virtues, my lords, were never engaged in a question of such importance as the present. A breach has been made in the Constitution,—the battlements are dismantled,—the citadel is open to the first invader,—the walls totter,—the Constitution is not tenable. What remains, then, but for us to stand forward in the breach, and repair it, or perish in it?"

That memorable debate of the Peers on the 9th of January was closed by an event which was not unexpected, but which formed a striking exception to the ordinary course of the actions of great statesmen. It is clear from the Chatham Correspondence that the Lord Chancellor Camden, and the marquis of Granby, were to a certain extent under the influence of Chatham. His confidential correspondent, Mr. John Calcraft, writes to him on the 28th of November, to beg "that they may be put on their guard" not to attend a particular council. "Fearing neither of our friends are the best politicians, I cannot help harbouring doubts but they may get entangled at this council, for no pains will be spared." Camden, Granby, and Conway, as well as Grafton, in the spring of 1769, held to the necessity of not attempting any taxation of

America, by import duties. They were overruled. Grafton remained in power, and Camden and Granby did not quit their employments. The schism in the cabinet was made more serious by the question of Wilkes. After Chatham's speech on the 9th of January, Camden rose from the woolsack, and thus threw off all restraint :—" I accepted the great seal without conditions ; I meant not, therefore, to be trammelled by his majesty—I beg pardon, by his ministers—but I have suffered myself to be so too long. For some time I have beheld with silent indignation the arbitrary measures of the minister. I have often drooped and hung down my head in council, and disapproved by my looks those steps which I knew my avowed opposition could not prevent. I will do so no longer, but openly and boldly speak my sentiments. I now proclaim to the world that I entirely coincide in the opinion expressed by my noble friend—whose presence again reanimates us—respecting this unconstitutional vote of the House of Commons. If, in giving my opinion as a judge, I were to pay any respect to that vote, I should look upon myself as a traitor to my trust, and an enemy to my country. By their violent and tyrannical conduct, ministers have alienated the minds of the people from his majesty's government—I have almost said from his majesty's person—inso-much, that if some measures are not devised to appease the clamours so universally prevalent, I know not, my lords, whether the people, in despair, may not become their own avengers, and take the redress of grievances into their own hands."

In the House of Commons, the marquis of Granby voted for the amendment which had been proposed in opposition to the government. The Lord Chancellor, and the Commander-in-Chief, were thus in open hostility with the other members of the Cabinet. Such an anomalous state could not long endure. Chatham, Temple, and their friends, were waiting the issue with extreme solicitude. Granby had been earnestly entreated to retain his command of the army in spite of his vote. " The king, it seems, and the duke of Grafton are upon their knees to lord Granby not to resign," writes Temple to Chatham.* Chatham grieves that twenty-four hours' respite has been granted to a minister's entreaties. † He was at last set at rest by Granby's resignation. But he regrets that the Chancellor had dragged the great seal for an hour at the heels of a desperate minister. ‡ His high office had been offered to Mr. Charles Yorke, the son of the lord chancellor Hardwicke. It was a prize he had long coveted ; but to accept it would be to desert his party. He declined. Three days after he went to the levee at St. James's ; and, at the earnest entreaties of the king, he

* "Chatham Correspondence," vol. iii. p. 391. † *Ibid.*, p. 392. ‡ *Ibid.*, p. 393.

kissed the royal hand as Chancellor. Camden was dismissed. Yorke, borne down by agitation of mind, died, as was supposed by his own hand, on the 20th of January. On the 22nd there came on another great debate in the House of Lords on the State of the Nation, in which Chatham announced his cordial union with the party of Rockingham. It was on this occasion that Chatham recommended a specific plan of Parliamentary Reform. "The boroughs of this country have properly enough been called 'the rotten parts' of the Constitution. But in my judgment, my lords, these boroughs, corrupt as they are, must be considered as the natural infirmity of the Constitution. Like the infirmities of the body, we must bear them with patience, and submit to carry them about with us. The limb is mortified, but the amputation might be death. Let us try, my lords, whether some gentler remedies may not be discovered. Since we cannot cure the disorder, let us endeavour to infuse such a portion of new health into the Constitution as may enable it to support its most inveterate diseases. The representation of the counties is, I think, still preserved pure and uncorrupted. That of the greatest cities is upon a footing equally respectable; and there are many of the larger trading towns which still preserve their independence. The infusion of health which I now allude to would be to permit every county to elect one member more, in addition to their present representation. The knights of the shires approach nearest to the constitutional representation of the country, because they represent the soil. It is not in the little dependent boroughs, it is in the great cities and counties, that the strength and vigour of the Constitution resides; and by them alone, if an unhappy question should ever arise, will the Constitution be honestly and firmly defended. It would increase that strength, because I think it is the only security we have against the profligacy of the times, the corruption of the people, and the ambition of the crown."

The continued debate on the State of the Nation was deferred till the 2nd of February. On the 28th of January, the duke of Grafton resigned. The king was not unprepared for this event. On the 23rd of January he thus wrote to lord North: "Lord Weymouth and lord Gower will wait upon you this morning to press you in the strongest manner to accept the office of First Lord Commissioner of the Treasury. My mind is more and more strengthened in the rightness of the measure, which would prevent every other desertion. You must easily see that if you do not accept, I have no peer at present that I would consent to place in the duke of Grafton's employment." "The rightness of the measure" was to be tested by twelve years of national calamity.

CHAPTER VII.

Lord North's Administration.—Retrospect of Colonial affairs.—Opposition to the Revenue Act.—Debates in Parliament on American proceedings.—Measures of coercion proposed.—Lord Hillsborough.—Virginia.—Outrages in Boston.—Repeal of duties, except that on teas.—Encounter with the military at Boston.—Renewal of the conflict regarding Wilkes.—Remonstrance of the City of London.—Beckford's Address to the King.—Printers arrested for publishing Debates.—Released by the City authorities.—Riots.—The Lord Mayor and an Alderman committed.—Officers of State.

THE domestic agitations during the period of the duke of Grafton's ministry required to be given in an unbroken narrative. We now take up the more truly important relation of those events in the North American Colonies, and of the mode in which they were dealt with by the imperial government. These facts form the prologue to the tragedy of the American Revolution.

In 1768 a third Secretary of State was appointed. The office of Secretary of State for Scotland had been abolished; but now a new place was created for the earl of Hillsborough—the Secretaryship of the Colonies. It was a position of authority which demanded a rare union of firmness and moderation. But the Secretary was a member of a cabinet divided in judgment on the great question of American taxation; and lord Hillsborough was of the party of the duke of Bedford, who held opinions on that subject, not exactly in consonance with that championship of our free constitution which has been claimed for him.* Hillsborough had to deal with colonial subjects of the British Crown, whose indignation at the Stamp Act had been revived by Charles Townshend's fatal measure for granting duties in America on glass, red and white lead, painter's colours, paper, and tea. These duties were not to be collected until the 20th of November, 1767. That day passed over in quiet in Boston; but the inhabitants had previously assembled, and had entered into resolutions to forbear the use of many articles of British produce or manufacture. The principle of resistance to the Revenue Act of 1767 was declared in a work largely circulated, entitled "Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania." The author was John Dickinson. Franklin republished these letters in London, although they were opposed to his earlier

* See *ante*.

opinion that external taxation,—import duties—were essentially less obnoxious than internal taxation—a Stamp Act. In February, 1768, the Assembly of Massachusetts, between which body and the governor, Francis Bernard, there had been serious disputes, addressed a circular letter to the other provinces, inviting them to unite in opposing the act for raising a revenue in the colonies. When the intelligence of this circular reached London, Hillsborough wrote to Bernard directing him to require, in the king's name, the House of Representatives in Massachusetts to rescind the resolution which produced the circular letter from their Speaker; and if they refused, immediately to dissolve them. The governors of the other colonies were ordered to pursue a similar course, if the assemblies gave any countenance to the "seditious paper," of Massachusetts. The dissolution of the Assembly of that state took place on the 1st of July, 1768, on its refusal, by a very large majority, to rescind the resolution. At that time there was a great ferment in Boston, occasioned by the seizure of a sloop laden with wine from Madeira, which had been attempted to be landed without paying duty. The new Commissioners of Customs directed the seizure; but a riot ensuing, they fled in terror to a fortress at the mouth of the harbour. It was now ascertained, from a letter written by Hillsborough to Bernard at the very time that this riot was taking place, that troops were ordered to be sent from Halifax to Boston. Some of the more violent inhabitants proposed to arm; others requested the governor to call together another Assembly. He refused to do so. The bold step was then taken by the popular leaders of summoning a Convention to meet at Boston. Elections took place; and committee men, as they were termed, from ninety-five towns or districts held sittings in a building belonging to the people of Boston, known as Faneuil Hall. The Convention sat only six days. The governor had remonstrated against this body of delegates attempting to transact the public business, and warned them of the penal consequences which they might incur if they did not separate. They protested, however, against taxation of the Colonies by the British Parliament, and against a standing army. They addressed a petition to the king. They recommended to all the preservation of good order. On the 28th of September, a squadron arrived from Halifax; conveying a large body of troops with artillery. Other troops continued to arrive; and four regiments were encamped near the city, or found their lodging in any public building. It was illegal to quarter them on the inhabitants. There was quiet; but the spirit of resistance was not thus to be extinguished. That spirit was not confined to Massachusetts;

although the determination to counteract the operation of the Revenue Act took only the form of associations who agreed not to consume the produce or manufactures of the mother-country. The "sons of liberty," as they were called, would wear no English broadcloth; and the "daughters of liberty" would drink no tea, if a duty were to be paid of threepence a-pound. The consumers of tea in England paid four times as much duty; but the Colonists denied the right of the imperial Parliament to levy any duty at all upon those who were unrepresented.

The king, on opening the Parliament on the 8th of November, 1768, spoke in severe terms of the proceedings in North America. The spirit of faction had broken out afresh; one of the colonies had proceeded to acts of violence and of resistance to the execution of the law; the capital town of that colony was in a state of disobedience to all law and government,—had adopted measures subversive of the constitution, and attended with circumstances that might manifest a disposition to throw off their dependence on Great Britain. Not a word was uttered of the cause of this disobedience. Turbulent and seditious persons were to be defeated. On the 15th of December, in the House of Lords, the duke of Bedford moved an Address to the king, recommending that the chief authors and instigators of the late disorders in Massachusetts should be brought to condign punishment; and beseeching his majesty that he would direct the governor of that colony "to take the most effectual methods for procuring the fullest information that can be obtained touching all treasons or misprision of treason, committed within this government since the 30th day of December last, and to transmit the same, together with the names of the persons who were most active in the commission of such offences, to one of your majesty's principal Secretaries of State, in order that your majesty may issue a special commission for inquiring of, hearing and determining, the said offences within this realm, pursuant to the provisions of the statute of the 35th year of the reign of king Henry VIII., in case your majesty shall upon receiving the said information, see sufficient ground for such a proceeding." This most arbitrary proposal was carried without a division. In the House of Commons, at the opening of the Session, Mr. Stanley, the seconder of the Address, said that the people of the insolent town of Boston "must be treated as aliens." "It is not arms that govern a people," exclaimed Burke. Beckford spoke with plain English honesty: "At the time of passing the American Stamp Act, I openly declared it to be my opinion that taxing America for the sake of raising a revenue would never do. Why would you

stir these waters? Let the nation return to its old good-nature, and its old good-humour." The Resolutions and Address of the Lords had been sent down to the Commons. On the 26th of January, 1769, the proposal of the duke of Bedford was strenuously resisted, and feebly defended. Burke said, with regard to this dangerous remedy for disaffection, "you fire a cannon upon your enemy which will re-act upon yourselves." Why, he said, do you call for this Act of Henry VIII. to be put in force? "Because you cannot trust a jury of that country. If you have not a party among two millions of people, you must either change your plan of government, or renounce the colonies for ever." George Grenville said the Resolution was "so much waste paper . . . Your conduct reminds me of the story of the sailor who climbed up to the top of the main-mast: on being asked what he was doing, he said he was doing nothing, and that the lad was helping him."* The most practical advice was offered to the House by Mr. Pownall, who had been governor of Massachusetts:—"Let the matter of right rest upon the declaratory law, and say no more about it."†

The minority, whether in Parliament or amongst the nation generally, who opposed the principle of American taxation, little knew in the spring of 1769 how near they were to a triumph. On the 19th of April, governor Pownall moved that the House should go into Committee to consider the Act passed for granting certain duties on the American colonies. There was a short debate, but the motion was rejected, by what lord North called "a mannerly way of putting aside the present question"—namely, by moving the orders of the day. On the 9th of May the Parliament was prorogued. But on the 1st of May a Cabinet Council was held, in which the result of a deliberation on the question of America is thus described by the duke of Grafton in his MS. Memoirs: "The internal state of the country was really alarming; and from my situation I had more cause to feel it than any other man. But a measure at this time adopted by a majority of the king's servants gave me still more apprehension, considering it to be big with more mischief; for contrary to my proposal of including the article of teas, together with all the other trifling objects of taxation, to be repealed on the opening of the next Session, it was decided that the teas were still to remain taxed as before, though contrary to the declared opinions of lord Camden, lord Granby, general Conway, and myself. Sir Edward Hawke was absent through illness: otherwise I think he would have agreed with those who voted for including the teas in the repeal." The duke of Grafton then pro-

* "Cavendish Debates," vol. i. p. 203.

† *Ibid.*, p. 225.

ceeds distinctly to accuse lord Hillsborough of having suppressed in the minute of the Council, which was to be communicated to the colonial governors, "words as kind and lenient as could be proposed by some of us, and not without encouraging expressions which were too evidently displeasing to his lordship." Camden charged Hillsborough with this suppression; which he denied. The presumptuous Secretary, who evidently acted with some authority from a higher quarter, not only garbled the minute, but accompanied it with a circular letter, which Grafton terms "unfortunate and unwarrantable—calculated to do all mischief, when our real minute might have paved the way to some good." Grafton and Camden felt that their power was gone. They ought to have resigned and denounced their dangerous colleague. The tea-duties were to be retained upon the principle maintained by the king, that "there must always be one tax, to keep up the right."

Whilst the king's ministers were thus divided upon the question of which few men saw the real importance, a demonstration of opinion was taking place in one of the colonies, of far more significance than the riots at Boston, and the meeting of its Convention. Lord Hillsborough had removed sir Jeffrey Amherst from the post of governor of Virginia, and had appointed in his place lord Boutetort, who, in a lucrative American office, could repair the consequences of his extravagance at home. In 1758 America had been called "the hospital of England;" the places in the gift of the Crown being filled "with broken Members of Parliament, of bad if any principle; valets de chambre, electioneering scoundrels, and even livery servants."* Lord Boutetort was a faded courtier whose rank would be acceptable to the aristocratic families of Virginia, and whose parade might dazzle the eyes of discontented politicians. Boutetort, the only governor who had appeared in Virginia within memory, opened the Session of the Legislature of Virginia, at Williamsburg, with royal pomp. He went to the House of Representatives in a state carriage, drawn by six white horses. He gave splendid entertainments. A dutiful address was presented to him, which he answered with the most perfect courtesy.† But there were men in that Assembly of a character not to be propitiated by cream-coloured horses or sumptuous feasts. George Washington, Patrick Henry, Thomas Jefferson, Peyton Randolph, were members of that Assembly. The House of Burgesses followed up its dutiful Address by unanimous Resolutions, in which they asserted that the right of laying taxes on Virginia

* Letter of General Huske in Phillimore's "Memoirs of Lord Lyttelton."

† Bancroft, "American Revolution," vol. iii. p. 309.

was exclusively vested in its own Legislature; and pronounced that the mode of trial recommended in Parliament upon charges of high treason, was illegal and unconstitutional. The governor, without waiting for an official communication, dissolved the Assembly. On the next day the members assembled at the Raleigh tavern; and in a room called "The Apollo"—probably in memory of the famous Apollo Room where Ben Jonson prescribed his "*Leges Conviviales*"—eighty-eight pledged themselves not to import or purchase certain articles of British merchandise, whilst the Revenue Act was unrepealed, and signed Resolutions to that effect. The example spread. Pennsylvania approved the Resolutions. Delaware adopted them.

The Assembly of Massachusetts was at last legally convened in May, 1769. The members complained that they could not discuss the public affairs with freedom, being surrounded with an armed force. The governor told them he had no authority over the ships in the port or the troops in the town. The place of assembling was removed to the town of Cambridge. The two authorities continued hostile, and the Assembly was prorogued. Sir Francis Bernard was recalled to England; and a lieutenant-governor, Hutchinson, an American, remained in authority. Then commenced a series of outrages on the part of the leaders of the non-importation agreement, which was disgraceful to the cause which would have had far better argument in moderation. Obnoxious persons were tarred and feathered. At a public dinner "strong halters, firm blocks, and sharp axes, to such as deserve them," was one of the toasts.* These excesses, which are slightly passed over by the historian of the American Revolution, elicited the following remarks from lord Chatham, strenuous as he was in contending for the right of America to be untaxed by Great Britain. His words are not reported in the Parliamentary History, but they are given in a letter from Mr. Johnson, Agent for Connecticut.† "I have been thought to be, perhaps, too much the friend of America. I own I am a friend to that country. I love the Americans because they love liberty, and I love them for the noble efforts they made in the last war. But I must own I find fault with them in many things; I think they carry matters too far; they have been wrong in many respects. I think the idea of drawing money from them by taxes as ill-judged. Trade is your object with them, and they should be encouraged. But (I wish every sensible American, both here and in that country, heard what I say.) if they carry

* Bancroft, vol. iii. p. 342.

† Note of Mr. Jared Sparkes, in his edition of *Franklin's Works*,

their notions of liberty too far, as I fear they do, if they will not be subject to the laws of this country, especially if they would disengage themselves from the laws of trade and navigation, of which I see too many symptoms, as much of an American as I am, they have not a more determined opposer than they will find in me."

We have now reached the period of lord North's administration. On the 5th of March, 1770, on the House of Commons proceeding to take into consideration the petition of the Merchants of London trading to North America, the First Lord of the Treasury, in a temperate speech, moved the repeal of such portions of the Act of 1767, as laid duties upon glass and other articles, omitting any mention of tea. "I cannot propose," he said, "any further repeal than what it was my intention to promise them. The Americans, by their subsequent behaviour, have not deserved any particular indulgence from this country." Upon this principle, many a mistaken policy has been persisted in, out of pure defiance of the excesses which that policy has provoked. "We will not be driven to repeal, by any threats held out to us," said the minister. He anticipated no larger revenue than 12,000*l.* a year from the tea duties, but he would not give up the right to tax America which was asserted in the preamble of the Act imposing the duties. There was much discussion upon the particular point in dispute; but colonel Barré took a broad view of the whole question: "For three years we have seen nothing but the folly and absurdity of succeeding administrations. If the former erred, they had the sense of the nation with them; they acted upon a system. We are now proceeding upon no system at all: what we do carries nothing with it but monuments of our tyranny and folly. . . . Why suffer these discontents to rankle in the minds of your American subjects? I suspect we are not safe behind this peace. With your colonies discontented, what would be your condition if a war should break out? Could you depend upon receiving their support? With their minds soured, they might, perhaps, go further: they might take you at an unlucky moment, and compel you to come into their terms." The proposition of lord North was carried by a majority of sixty-two. Franklin, writing to a friend in America, says of this result, "I think the repeal would have been carried, but that the ministry were persuaded by governor Bernard, and some lying letters, said to be from Boston, that the associations not to import were all breaking to pieces; that America was in the greatest distress for the want of the goods; that we could not possibly subsist any longer without them, and must, of course, submit to any terms Parliament should think fit to impose

upon us. The ministerial people gave out, that certain advices were received of our beginning to break our agreement; of our attempts to manufacture proving all abortive, and ruining the undertakers; of our distress for want of goods, and dissensions among ourselves, which promised the total defeat of all such kind of combinations, and the prevention of them for the future, if the government were not urged imprudently to repeal the duties. But now that it appears, from late and authentic accounts, that agreements continue in full force, that a ship is actually returned from Boston to Bristol with nails and glass (articles that were thought of the utmost necessity), and that the ships, which were waiting here for the determination of Parliament, are actually returning to North America in their ballast, the tone begins to change."

On the same day that the British Parliament was voting against the repeal of the tea-duties, the people of Boston were fighting with British soldiers in their streets. The story of this conflict has been related as if, as is generally the case, there were not egregious faults on both sides. "At the cry of innocent blood shed by the soldiery, the continent heaved like a troubled ocean," writes Mr. Bancroft.* There was a quarrel between a soldier and some workmen at a rope-walk. The soldier challenged one to fight in the good old English fashion of fisty-cuffs; was beaten; and came back with some of his companions for revenge. A general scuffle ensued, and the troops were driven to their barracks. Sunday intervened; but on Monday, the 5th of March, the troops, who had been stimulating each other, came forth in the evening, and offering some insults to the townsmen, there was a serious tumult. This was at length quieted. The more prudent of the citizens cried "Home, home;" but many boys remained, daring the soldiers, and calling them "lobsters." They at last surrounded a sentinel; and captain Preston, the captain of the day, ordered the main guard to turn out. The captain, a corporal, and six men marched to the rescue of the sentinel. They began to load; and then a party of the townsmen passed along the front of the soldiers, and struck their muskets with sticks. They dared the guard to fire, calling them "lobster scoundrels." One of the soldiers received a blow with a stick thrown at him, and he shot a mulatto. Two other persons were killed, and eight wounded. A warrant was issued against Preston, who surrendered himself, and the soldiers were committed to prison. With great good sense governor Hutchinson and the colonel in command removed all the troops from the town. The affray was called "a massacre." When Preston was tried for

* "American Revolution," vol. iii. p. 386.

murder a few months afterwards, no counsel dared undertake his defence; till John Adams, a rising advocate, devoted to the popular cause, but more devoted to his duty, accepted a brief; and the jury returned a verdict of Not Guilty. The high-minded barrister became the President of the United States. Two of the soldiers were found Guilty of Manslaughter. On the 4th of May, Burke brought forward a motion for inquiry into the late disasters in America. On that occasion George Grenville made his last speech in Parliament, he dying in the following November. His concluding words, in giving assent to Burke's motion, were solemn and prophetic: "If, by the neglect of his ministers, our beloved sovereign should leave his crown to his successor diminished and dishonoured, then, sir, let those who brought the misery upon us, rise up severally and say, 'I was the man who formed these incompetent plans; I was the man who advised this plan and that plan; I was the man to whom all these fatal consequences are owing.'"

When the American colonists came to know that the British Parliament had repealed all the duties laid by the Act of 1767, except that on tea, the spirit which had prompted the non-importation agreements was somewhat allayed. The citizens of New York determined by a large majority to resume importations from England; and many orders were despatched in July for every kind of merchandise but tea. Other provinces were indignant with the New Yorkists. Massachusetts maintained a position of sullen defiance. The jurymen of Boston had manifested that in the discharge of their duty, in the trial of captain Preston and the soldiers, they were not to be influenced by public clamour. The conduct of John Adams showed how high-minded were many of those opponents of an obstinate policy, who, in parliamentary language, were usually called rebels. "The language we hold," said colonel Barré, "is little short of calling the Americans rebels; the language they hold is little short of calling us tyrants—rebels on one side, tyrants on the other." It was thus that the men of England and the men of America were mutually inflamed. Although, for two or three years, there was in America an apparent calm—a deceptive absence of violence which looked like peace—the time was rapidly approaching when the exhortation of Mr. Wedderburn, in 1770, before he became lord North's solicitor-general, would be looked upon as a prophecy: "How, sir, will it hereafter sound in the annals of the present reign, that all America—the fruit of so many years' settlement, nurtured by this country at the price of so much blood and treasure—was lost to the Crown of Great Britain in the reign of George III.?"* Whilst there is a lull in this trans-atlantic tem-

* "Cavendish Debates," vol. ii. p. 30.

pest, let us revert to our domestic affairs—petty in their details, but very significant in their tendencies.

The parliamentary conflict on the question of the Middlesex election was not likely to drop after the great debates on the Address at the opening of the Session of 1770. Mr. Sheriff Townsend, in his place in the House of Commons on the 7th of February, declared, upon going into a Committee of Ways and Means, that it was not his intention to pay the Land-tax. He would state the case as on the part of the freeholders of Middlesex. Their lawful representative, Mr. Wilkes, was kept out of the House by force and violence. Mr. Luttrell was not their representative. Lord North told the worthy sheriff that if any demand upon him was illegal, the law would relieve him. He refused to pay the tax; his goods were distrained; he brought an action against the collector; and lord Mansfield having charged the jury that the question was no other than whether there was a legislative power in this county, the jury found for the defendant. The declaration of Mr. Townsend was an indication of the prevailing temper of the citizens of London. On the 14th of March, the lord mayor and sheriffs, a few aldermen, and a great number of the common council, exercising the right of the City to present addresses to the king in person, arrived, with an immense concourse of people at St. James's. The address, remonstrance, and petition offered on this occasion, prayed for the dissolution of Parliament, and the removal of evil ministers; spoke of "secret and malign influence" which had deprived the people of their dearest rights; and declared that the present House of Commons did not represent the people. The king's answer was "deemed by some to have been uncommonly harsh." * His majesty said, "I shall always be ready to receive the requests, and to listen to the complaints of my subjects; but it gives me great concern to find that any of them should have been so far misled, as to offer me an Address and Remonstrance, the contents of which I cannot but consider as disrespectful to me, injurious to my Parliament, and irreconcilable to the principles of the constitution." A debate took place the next day in the House of Commons, upon a motion for an Address to his majesty that he would direct a copy of this paper and his answer to be laid before them. The lord mayor (Beckford), alderman Trecothick, and sheriffs Townsend and Sawbridge, boldly defended the language of the Remonstrance. Lord North told them that they would be remembered as the John Lillburns and Dr. Sacheverells of their day. Burke called to the memory of the House the words of lord Falkland, "Peace! peace!"

* "Annual Register," 177, p. 790.

The Commons, by a large majority, agreed upon an Address to the king; having resolved that "to deny the legality of the present Parliament, and to assert that the proceedings thereof are not valid, is highly unwarrantable." The general opinion was, that the lord mayor and sheriffs courted commitment.* On the 23rd of May, the lord mayor, aldermen, and common council, presented a second Remonstrance to the king at St. James's. Walpole says, "it had been drawn up by lord Chatham, or formed on one of his late speeches." They lamented that his majesty had been advised to lay the weight of his displeasure upon the citizens of London. "We are deeply concerned that what the law allows, and the constitution teaches, has been misconstrued by ministers, instruments of that influence which shakes the realm into disrespect for your majesty." They demanded "a full, free, and un mutilated Parliament." They concluded by saying, "we offer our constant prayers to Heaven that your majesty may reign as kings only can reign, in and by the hearts of a loyal, dutiful, and free people." The king's answer conveyed no change of opinion on the proceedings of the City: "I should have been wanting to the public as well as to myself, if I had not expressed my dissatisfaction at the late Address. My sentiments on that subject continue the same." The king had no sooner spoken his answer, writes Walpole, "than, to the astonishment of the whole court, Beckford, the lord mayor, desired leave to say a few words. This was totally unprecedented. Copies of all intended harangues are first transmitted privately to court, that the king may be prepared with an answer. On this occasion the king was totally at a loss how to act. He was sitting in ceremony on his throne, and had no means to consult, no time to consider, what to do. Remaining silent and confounded, Beckford proceeded." † The words said to be uttered by the lord mayor are engraved in letters of gold under his monument in the Guildhall of London. Having this distinguished record, it may be proper here to give them:—

"Most gracious Sovereign,—Will your majesty be pleased so far to condescend as to permit the mayor of your royal city of London to declare in your royal presence, in behalf of his fellow-citizens, how much the bare apprehension of your majesty's displeasure would at all times affect their minds. The declaration of that displeasure has already filled them with inexpressible anxiety and with the deepest affliction. Permit me, sire, to assure your majesty, that your majesty has not in all your dominions any

* "Chatham Correspondence," vol. iii. p. 429.

† "Memoirs of George III.," vol. iv. p. 154.

subjects more faithful, more dutiful, or more affectionate to your majesty's person and family, or more ready to sacrifice their lives and fortunes in the maintenance of the true honour and dignity of your crown. We do therefore, with the greatest humility and submission, most earnestly supplicate your majesty that you will not dismiss us from your presence, without expressing a more favourable opinion of your faithful citizens, and without some comfort, without some prospect at least of redress. Permit me, sire, further to observe, that whoever has already dared, or shall hereafter endeavour, by false insinuations and suggestions, to alienate your majesty's affections from your loyal subjects in general, and from the city of London in particular, and to withdraw your confidence in and regard for your people, is an enemy to your majesty's person and family, a violator of the public peace, and a betrayer of your happy constitution, as it was established at the glorious Revolution."

Chatham was in raptures. Two days after he wrote to Beckford, "The spirit of Old England spoke, that never-to-be-forgotten day Your lordship's mayoralty will be revered, till the constitution is destroyed and forgotten." Beckford replied, "What I spoke in the king's presence was uttered in the language of truth, and with that humility and submission which becomes a subject speaking to his lawful king."* Certainly the constitution was somewhat outraged when a subject forgot that ministerial responsibility ought to have sheltered his lawful king from a personal reproof. † Beckford died within a month after this remarkable impulse of an honest but over-zealous partisanship. The agitations connected with the Middlesex election soon subsided. The term of Wilkes's imprisonment had expired in April; and, in his position of alderman, he became more a city agitator than a demagogue to stir a nation.

In the ensuing Session of Parliament, in 1771, there was a contest between the House of Commons and the Corporation of London which was eventually productive of the highest public benefit. Although both Houses held strenuously to the principle that it was the highest offence to publish their debates, the speeches of particular members were frequently printed. Sometimes the privileges of Parliament were strictly enforced. At other times little notice was taken of reports, with stars and initials in newspapers and magazines. The thirteenth Parliament of Great Britain was one in which the majorities of both Houses were on the anti-popular side; and thus the nation had only occasional

* "Chatham Correspondence," vol. iii. pp. 462-3.

† See *ante*, p. 55.

glimpses of the proceedings of those who presided over their destinies. On the 8th of February, 1771, colonel Onslow complained to the House of Commons, that two newspapers had printed a motion he had made, and a speech against it; and moreover had called him, "little Cocking George." Upon his motion, the papers were delivered in and read; and the printer of the "Gazetteer," R. Thompson, and the printer of the "Middlesex Chronicle," J. Wheble, were ordered to attend the House. The printers could not be found to serve the orders upon them, and then the House addressed the king that he would issue his royal proclamation for their apprehension. On the 12th of March, colonel Onslow said he was determined to bring this matter to an issue. "To-day I shall only bring before the House three brace, for printing the debates." This wholesale proceeding was resisted by motions for adjournment and amendments, which protracted the debates till five o'clock in the morning, during which the House divided twenty-three times.* One member moved an amendment to the motion for summoning one of the printers, by adding, "together with all his compositors, pressmen, correctors, blackers and devils;" and Burke said, "It would be as irregular for the printer to come to your bar without them, as it would be for you, sir, to come to the House without your mace, or a marshal of the King's Bench without his tipstaff, or a first lord of the treasury without his majority."† Four of the printers obeyed the orders of the House; made their submission, and were discharged. But the affair now took a more serious turn. The serjeant-at-arms had been ordered to take J. Miller, of the "London Evening Post" into custody. Wheble and Thompson had been previously arrested collusively, by some friends or servants; and being taken before alderman Wilkes, and alderman Oliver, were discharged. Miller was apprehended by the officer of the House of Commons, at his house in the city; but the officer was immediately himself taken into custody by a city constable. The parties went before the lord mayor, Crosby; who was attended by Wilkes and Oliver. The lord mayor decided that the arrest of a citizen without the authority of one of the city magistrates, was a violation of its charters; and ordered Miller to be released, and the officer of the Commons to give bail to answer a charge of assault. The king, always impatient of resistance to authority, wrote on the 17th of March to lord North.—"If lord mayor and Oliver be not committed, the authority of the House of Commons is annihilated." On the first complaint of colonel Onslow he had written to his minister, "Is not the

* "Annual Register," 1771.

† "Cavendish Debates," vol. ii. p. 391.

House of Lords the best court to bring such miscreants before, as it can fine as well as imprison, and has broader shoulders to support the odium of so salutary a measure?"

On the 18th of March, the deputy-serjeant-at-arms was desired by the Speaker to give an account of the transactions in the City. It was then moved that Brass Crosby, esq., lord mayor, and a member of parliament, should attend in his place the next day. The lord mayor although he was ill, came amidst the huzzas of a crowd that echoed through the House. He was permitted to sit whilst defending his conduct; and then he desired to go home, having been in his bed-chamber sixteen or seventeen days. The lord mayor was allowed to retire. Charles Fox said "there are two other criminals, alderman Oliver and alderman Wilkes," for which expression "criminals," he was gently reprov'd by Wedderburn, who had become solicitor-general. Alderman Oliver was then ordered to attend in his place. Wilkes had written a letter to declare that he was the lawful member for Middlesex, and would only appear in the House as a member. Mr. Calcraft writes to lord Chatham, "The ministers avow Wilkes too dangerous to meddle with. He is to do what he pleases; we are to submit. So his majesty orders; he will have 'nothing more to do with that devil Wilkes.'"* On the 25th of March the lord mayor and alderman Oliver were in their places. In the course of the debate upon a proposal to commit them to the Tower, members came in, and reported that they had been insulted on their way to the House. The magistrates of Westminster were called, and were ordered to disperse the mob. The debate proceeded. The lord mayor being again permitted to withdraw, said he should submit himself to whatever the House should do. The populace took the horses from his coach, and drew him in triumph to the Mansion House. After a sitting of nine hours, a motion for adjournment was rejected. When the Speaker asked alderman Oliver what he had to say in his defence, he replied—"I know the punishment I am to receive is determined upon. I have nothing to say, neither in my own defence, nor in defence of the city of London. Do what you please. I defy you." †

Before the motion for committing alderman Oliver to the Tower was carried, colonel Barré left the House, followed by Dunning, and about a dozen other members. He wrote to Chatham, "I spoke to this question about five minutes only, but I believe with great violence." To the Tower was Oliver conducted quietly at

* "Chatham Correspondence," vol. iv. p. 143.

† "Cavendish Debates," vol. ii. p. 461.

seven o'clock on the morning of the 27th. On that day the lord mayor again came to the House to attend in his place. A tremendous riot ensued. Mr. Calcraft described the scene to lord Chatham: "The concourse of people who attended the lord mayor is incredible. They seized lord North, broke his chariot, had got him amongst them, and but for sir William Meredith's interfering, would probably have demolished him. This, with the insults to other members, caused an adjournment of business for some hours. The justice came to the bar to declare they could not read the Riot Act, and that their constables were overpowered. The sheriffs were then called upon: they went into the crowd, attended by many members, and quieted them by five o'clock; when we proceeded on business." Upon the resumption of the debate lord North displayed his anxiety by his tears, and his courage by his words. "I certainly did not come into office at my own desire. Had I my own wish, I would have quitted it a hundred times. My love of ease and retirement urged me to it; but as to my resignation now, look at the situation of the country; look at the transactions of this day, and then say whether it would be possible for any man with a grain of spirit, with a grain of sense, with the least love for his country, to think of withdrawing from the service of his king and his country . . . There are but two ways in which I can go out now—by the will of my sovereign, which I shall be ready to obey; or the pleasure of the gentlemen now at our doors, when they shall be able to do a little more than they have done this day."*

The lord mayor and alderman Oliver remained prisoners in the Tower, till the Parliament was prorogued on the 8th of May. A prorogation suspends the power under which the privilege of committal is exercised. The House wisely resolved not to renew the perilous dispute with the City in the ensuing session. With equal wisdom the printers of the debates were no more threatened or arrested. On the 1st of May, Chatham told the Peers some wholesome truths, on the subject of the publication of parliamentary proceedings. The dissatisfaction of the people "had made them uncommonly attentive to the proceedings of Parliament. Hence the publication of the parliamentary debates. And where was the injury, if the members acted upon honest principles? For a public assembly to be afraid of having their deliberations published is monstrous, and speaks for itself." It was some years before these principles were completely recognised, in the conviction that a full and impartial report of the debates in Parliament is one of the

* "Cavendish Debates."

best securities for freedom, for a respect for the laws, and for raising up a national tribunal of public opinion in the place of the passions of demagogues and the violence of mobs. The triumph of the "miscreants" of 1771 led the way to the complete establishment of that wonderful system of reporting, which has rendered the newspaper press of this country the clearest mirror of the aggregate thought of a reflecting people.

PRINCIPAL OFFICERS OF STATE FROM THE END OF THE ADMINISTRATION OF SIR ROBERT WALPOLE, 1741, TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF THAT OF LORD NORTH, 1770.

[To enable our readers to connect with our narrative a general view of the constitution of a Ministry at any period of change, whether general or partial, we have drawn out the following Table :—

LORD CHANCELLOR.	FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY.	CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER.	PRINCIPAL SECRETARIES OF STATE.
1741. Philip, lord Hardwicke (from 1737), “	1741. Sir Robert Walpole.	1741. Sir Robert Walpole.	1741. William, lord Harrington (from 1730).
1742. “	1742. Spencer, earl of Wilmington.	1742. Samuel Sandys, esq.	1742. (Feb. 12.) John, lord Carteret (vice lord Harrington).
1743. “	1743. Hon. Henry Pelham.	1743. Hon. Henry Pelham.	1743. “
1744. “	1744. “	1744. “	1744. (Nov. 24.) William, earl of Harrington (vice lord Carteret).
1745. “	1745. “	1745. “	1745. “
1746. “	1746. “	1746. “	1746. (Feb. 10.) John, earl Granville (vice earl of Harrington).
			{ (Feb. 14) Thos. Holles, duke of Newcastle. “ of Newcastle. “ William, earl of Harrington.
			— (Nov. 4.) Philip Dormer Stanhope, earl of Chesterfield, (vice earl of Harrington).
1747. “	1747. “	1747. “	1747. “
1748. “	1748. “	1748. “	1748. (Feb. 13.) John, duke of Bedford (vice earl of Chesterfield).
1749. “	1749. “	1749. “	1749. “
1750. “	1750. “	1750. “	1750. “
1751. “	1751. “	1751. “	1751. (July 12.) Robert, earl of Holderness (vice duke of Bedford).
1752. “	1752. “	1752. “	1752. “
1753. “	1753. “	1753. “	1753. “
1754. “	1754. (March 16.) J. H. Pelham, duke of Newcastle.	1754. (March 9.) Sir William Lee. (April 6.) Hon. H. B. Legge.	1754. (April 6.) Sir Thos. Robinson (vice duke of Newcastle).
1755. “	1755. “	1755. Sir George Lyttelton.	1755. (Nov.) Henry Fox, esq. (vice sir T. Robinson).
1756. The Great Seal in Commission.	1756. (Nov. 16.) William, duke of Devonshire.	1756. Hon. H. B. Legge.	1756. (Dec.) William Pitt, esq. (vice Mr. Fox. He resigned in April, 1757, and was re-appointed in June).
1757. Sir Robt. Henley—Lord Keeper—(created lord Henley, 1760).	1757. (April 9.) W. Murray, lord Mansfield.	1757. (April 9.) W. Murray, lord Mansfield.	1757. “

PRINCIPAL OFFICERS OF STATE (Continued).

LORD CHANCELLOR.	FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY.	CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER.	PRINCIPAL SECRETARIES OF STATE.
1757. Sir Robt. Henley—Lord Keeper—(created lord Henley, 1760).	— (July 2). J. H. Pelham, duke of Newcastle.	— (July 2). Hon. H. B. Legge.	1756. (Dec.) William Pitt, esq. (<i>vice</i> Mr. Fox, etc.
1758. “	1758. “	1758. “	1758. “
1759. “	1759. “	1759. “	1759. “
1760. “	1760. “	1760. “	1760. “
1761. “	1761. William, viscount Barrington.	1761. William, viscount Barrington.	1761. (March 25). John, earl of Bute (<i>vice</i> lord Holderness).
1762. “	1762. (May 20). John, lord Bute.	1762. Sir Francis Dashwood.	— (Oct. 9). Charles, lord Egremont (<i>vice</i> Mr. Pitt).
1763. “	1763. Hon. George Grenville.	1763. Hon. George Grenville.	1762. (May 29). Hon. G. Grenville (<i>vice</i> lord Bute).
1764. “ —Lord Chancellor, as earl of Northampton.	1764. “	1764. “	— (Oct. 14). George, earl of Halifax (<i>vice</i> Mr. Grenville).
1765. “	1765. (July 13). Charles, marquis of Rockingham.	1765. William Dowdeswell, esq.	1763. (Sept. 9). John, earl of Sandwich (<i>vice</i> lord Egremont).
1766. (July 30). Chas., lord Camden.	1766. (August 2). Augustus Henry, duke of Grafton.	1766. Hon. Charles Townshend.	1764. “
1767. “	1767. (Sept. 12). William, lord Mansfield.	1767. (Sept. 12). William, lord Mansfield.	1765. (July 12). A. H., duke of Grafton (<i>vice</i> lord Halifax).
1768. “	— (Dec. 1). A. H., duke of Grafton.	— (Dec. 1). Frederick, lord North.	— Hon. H. S. Conway (<i>vice</i> lord Sandwich).
1769. (Jan. 17). Hon. Chas. Yorke.	1769. “	1769. “	1766. (May 23). Charles, duke of Richmond (<i>vice</i> duke of Grafton).
1770. (Jan. 20). Great Seal in Commission.	1770. (February 10). Frederick, lord North.	1770. “	— (Aug. 2). William, earl of Shelburne (<i>vice</i> duke of Richmond). “
			1767. “
			1768. (Jan. 20). Thomas, viscount Weymouth (<i>vice</i> general Conway).
			— Willes, earl of Hillsborough— <i>colonies</i> .
			— (Oct. 21). W. H., earl of Rochford (<i>vice</i> earl of Shelburne).
			1769. “
			1770. (Dec. 19). John, earl of Sandwich (<i>vice</i> lord Weymouth).

CHAPTER VIII.

Foreign affairs.—Cession of Corsica to France.—The Falkland Islands.—First Partition of Poland.—War between Turkey and Russia.—Acquisitions of Russia.—Suppression of the Jesuits.—Home Politics.—Subscription to Thirty-nine Articles.—Test Act.—Thirtieth of January.—Repeal of laws against forestalling.—The queen of Denmark.—Death of the Princess Dowager.—The Royal Marriage Act.—Retrospect of Indian affairs.—East India Company's Regulation Act.—Teas, duty free, to the Colonies.

THE turbulence of home politics, and the threatening aspect of the colonies, left little inclination in the people to think much of foreign affairs. The cession by Genoa, in 1768, of Corsica to France, and the resistance by the Corsican patriot, Paoli, to the occupation of the island by French troops, excited interest in a few who could sympathize with heroic actions. Boswell wrote an account of Corsica. The cold Walpole advises Gray to read it: "What relates to Paoli will amuse you much."* The impressible Gray replies, "It has moved me strangely; all, I mean, that relates to Paoli. He is a man born two thousand years after his time." Corsica was subjugated in 1769, and Paoli became an exile from his country, seeking refuge in England. A month after Corsica was annexed to France, Napoleon Bonaparte was born at Ajaccio. In 1768 England was within a hair's-breadth of making war with France in the matter of Corsica. "Corsica a province of France is terrible to me," said Burke. The duke of Grafton did not go to war; but he sent secret supplies of arms and ammunition to Paoli, who said he could hold out eighteen months. Insurrections continued through 1770 and 1771. The French minister, the duke de Choiseul, who had annexed Corsica, and was anxious for a rupture with England, was dismissed from power in 1770. "My minister wishes for war," said Louis XV., "but I do not." If war had come, Corsica would most probably have been a British possession; Napoleon Bonaparte a subject of the British crown. He might have chosen England for the theatre of his rising ambition; have commanded a company of British grenadiers in the war of the French Revolution; and have won a green ribbon instead of an empire.

In 1770, whilst the influence of the duke de Choiseul was para-

* Feb. 18, 1768.

mount, Great Britain became involved in a dispute with Spain, which very nearly led to a war in which France would most probably have joined. The Falkland Islands—who cares now to enter into the details of a quarrel about a possession which Johnson calls “tempest-beaten barrenness?” These two islands in the South Atlantic were known by English navigators at the end of the sixteenth century. They were not colonised till the French, in 1764, formed a settlement in East Falkland. The British settled in West Falkland in 1767. The French at that time ceded their colony to the Spaniards; and the Spaniards, at a period of profound peace, in 1770, sent a force of five frigates, with sixteen hundred men, from Buenos Ayres, and drove the British from their fort at Port Egmont. Preparations for war were instantly made. The aggression of Spain was the chief topic of the speech with which the king opened the session of Parliament on the 13th of November. There were violent debates in both Houses, the opposition accusing the ministry of supineness and pusillanimity. Johnson wrote a pamphlet in defence of the government, which may be read, now the particular points of the quarrel have ceased to interest, for his forcible descriptions of the calamities of war, and his declamation against the folly of plunging two countries into hostilities upon a question of doubtful right. The Spanish government gave way to remonstrance. Mr. Harris, afterwards Lord Malmesbury, was the British Chargé des Affaires at Madrid; and, although at one time war appeared inevitable, the Spanish court finally made restitution. Mr Harris had been recalled from Spain, in consequence of the language of the Spanish ambassador in London. He was twenty leagues from Madrid on his way home, when he met the messenger from St. James’s who was sent to say that the Spanish envoy had conceded the demands of the British government.* The sudden change was in consequence of the fall from power of the duke de Choiseul. England and Spain left the naked rocks and bogs of the Falkland Islands to their wild cattle; till in 1840, after an attempt at occupation by the republic of Buenos Ayres, they were again colonised by the English.

The first Partition of Poland by Russia, Prussia, and Austria, was made in 1772. On the 5th of August definitive treaties were signed between these powers, by which nearly a third of the Polish territory was divided amongst them. To Russia was assigned great part of Lithuania; to Austria, Galicia and portions of Podolia and Cracow; to Prussia, Pomerania, and the country of the Vistula. Prussia acquired by far the smallest share of the spoil in extent of

* “Diaries and Correspondence of the Earl of Malmesbury,” vol. i. p. 61.

territory, but incomparably the most valuable, when she obtained Dantzic, and the best trading towns of the dismembered country. The events which led to this partition, or rather which were the excuses for it, were connected with the religious and political dissensions of the Polish nobles, priests, and commonalty. An elective monarchy was necessarily subject to the intrusive control of a powerful neighbour. After the death of John Sobieski, at the end of the seventeenth century, his successors Augustus II. and Augustus III. were little more than the representatives of the court of Russia. The influence of the Czarina, Catherine, procured the election of Stanislaus Poniatowski. The favourite of the profligate empress was lifted into a throne by the intrigues of one party of the nobles, supported by a Russian army. From 1764 to 1772 two factions were struggling about civil and religious privileges, whilst their country was more and more exposed to the danger of an entire loss of its independence. Poland could scarcely be called a nation, if by a nation we mean a community of various classes, with a large intermediate class between the highest and the lowest. Poland was a country of nobles and of serfs. When Russia was about to seize the territories which she coveted, Prussia demanded a share; and to prevent the opposition of the other great neighbour, Austria was propitiated with another share. Maria Theresa, personally, was opposed to the scheme; but her opposition was not of that nature which was likely to interfere with its completion. "I let things go their own way," she said, "but not without the greatest grief."

The indifference of the English government to what was considered by impartial observers "as the first very great breach in the modern political system of Europe,"* was manifested in the diplomatic communications of our court. Mr. Harris, now minister at Berlin, kept lord Suffolk well-informed of the negotiations between Prussia and Russia. The Secretary for foreign affairs receives the intelligence very coolly: "I have some reason to apprehend the terms and quantum of this curious transaction are not positively settled, though there is no doubt of the general plan and intention."† Again: "His majesty does not consider the affair of such present importance as to justify acting to prevent it."‡ Mr. Murray, ambassador at Constantinople, who had given some advice to the Porte on the subject, received a very severe admonition from the British government not to meddle with matters on which he had no instructions. Lord Rochford calls the partition of Poland an

* "Annual Register," 1772, p. 2.

† "Malmesbury Diaries," &c., vol. i. p. 70.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

“extraordinary and unexpected event!” but says, “I am to inform you that, although such a change suggests not improbable apprehensions that *the trade* of Europe may hereafter be affected by it, neither his majesty nor the other commercial powers have thought it of such present importance as to make a direct opposition to it.”* The language of the British government only reflected the temper of the country. Burke describes this apathy: “We behold the destruction of a great kingdom, with the consequent disarrangement of power, dominion, and commerce, with as total an indifference and unconcern as we would read an account of the extermination of one horde of Tartars by another, in the days of Gengis Khan and Tamerlane.” † Mr. Harris, writing to lord Suffolk in 1774, upon the completion of the Partition by fresh usurpation of territory, indulges a hope which was not to be fulfilled: “There is reason to believe that this affair once settled, that unfortunate Republic, after an uninterrupted series of discord, troubles, and disgraces, for nearly ten years, in which it has lost its liberty, its finest provinces, and all its consideration in the affairs of Europe, will be left quietly to reflect on its misfortunes, and from its insignificance be unmolested.” ‡ Twenty-one years afterwards, Kosciusko fell; and what remained of Poland was divided amongst the first spoliators.

Intimately connected with the affairs of unhappy Poland was the war between Turkey and Russia. It commenced in October, 1768, under the avowed desire of the sultan, Mustapha III., to save Poland from the calamity of Russian interference in her domestic troubles. The sultan, however, lies under the charge of having proposed a partition of Poland between Turkey and Austria. The war was a serious calamity for the Porte. Its details have become more interesting for us, as the scenes of that conflict present us with the names so familiar in 1855. The war was for some time chiefly between the Polish confederates and their allies the Turks, against the Russian troops in Poland. But it soon assumed the more decisive character of a war for an extension of Russian dominion. The generals of each power, in the judgment of the king of Prussia, had no military skill. The battles were terrible sacrifices of life, without intelligent direction, though the Russians had more pretension to tactics. “To have a proper notion of the contest,” said Frederick, “we must figure to ourselves a party of one-eyed people thoroughly beating a party of blind men.” Eventually the whole country between the Danube and

* Appendix to Mahon, vol. v.

† “Diaries,” &c., vol. i. p. 99.

‡ “Annual Register,” 1772, p. 2.

the Dnieper fell into the hands of the Russians. The Crimea was overrun by them. They became masters of Kertsch, Yenikale, and Kaffa. The Turkish fleet was destroyed in the bay of Chesme, by a Russian squadron which had sailed from Cronstadt to the Mediterranean. The Russian admiral was assisted by English officers, every indirect aid having been given by the British government to Russia; which power, wrote lord Rochford, in 1772, "his majesty cannot but look upon as the natural ally of his crown, and with which he is likely, sooner or later, to be closely connected." There was an armistice after the Russian fleet returned to the Baltic, having been very efficiently resisted by Gazi Hassan, an adventurer who raised himself by his genius and daring to be capitan pasha.* Peace was concluded in 1774. The acquisitions of Russia by the peace of Kuchuk-Kainarji may be thus summed up: Russia obtained the Great and the Little Kabarda, the fortresses of Azof, Kilbarun, Kertsch, and Yenikale; the country between the Bog and the Dnieper; the free navigation of the Black Sea, and a free passage through the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles; the co-protectorship over Moldavia and Wallachia; and the protectorship over all the Greek churches within the Turkish empire. The Khanat of the Crimea was declared independent, but it soon became a prey to Russia.

The suppression of the Jesuits, in 1773, "though it has been so long expected," writes Burke, "is so remarkable an event that it will stamp the present year as a distinguished era." † The event was expected, because the abolition of the society by Pope Gananelli, Clement XIV., was a final measure of the proscription which had been carried on against them, for some years, by the Roman Catholic powers of Europe. They had been expelled from Portugal, in 1759, with many odious circumstances of severity. In 1764, the Society was suppressed in France, and their property confiscated. In 1767, the members of the Order were driven out of Spain. Clement XIII. strenuously defended the Jesuits. He believed that they were amongst the firmest supporters of the papacy, and the most faithful champions of religion. He would consent to no change in their constitution; and he was supported by the obstinacy of their chief, Lorenzo Ricci. ‡ The Bourbon courts had real or supposed injuries of the Jesuits to revenge. Madame de Pompadour, it is said, had been affronted by her confessor, a Jesuit, who exhorted her wholly to amend her life. The

* The sketch of this remarkable man in "Anastasius" is held to be perfectly accurate.

—Note by Lord Mahon, vol. v. p. 473.

† "Annual Register," 1773, p. 3.

‡ Ranke—"History of the Popes," vol. iii. p. 209.

king of Spain believed that they were plotting to put his brother upon the throne. Clement XIII. died in 1769. His successor had been raised to the papal throne by the Bourbon influence. But he was a man of liberal and moderate opinions; and he saw that the institution had outlived its uses as an instrument of papal supremacy, and was out of harmony with the prevailing opinions of his time. However predisposed against the Jesuits, he took several years for inquiry and counsel. On the 31st of July, 1773, he thus pronounced his decision: "Inspired, as we humbly trust, by the Divine Spirit, urged by the duty of restoring the unanimity of the Church, convinced that the Company of Jesus can no longer render those services, to the end of which it was instituted, and moved by other reasons of prudence and state policy which we hold locked in our own breast, we abolish and annul the Society of Jesus, their functions, houses, and institutions." When Ganganelli said "the Company of Jesus can no longer render those services to the end of which it was instituted," he expressed a truth of larger comprehension than their services to the papacy. They had, in spite of their political intrigues, rendered essential aid to the progress of knowledge. Their missions had done more for the spread of information as to the geography of distant countries, than for the conversation of the peoples amongst whom they went. Their success as educators had done more for the freedom of the human mind than their notions of papal authority for its enslavement. They had advanced literature and science amidst their incessant efforts to hold society in thralldom. They had waged unceasing war against Protestantism, and during that conflict the prevailing thoughts of Europe had been advancing, and had left them behind. "The general course of events, the development of modern civilization, the liberty of the human mind, all these forces against which the Jesuits were called to contest, were arrayed against them, and conquered them."* A recent writer has expressed this more tersely: "They stood in the way of the age, and the age swept them from its path."† The same acute thinker says: "They were the last defenders of authority and tradition; and it was natural that they should fall in an age when statesmen were sceptics, and theologians were Calvinists." Johnson, whilst most men exulted in their destruction, "condemned it loudly as a blow to the general power of the Church, and likely to be followed with many dangerous innovations, which might at length become fatal to relig

* Guizot—"Civilisation en Europe"—Douzième Leçon.

† Buckle—"Civilization in England," vol. i. p. 783.

ion itself." * He was addressing a French abbé, and was perhaps right with regard to France.

There are subjects of home politics which ought to be fully treated in a special history of a particular era, but which must be slightly noticed in a work embracing the whole field of British progress. Thus, in the year 1772, when Wilkes was contending for the shrievalty of London instead of battling with a House of Commons; when the country was no longer agitated with Remonstrances and Addresses; when Woodfall was reporting the debates of Parliament without the terror of the serjeant-at-arms before his eyes,—there were interesting discussions in both Houses on petitions of some of the clergy and laity that Subscription to the Thirty-Nine Articles might not be enforced at the Universities. But we cannot enter upon any détail of these proceedings. Nor can we do more than notice that the Dissenters then obtained a majority in the House of Commons for a repeal of the Test Acts, but were defeated in the Upper House. Time gradually matures into practical measures the theories, sometimes crude and undigested, by which social reforms are advanced. There has been, since 1772, a partial concession to the spirit of religious liberty on the subject of Subscription. The repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts was amongst the earliest of those vast improvements which have made the age of queen Victoria so essentially different from the age of George IV. The constant agitation of questions like these gradually determines public opinion, and reforms are accomplished without violence or ill-will. Thus, in March, 1772, Mr. Montague moved for leave to bring in a Bill to repeal so much of the Act of the 12th of Charles II. as directs that every 30th of January should be for ever kept as a day of fasting and humiliation. When the debates were very meagrely reported, a joke was some times carefully preserved; and we learn from the Parliamentary History that Mr. Stephen Fox said he thought the ceremony of the day did no harm, unless,—addressing the Speaker,—“it obliges you, sir, to go to church once a year.” In 1859, the fast of the 30th of January passed out of the Calendar by Act of Parliament; and the form of prayer, which was called “impious” in the debate of 1772, has vanished from our Liturgy. The motion was rejected. The strongest prejudice must, however, yield at last, and the most prejudiced know that time will settle these conflicts of principle. “I am against abolishing the fast for the 30th of January,” said Johnson. “But I should have no objection to make an Act continuing it for another century, and then letting it expire.”† The

* Mrs. Piozzi's “Anecdotes.”—Note in Boswell.

† Boswell—March 21, 1772.

time he had contemplated had nearly run out when this solemn mockery could no longer be endured.

Upon a question of political economy, the Parliament of 1772 was in advance of public opinion. It was a period of scarcity. The price of wheat was 35 per cent. above the average. Harvests were deficient throughout Europe. Adam Smith represents the feeling of his time in saying—"In years of scarcity the inferior ranks of people impute their distress to the avarice of the corn merchant." The statute of Edward VI. enacted, that whoever should buy any corn or grain with intent to sell it again, should be reputed an unlawful engrosser, and be subject to various penalties. The statute of Charles II. permitted the engrossing of corn when it was cheap, but the buyer was not to sell again in the same market within three months. The statute of 1772 "For repealing several Laws therein mentioned against Badgers, Engrossers, Forestallers, and Regrators," boldly declares that these laws are "detrimental to the supply of the labouring and manufacturing poor of this kingdom." The preamble to the statute says, that "it hath been found by experience that the restraints laid by several statutes upon dealing in corn, meal, flour, cattle, and sundry other sorts of victuals, by preventing a free trade in the said commodities, have a tendency to discourage the growth and to enhance the price of the same." Nevertheless, the Common Law was not yet rendered inoperative by public enlightenment. In 1800, the clamours against corn dealers were as violent as in the days of the Tudors; and a merchant was convicted, before lord Kenyon, for regrating, that is, for selling thirty quarters of oats at an advanced price in the same market on the same day on which he had bought them.

The commencement of the year 1772 brought to George III. an accumulation of family anxieties. On the 29th of January, a courier arrived from Denmark with the intelligence that the queen of Denmark, sister of the king of England, had been sent as a prisoner to the castle of Kronberg. Caroline Matilda, the youngest of the numerous family of Frederick, prince of Wales, was born in 1751; and was married in 1766, to Christian VII., king of Denmark. She is described as very beautiful; of a sweet nature; one whose life would have been happy had she been united to a worthy husband. The king of Denmark was as debased in morals as he was low in intellect—a spiritless wretch, who had given up all care of his subjects to his favourite, Struensee. Verging towards idiocy, the king left his consort to transact state affairs in council with Struensee. The minister was rash and presumptuous; and provoked the hostility of a strong party of the court, who were led by

the dowager-queen, Juliana Maria, the step-mother of Christian VII. A formidable conspiracy was organized against Struensee; and Caroline Matilda was destined to be the victim with him, upon an accusation against her of conjugal infidelity. She had borne the king a son and a daughter, and had been recently confined with a second daughter. At midnight the king's chamber was suddenly entered; and he was required to sign an order for the arrest of his queen, of Struensee, and of his colleague in the ministry, Brandt. The king was told that they had entered into a plot to depose him; and in terror for his own personal safety, he hesitated not to resign his queen and his ministers into the hands of their enemies. Caroline Matilda was dragged from her chamber, refused access to her husband, and with her infant carried off to the castle of Kronberg. Struensee and Brandt were beheaded, after a pretended trial. Proceedings against the queen were suspended by the interposition of the government of George III.; and, after a captivity of four months, she was received on board a British man-of-war, but was not permitted to take her child with her. In the castle of Zell, in Hanover, she passed the remaining three years of her unhappy life. There is a record of M. Roques, the pastor of the French Protestant church at Zell, who was frequently consulted by the queen on the distribution of her charities, that on her death-bed she made a solemn declaration that she had never been unfaithful to her husband.

When this distressing news arrived in England, the mother of George III. was dangerously ill. The king, as Walpole relates, was advised to conceal this new misfortune from the Princess Dowager; but he replied, "My mother *will* know everything, and therefore it is better that I should break it to her by degrees."* On the 8th of February the king wrote this short note to lord North: "My mother is no more." Of the five sons of the princess of Wales, two had died—Edward, duke of York, and Frederick, the youngest son. William, duke of Gloucester, and Henry, duke of Cumberland, were at this time under the serious displeasure of their brother the king.

The Marriage-Act of 1753 especially excepted members of the royal family from its operation. George II. is represented to have said, "I will not have my family laid under these restraints." In 1771, the duke of Cumberland, then in his twenty-sixth year, became deeply enamoured of Mrs. Horton, the daughter of an Irish peer, Simon Luttrell, lord Irnham. The duke had been previously notorious for his intrigues; and a jury had awarded damages of

* "Last Journals of Horace Walpole," edited by Dr. Doran, vol. i. p. 4.

ten thousand pounds against him in an action for criminal conversation brought by lord Grosvenor. The letters of this very silly prince of the blood, produced on this occasion, were the public scorn. In October, 1771, the duke of Cumberland induced Mrs. Horton to accompany him to Calais, where they were married according to the forms of the English Church. The pair were forbidden the Court. What was the mortification of the king, what was the triumph of Wilkes, exclaims Walpole, "when it was known that this new princess of the blood was own sister of the famous colonel Luttrell, the tool thrust by the Court into Wilkes's seat for Middlesex?"* The duke of Gloucester, in September, 1766—he then being in his twenty-third year—had married the widow of the earl of Waldegrave. This lady was a natural daughter of sir Edward Walpole; and as the wife of the nobleman who had been governor to prince George, had been distinguished for her exemplary character. Walpole says, "The duke of Cumberland's marriage was a heavy blow on lady Waldegrave, and seemed to cut off all hopes of the king's permitting the duke of Gloucester to acknowledge her for his wife."† The duke of Gloucester's marriage was kept secret.

On the 20th of February the following royal message was brought down to both Houses of Parliament: "George R. His Majesty being desirous, from paternal affection for his own family, and anxious concern for the future welfare of his people, and the honour and dignity of his crown, that the right of approving all marriages in the royal family (which ever has belonged to the kings of this realm as a matter of public concern) may be made effectual, recommends to both Houses of Parliament to take into their serious consideration whether it may not be wise and expedient to supply the defect of the laws now in being; and, by some new provision, more effectually to guard the descendants of his late majesty king George the second (other than the issue of princesses who have married or may hereafter marry into foreign families) from marrying without the approbation of his majesty, his heirs, or successors, first had and obtained." The royal Marriage Bill was presented next day to the House of Lords. It made provision that no Prince or Princess, descended from George II.—with the exception of the issue of Princesses married abroad—should be capable of contracting matrimony without the previous consent of the king, his heirs, or successors. But it also provided that if any such descendant of George II., being above the age of twenty-five, should persist in a resolution to marry, the king's consent

* "Memoirs of George III.," vol. iv. p. 356.

† *Ibid.* p. 360.

being refused, he or she might give notice to the Privy Council, and might at any time within twelve months after such notice contract marriage, unless both Houses of Parliament, before the expiration of twelve months, should expressly declare their disapprobation of such intended marriage. After continued and vehement debates in both Houses, the Bill became law; and it still continues in force. Its provisions appear to be imperfectly understood. It is called "an encroachment upon the law of nature"—"an impious and cruel measure."* There is a constitutional appeal against an unjust exercise of the prerogative. Such an appeal has never been made; but it would most probably not be made in vain, if any case should arise which would justify Parliament in not supporting the sovereign in the assertion of an arbitrary power. However we may deplore the alleged necessity of excepting the highest in the land from the enjoyment of that individual liberty which belongs to the meanest subject, we cannot help repeating a question very pertinently asked, "What turn would English history have taken if this Act had never been passed?" † During the progress of the Bill, the duke of Gloucester's marriage was avowed. There is a very interesting letter of the duchess of Gloucester to her father, sir Edward Walpole, dated the 19th of May; the last debate on the marriage Act having been on the 24th of March. The following is an extract:—"When the duke of Gloucester married me (which was in September, 1766) I promised him upon no consideration in the world to own it even to you without his permission; which permission I never had till yesterday, when he arrived here in much better health and looks than ever I saw him; yet, as you may suppose, much hurt at all that has passed in his absence: so much so, that I have had great difficulty to prevail upon him to let things as much as possible remain as they are. To secure *my* character, without injuring his, is the utmost of my wishes; and I dare say that you and all my relations will agree with me that I shall be much happier to be called lady Waldegrave, and respected as duchess of Gloucester, than to feel myself the cause of his leading such a life as his brother does, in order for me to be called your Royal Highness. . . . If ever I am unfortunate enough to be called duchess of Gloucester, there is an end of almost all the comforts which I now enjoy, which, if things can go on as they are now, are many." ‡ The domestic miseries of one generation are, happily, frequently put an end to in another generation. The son of William, duke of Glou-

* Massey—"George III.," vol. ii. p. 145. † "Quarterly Review," vol. cv. p. 470.

‡ "Last Journals of H. Walpole," p. 100.

cester, the brother of George III., married the princess Mary, the daughter of George III. *

In 1773, the Parliament turned from its long course of anti-popular contests, to look seriously at a matter of paramount national importance. The pecuniary affairs of the East India Company had fallen into great disorder. On the 2nd of March a petition was presented from the Company to the House of Commons, praying for the assistance of a loan of a million and a half sterling. In the previous session a Select Committee of the House had been appointed to inquire into the affairs of the Company. The necessity for such an inquiry was strongly urged, upon financial and moral grounds. The net revenues of Bengal had decreased; the natives were distressed and discontented; the Company's servants were arbitrary and oppressive. General Burgoyne, the mover of the Resolution for a Committee, made an eloquent appeal to the feelings of the House: "The fate of a great portion of the globe; the fate of great states in which your own is involved; the distresses of fifteen millions of people; the rights of humanity; are involved in this question." To understand the necessity for such an inquiry, we must take a rapid glance at the affairs of India, from the period when the French supremacy was utterly destroyed by the energies of Clive. †

In 1760, when the strong hand that had made the English masters of Bengal was withdrawn, the agents of the Company, regarding their own enrichment as the immediate business of their lives, and permitting their native factors to pursue a similar course of extortion, Meer Cossein, for whose elevation they had removed the Subahdar whom Clive had raised to power, displayed an inclination to be freed from his English friends. The differences at last came to an open rupture, and Meer Cossein's troops murdered the members of a deputation sent from Calcutta to negotiate with him. In 1763 war was commenced, for the purpose of deposing Meer Cossein and restoring Meer Jaffier. The Subahdar was finally overthrown, but not before he had taken a horrible vengeance upon the English, by murdering a hundred and fifty prisoners in the fortress of Patna. The tyrant fled to the Nabob of Oude. Their joint forces were subsequently defeated by the English under ma-

* "On the death of the late duke of Sussex, the fifth son of king George III., who had been married at Rome in 1792, by a minister of the Church of England, and shortly afterwards again in England, according to the rites of the Church of England, it was held that his peerage did not pass to the only son of that marriage, Sir Augustus D'Este; but that the statute extended to prohibit contracts for, and to annul, any marriage in violation of its provisions, wherever the same might be contracted or solemnized."—(*Blackstone's Commentaries*—Kerr's edit., vol. i. p. 215.)

† *Ante*. p. 31.

for Munro. Shah Alum, the Great Mogul, who had been driven from his capital of Delhi by the Mahrattas, now sought the British protection. But in spite of victories, the rule of the stranger was one of oppression for the Bengalees; and the undoubted misgovernment of this period justified general Burgoyne, to call upon the Parliament to redress their wrongs: "Good God! what a call! the native of Hindustan, born a slave; his neck bent from the very cradle to the yoke; by birth, by education, by climate, by religion, a patient, submissive, willing subject to Eastern despotism, first begins to feel, first shakes his chains, for the first time complains, under the pre-eminence of British tyranny."

The misrule of the Company's servants in India was unchecked by an united central authority in England. The king's government had as yet no efficient control over Indian affairs. The Directors were quarrelling amongst themselves, and divided into knots contending for supremacy. To establish a just rule over the vast empire that was subject to their power and influence formed a small portion of their deliberations. In India there was no supreme authority; and the three presidencies had rival interests to uphold. The whole dominion of the English would have probably gone to ruin, if Clive had not procured an ascendancy in the Court of Directors, and once more sailed for Calcutta with extensive powers, as Governor and Commander-in-chief of Bengal. His very name soon operated upon the native princes. His judicious measures set some bounds to the rapacity of the Company's servants. He made them give pledges to accept no future presents from natives. He debarred high officers from carrying on private trade. He deprived military officers of that extra allowance in the field known as "double batta." For himself, he now cautiously abstained from adding anything to his large fortune by accepting such gratuities as he had received in the early portion of his career. He returned to England in the beginning of 1767, having laid the foundation of that better government which eventually made the British dominion a blessing instead of a curse to India. His biographer has said, "From Clive's second visit to India dates the political ascendancy of the English in that country. . . . From Clive's third visit to India dates the purity of the administration of our Eastern Empire."*

The successes of the Company in Bengal were now to be counterbalanced by defeats in Madras. Hyder Ali, a man of ability and daring, who had deposed the rajah of Mysore in 1761, was extending his dominions by conquests and seizures; and was securing his ascendancy by an energy which formed a striking con-

* Macaulay—"Essays."

trast to the supineness of the greater number of native princes. He became engaged in a contest with the English; and by his rapid movements, and his sudden attacks, was a most formidable enemy by land and sea. Having plundered and wasted the Carnatic, he appeared with five thousand horsemen before Madras, in 1769; and there concluded a treaty with the terrified Council, in the absence of their troops. The terms of the alliance which was then concluded were not onerous. Their moderation evinced the sagacity of this extraordinary ruler.

An arrangement was, in 1769, made between the Administration and the East Indian Directors. The Company were to hold the territorial revenues of India for five years, they paying £400,000 annually into the Exchequer. But in 1770 the resources of India materially failed. There was a terrible famine in Bengal, in which it is supposed that one-third of the inhabitants perished. In 1772, the Company declared a deficiency of above a million; obtained loans from the Bank of England to a large amount; and at last went to Parliament for aid, with the undoubted risk of provoking a more stringent inquiry into their affairs than had ever before been instituted. In 1773, an Act was passed, by which £1,400,000 was lent to the Company; the payment of £400,000 per annum was postponed; and the dividend of the proprietors was restricted to 6 per cent., until the loan should be repaid. By another Act the annual elections of directors were to be subject to regulations, such as prevailed till the very recent changes. A Governor-General was to reside in Bengal, to which presidency the other two were made subordinate. The first Governor-General, Warren Hastings, was named in this Act, as were the new Council. The appointments of Parliament were to continue for five years, and then the nomination was to revert to the Court of Directors, subject to the approbation of the Crown. One of the new council was Philip Francis; and this appointment has given birth to the theory that Junius ceased to write when he was propitiated by so great a bounty upon his silence.

The transactions of the government with the East India Company were completed by what was meant as a concession to the Directors. They had in their warehouses seventeen million pounds of tea, for which they wanted a market. Permission was given by Act of Parliament to export teas belonging to the Company to any of the British plantations in America, with a drawback of the duty payable in England. The colonial tax of three pence in the pound was to be paid in the American ports. Ships were freighted, and consignees appointed to sell their cargoes. Fatal boon, whose consequences no one saw.

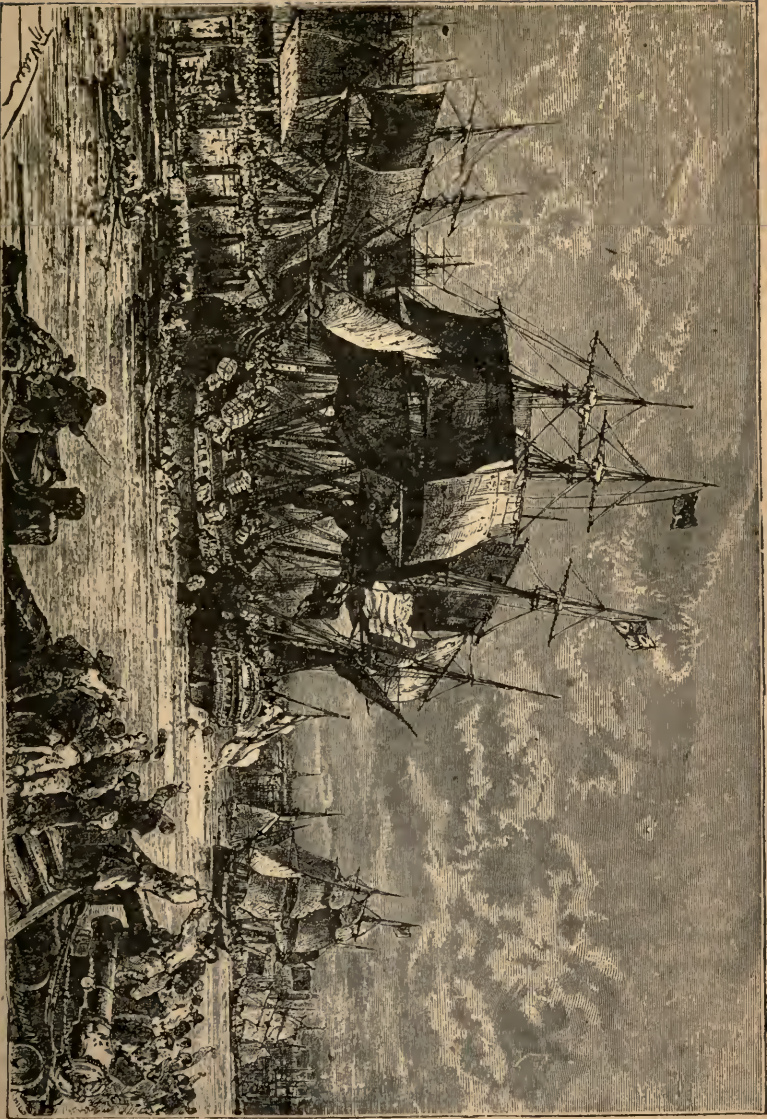
CHAPTER IX.

Destruction of Tea in Boston Harbour.—Franklin before the Council.—Boston Port Bill.—Burke's speech against taxing America.—Chatham's speech.—Sentiments of the Americans.—State of Parties in America.—Leaders of the House of Commons.—Reception of the Boston Port Bill.—Military preparations.—Chatham's and Burke's efforts for conciliation.—Rapid growth of America.—English feelings on the American question.—Hostilities commenced at Lexington.—Ticonderoga and Crown Point taken.—Washington's view of civil war.—Principles involved in the struggle.

It was Sunday, the 28th of November, 1773, when there sailed into Boston harbour the English merchant ship Dartmouth, laden with chests of tea belonging to the East India Company. The Act of Parliament which allowed the Treasury to license vessels to export the teas of the Company to the American colonies, free of duty, was the signal for popular gatherings in Boston. Samuel Adams, in the "Boston Gazette," roused again that feeling of resistance which had partially subsided. The governor of Massachusetts, in October, wrote to lord Dartmouth, who had succeeded lord Hillsborough as colonial secretary, that Samuel Adams, "who was the first person that openly, and in any public assembly, declared for a total independence," had "obtained such an ascendancy as to direct the town of Boston and the House of Representatives, and consequently the Council, just as he pleases." The East India Company had appointed its consignees in Boston. On the night of the 2nd of November, summonses were left at the houses of each of these persons, requiring them to appear on a certain day at Liberty Tree, to resign their commission; and notices were issued desiring the freemen of Boston and of the neighbouring towns to assemble at the same place. The consignees did not appear; but a Committee of the Assembly traced them to a warehouse, where they were met to consult. They were required not to sell the teas, but to return them to London by the vessels which might bring them. They refused to comply, and were denounced as enemies to their country. Philadelphia had previously compelled the agents of the Company to resign their appointments. Town meetings were held at Boston, when strong resolutions were adopted. In this state of things, on that Sunday, the 28th of November, the first tea-ship arrived. The New England colonists preserved that strict observance of the Sabbath

which their puritan fathers felt the highest of duties. But it was a work of necessity to impede the landing of the tea; and a Committee met twice on that Sunday to concert measures. They obtained a promise from Rotch, the commander of the ship Dartmouth, that his vessel should not be entered till the following Tuesday. On Monday, the Committee of all the neighbouring town assembled at Boston; and five thousand persons agreed that the tea should be sent back to the place whence it came. "Throw it overboard," cried one. The consignees, alarmed at this demonstration, declared that they would not send back the teas, but that they would store them. This proposal was received with scorn; and then the consignees agreed that the teas should not be landed. But there was a legal difficulty. If the rest of the cargo were landed, and the tea not landed, the vessel could not be cleared in Boston, and after twenty days was liable to seizure. Two more ships arrived, and anchored by the side of the Dartmouth. The people kept watch night and day to prevent any attempt at landing the teas. Thirteen days after the arrival of the Dartmouth, the owner was summoned before the Boston Committee, and told that his vessel and his tea must be taken back to London. It was out of his power to do so, he said. He certainly had not the power; for the passages out of the harbour were guarded by two king's ships, to prevent any vessel going to sea without a license. On the 16th, the revenue officers would have a legal authority to take possession of the Dartmouth. For three days previous there had been meetings of the Boston Committee; but their journal had only this entry—"No business transacted matter of record."

On the 16th of December, there was a meeting in Boston of seven thousand persons, who resolved that the tea should not be landed. The master of the Dartmouth was ordered to apply to the governor for a pass, for his vessel to proceed on her return voyage to London. The governor was at his country house. Many of the leaders had adjourned to a church, to wait his answer. The night had come on when Rotch returned, and announced that the governor had refused him a pass, because his ship had not cleared. There was no more hesitation. Forty or fifty men, disguised as Mohawks, raised the war-whoop at the porch of the church; went on to the wharf where the three ships lay alongside; took possession of them; and deliberately emptied three hundred and forty chests of tea into the waters of the bay. It was the work of three hours. Not a sound was heard, but that of breaking open the chests. The people of Boston went to their rest, as if no extraordinary event had occurred.



THE PEOPLE OF BOSTON THROWING THE TEA OVERBOARD. — Vol. vi. 156.

On the 27th of January, 1774, the news of this decisive act reached the English government. On the 29th there was a great meeting of the Lords of the council, to consider a petition from Massachusetts, for the dismissal of Hutchinson, the governor, and Oliver, the lieutenant-governor. Dr. Franklin appeared before the Council as agent for Massachusetts. He had rendered himself obnoxious to the English government by a proceeding which even his patriotism could not wholly justify. He had obtained possession of some private letters written confidentially several years before, in which Hutchinson and Oliver avowed sentiments opposed to what they considered the licentiousness of the Colonists. These letters Franklin transmitted to the Assembly at Boston, who voted, by a large majority, that the opinions expressed contemplated the establishment of arbitrary power; and they accordingly petitioned for the removal of the governor and lieutenant-governor. The intelligence from Boston of the destruction of the teas was not likely to propitiate the Council. Franklin was treated with little respect; and Wedderburn, the solicitor-general, assailed him with a torrent of invective, at which the lords cheered and laughed. Franklin bore the assaults with perfect equanimity; but from that hour he ceased to be a mediator between Great Britain and the Colonists. The Council reported that the Petition from Massachusetts was "groundless, vexatious, and scandalous." Two days after, Franklin was dismissed from his office of Deputy Postmaster General. He said to Priestley, who was present at the Council, that he considered the thing for which he had been so insulted, as one of the best actions of his life.

The Parliament had met on the 13th of January. It was the 7th of March when lord North delivered the king's message relating to "the violent and outrageous proceedings at the town and port of Boston, in the province of Massachusetts Bay, with a view to obstructing the commerce of this kingdom, and upon grounds and pretences immediately subversive of the constitution thereof." There was a debate, of which the most remarkable part was, that when lord North stated that the proper papers should be ready on the following Friday, Thurlow, the attorney-general, said, loud enough to reach the ear of the minister, "I never heard anything so impudent; he has no plan yet ready." * The one plan which first presented itself—the most unfortunate of all plans—is exhibited in a note of the king to lord North, dated the 4th of February: "Gen. Gage, though just returned from Boston, expresses his willingness to go back at a day's notice if convenient measures are adopted. He says,

* Walpole—"Last Journals," vol. i. p. 329.

They will be lions while we are lambs; but if we take the resolute part, they will undoubtedly prove very meek. Four regiments, sent to Boston, will, he thinks, be sufficient to prevent any disturbance. All men now feel that the fatal compliance in 1766 has increased the pretensions of the Americans to thorough independence." On the 14th of March, lord North brought in a Bill for removing the Custom House from Boston, and declaring it unlawful, after the 1st of June, to lade or unlade, ship or unship, any goods from any landing-place within the harbour of Boston. There was little opposition to this measure, which was passed in a fortnight, and when sent to the Lords was as quickly adopted. Chatham suggested, in a letter to Shelburne, that reparation ought first to be demanded and refused before such a bill could be called just. The letter of Chatham, in which he makes this suggestion, is that of a great statesman, exhibiting the sound qualities of his mind perhaps even more clearly than his impassioned oratory: "The whole of this unhappy business is beset with dangers of the most complicated and lasting nature; and the point of true wisdom for the mother-country seems to be in such nice and exact limits (accurately distinguished, and embraced, with a large and generous moderation of spirit), as narrow, short-sighted counsels of state, or over-heated popular debates, are not likely to hit. Perhaps a fatal desire to take advantage of this guilty tumult of the Bostonians, in order to crush the spirit of liberty among the Americans in general, has taken possession of the heart of government."*

In the "heart of government" there was no place for conciliation. The Boston Port Bill, backed up by military force, was to be followed by other measures of coercion. On the 28th of March, lord North brought in a Bill for regulating the government of Massachusetts Bay. "I propose," he said, "In this Bill to take the executive power from the hands of the democratic part of government." The proposition went, in many important particulars, to annul the Charter granted to the province by William III. The council was to be appointed by the Crown; the magistrates were to be nominated by the governor. This Bill also passed, after ineffectual debate. A third Bill enacted, that during the next three years, the Governor of Massachusetts might, if it was thought that an impartial trial of any person could not be secured in that colony, send him for trial in another colony; or to Great Britain, if it were thought that no fair trial could be obtained in the Colonies. The object of the Bill was distinctly stated by lord North—"Unless such a bill should pass into a law the executive power will be

* "Chatham Correspondence," vol. vi. p. 337.

unwilling to act, thinking they will not have a fair trial without it." Colonel Barré strongly remonstrated against such a measure. The Bill was to protect the military power in any future encounters with the people.* The king rejoices "in the feebleness and futility of opposition." † Mr. Bancroft says, without perhaps any very accurate means of judging, that "the passions of the British ministry were encouraged by the British people, who resented the denial of their supremacy, and made the cause of Parliament their own." ‡ The British people were not allowed to be free judges of the great question at issue. On the discussion of the Bostonian Bills, Walpole says, "The doors of both Houses were carefully locked—a symptom of the spirit with which they were dictated." § Perhaps if the words of Edmund Burke had gone forth to the world, hot from his lips, instead of oozing out in a pamphlet, the people might have thought seriously of the crisis which called forth his eloquent philosophy. His speech of the 19th of April, on American taxation, has passages that have an interest for all time. It had been urged that the tax upon tea is trifling. This is his reply:—"Could anything be a subject of more just alarm to America, than to see you go out of the plain high-road of finance, and give up your most certain revenues and your dearest interest, merely for the sake of insulting your colonies? No man ever doubted that the commodity of tea could bear an imposition of three-pence. But no commodity will bear three-pence, or will bear a penny, when the general feelings of men are irritated, and two millions of people are resolved not to pay. The feelings of the colonies were probably the feelings of Great Britain. Theirs were formerly the feelings of Mr. Hampden when called upon for the payment of twenty shillings. Would twenty shillings have ruined Mr. Hampden's fortune? No! but the payment of half twenty shillings, on the principle it was demanded, would have made him a slave." Lord Carmarthen, as Walpole records, produced a sensation on his first appearance in the House of Commons. The young lord's speech prompted one of the most splendid manifestations of Burke's genius: "A noble lord who spoke some time ago, is full of the fire of ingenuous youth; and when he has modelled the ideas of a lively imagination by further experience, he will be an ornament to his country in either house. He has said, that the Americans are our children, and how can they revolt against their parent? He says, if they are not

* Lord Mahon has not looked at this measure with his usual care. He says, "It was imagined that no fair trial could be had within the limits of that province of any persons concerned in the late disturbances."—History, vol. vi. p. 8.

† Note to lord North, 23rd March.

‡ "American Revolution," vol. iii. p. 556.

§ "Last Journals," p. 363.

free in their present state, England is not free; because Manchester, and other considerable places, are not represented. So then, because some towns in England are not represented, America is to have no representative at all. They are our 'our children;' but when children ask for bread, we are not to give a stone. Is it because the natural resistance of things, and the various mutations of time, hinder our government, or any scheme of government, from being any more than a sort of approximation to the right, is it therefore that the Colonies are to recede from it infinitely? When this child of ours wishes to assimilate to its parent, and to reflect with a true filial resemblance the beautiful countenance of British liberty; are we to turn to them the shameful parts of our constitution? are we to give them our weakness for their strength; our opprobrium for their glory; and the slough of slavery, which we are not able to work off, to serve them for their freedom?"

The dangers of the country called forth Chatham from his retirement. Walpole describes him making his appearance in the House of Lords, on the 26th of May: "Lord Chatham, who was a comedian even to his dress, to excuse his late absence by visible tokens of the gout, had his legs wrapped in black velvet boots, and, as if in mourning for the king of France, he leaned on a crutch covered with black likewise." * Walpole says, "he made a long feeble harangue." There are portions of the harangue which throw a doubt upon the taste or candour of the journalist—the opening passage for example:

"If we take a transient view of those motives which induced the ancestors of our fellow-subjects in America to leave their native country to encounter the innumerable difficulties of the unexplored regions of the Western World, our astonishment at the present conduct of their descendants will naturally subside. There was no corner of the world into which men of their free and enterprising spirit would not fly with alacrity, rather than submit to the slavish and tyrannical principles which prevailed at that period in their native country. And shall we wonder, my lords, if the descendants of such illustrious characters spurn with contempt the hand of unconstitutional power, that would snatch from them such dear-bought privileges as they now contend for? Had the British colonies been planted by any other kingdom than our own, the inhabitants would have carried with them the chains of slavery and spirit of despotism; but as they are, they ought to be remembered as great instances to instruct the world what great exertions mankind

* "Last Journals," vol. i. p. 369. (Louis XV. died on the 10th of May.)

will naturally make, when they are left to the free exercise of their own powers."

The spirit of the New Englanders took the same course of thought as that of the first orator of the mother-country. In proposing a General Congress of the several Houses of Assembly, John Hancock exclaimed, "Remember from whom you sprang." * This was said on the 5th of March—two days before lord North had delivered to Parliament the Royal Message which was the prelude to the measures which the British government believed would ensure the submission of the Colonists. The people of Massachusetts, in their proceedings of the 16th of December, "had passed the river and cut away the bridge." † Lord Mansfield called upon the Peers to delay not in carrying the Boston Port Bill: "Pass this Act, and you will have crossed the Rubicon." Before the men of Massachusetts knew of the severities that were hanging over them, the most violent of their leaders, Samuel Adams, had officially drawn up instructions for Franklin, the agent for the colony, which concluded with these words: "Their old good will and affection for the parent country are not totally lost. If she returns to her former moderation and good-humour, their affection will revive. They wish for nothing more than a permanent union with her upon the condition of equal liberty. This is all they have been contending for; and nothing short of this will or ought to satisfy them." ‡ The same language was held in 1774 by George Washington. He wrote in October of that year, to a friend who held the rank of captain in the English army, "You are taught to believe that the people of Massachusetts are rebellious; setting up for independency and what not. Give me leave to tell you, you are grossly abused. . . . I cannot announce it as a fact, that it is not the wish or interest of that government, or any other upon this continent, separately or collectively, to set up for independence. But this you may at the same time rely on, that none of them will ever submit to the loss of those valuable rights and privileges which are essential to the happiness of every free state, and without which life, liberty, and property, are rendered totally insecure."

Such were the sentiments, even of the moderate, in the American Colonies. But it must not be assumed that the universal opinion of the colonial communities was represented by Samuel Adams or John Hancock, even by George Washington or Thomas Jefferson. There was a large party in every province who were avowed Royalists; and who gradually acquired the name of Tories. They

* Bancroft, vol. iii. p. 56:

† J. Adams, quoted by Bancroft.

‡ Bancroft, p. 563.

were not wanting in encouragement from England. They had the support of a preponderating majority in Parliament, which sanguine persons thought would overawe the malcontents. "Nothing can be more calculated," writes the king to lord North, "to bring the Americans to a due submission than the very handsome majority that at the outset appears in both Houses." This was written on the 22nd of January, 1775, a new Parliament having met on the previous 29th of November. The American Royalists would not lack private instigations from individuals of eminence in England, to oppose their rebellious countrymen. The conversational opinions of the famous Dr. Johnson might reach them, even before they read his pamphlet, "Taxation no Tyranny." They might be told that Edward Gibbon, of rising literary reputation, held that the right was on the side of the mother country.* The future great historian was returned to Parliament in 1774, and was prepared to speak on the American question, if he could have overcome "timidity fortified by pride." Whatever may be now the prevailing sentiment upon the colonial quarrel, we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that the controversy was one that involved great principles, and called forth the highest energies of great intellects. On either side of the Atlantic was manifested the grandeur of the Anglo-Saxon mind. Chatham, in 1775, paid a deserved tribute to the qualities displayed in the first American Congress: "When your lordships look at the papers transmitted us from America—when you consider their decency, firmness, and wisdom, you cannot but respect their cause, and wish to make it your own. For myself I must declare and avow, that in all my reading and observation—(I have read Thucydides, and have studied and admired the master-states of the world)—that for solidity of reasoning, force of sagacity, and wisdom of conclusion, under such a complication of difficult circumstances, no nation or body of men can stand in preference to the General Congress at Philadelphia. I trust it is obvious to your lordships that all attempts to impose servitude upon such men, to establish despotism over such a mighty continental nation, must be vain, must be fatal." Gibbon has described the striking scene he witnessed in the British House of Commons: "I assisted at the debates of a free assembly; I listened to the attack and defence of eloquence and reason; I had a near prospect of the character, views, and passions, of the first men of the age. The cause of government was ably vindicated by lord North, a statesman of spotless integrity, a consummate master of debate, who could wield, with equal dexterity, the arms of reason and of ridicule. He was

* See his Letter to Holroyd, 31st January, 1775.

seated on the treasury-bench between his attorney and solicitor-general, the two pillars of the law and state, *magis pares quam similes*; and the minister might indulge in a short slumber, whilst he was upholden on either hand by the majestic sense of Thurlow, and the skilful eloquence of Wedderburn. From the adverse side of the house an ardent and powerful opposition was supported by the lively declamation of Barré, the legal acuteness of Dunning, the profuse and philosophical fancy of Burke, and the argumentative vehemence of Fox, who, in the conduct of a party, approved himself equal to the conduct of an empire. By such men every operation of peace and war, every principle of justice and policy, every question of authority and freedom, was attacked and defended; and the subject of the momentous contest was the union or separation of Great Britain and America. The eight sessions I sat in parliament were a school of civil prudence, the first and most essential virtue of an historian."*

The differences of opinion in America ought to have retarded the terrible issue that was approaching. The fears of the timid, the hopes of the loyal, were opposed to the advocates of resistance, and might have prevailed to avert the notion of independence. In an unhappy hour, blood was shed; and conciliation then became a word that was uttered to deaf ears in England as in America. We must in this chapter rapidly trace the course of events till we reach that crisis.

The ministry after passing their coercive Bills had determined to send out general Gage to supersede Hutchinson as governor of Massachusetts, and to be Commander in Chief in the Colonies. He would have to act upon a system distinctly opposed to the old chartered system of free local government. He undervalued, as we have seen, the resistance which was to be brought against him, and relied too absolutely upon "four regiments." His appointment was not disagreeable to the New Englanders. He had lived amongst them, and had honourably executed the military authority with which he had been previously entrusted. In an unhappy hour he arrived at Boston, on the 13th of May, 1774. A vessel which came there before him brought a copy of the Boston Port Bill. When Gage came into the harbour, the people were holding a meeting to discuss that Act of the British Legislature which deprived them of their old position in the commerce of the world—which doomed their merchants and all dependent upon them to absolute ruin. There was but one feeling. The meeting entered into resolutions, to which they invited the co-operation of the other

* Autobiography.

Colonies, for the purpose of suspending all commercial intercourse with Great Britain, and the West Indies, until the Act was repealed. Copies of the Act were everywhere circulated, printed with a black border. But there was no violence. The new Governor was received with decorum, but without the accustomed honours. General Gage gave the Assembly notice that on the 1st of June, according to the provisions of the Act, their place of meeting would be removed to the town of Salem. When the spirit of opposition to his dictates was getting up, the Governor suddenly adjourned the Assembly. He was asked to appoint the 1st of June as a day of general prayer and fasting. He refused. In Virginia the House of Burgesses appointed the 1st of June as a day of humiliation, to avert the calamity of their loss of rights, or the miseries of civil war. They were immediately dissolved. The Assembly of Virginia did not separate without recommending a General Congress. The idea universally spread. Meanwhile, general Gage had an encampment of six regiments on a common near Boston, and had begun to fortify the isthmus which connects the town with the adjacent country. The 1st of June came. There was no tumult. Business was at an end; Boston had become a city of the dead.

The first Congress, consisting of fifty-five members, met at Philadelphia on the 4th of September. The place of their meeting was Carpenter's Hall. Peyton Randolph was chosen as their President. Their proceedings were conducted with closed doors. The more earnest party gradually obtained the ascendancy over the more timid. They drew up a Declaration of Rights. They passed Resolutions to suspend all imports from Great Britain or Ireland after the 1st of December, and to discontinue all exports after the 10th of September in the ensuing year, unless the grievances of America should be redressed. They published Addresses to the people of Great Britain and of Canada, and they decided upon a petition to the king. These were the papers that called forth the eulogium of Chatham. The Congress dissolved themselves on the 26th of October; and resolved that another Congress should be convened on the 10th of May, 1775.

After the 1st of June the irremediable conflict between the Governor and Representatives of the people soon put an end to the legal course of government. General Gage was so wholly deserted by the Council, that the meeting of the Assembly, which was proposed to take place at Salem in October, could not be regularly convened. Writs for the election of members had been issued, but were afterwards annulled by proclamation. The elections took

place. The persons chosen assembled, and styled themselves a Local Congress. A Committee of safety was appointed. They enrolled militia, called "Minutemen," whose engagement was that they should appear in arms at a minute's notice. They appointed commanders. They provided ammunition. The knowledge of the two Acts of Parliament which had followed that for shutting up the Port of Boston, not only provoked this undisguised resolve to resist to the death amongst the people of Massachusetts, but called up the same growing determination throughout the vast continent of America.

The new Parliament met on the 29th of November, 1774. There was an end of the agitations about Wilkes; for, having been elected for Middlesex, he took his seat without opposition. The king's speech asserted his determination "to withstand every attempt to weaken or impair the supreme authority of this Legislature over all the dominions of my Crown." Corresponding Addresses were voted in both Houses with a large majority. In January, lord Chatham brought forward a motion to withdraw the troops from Boston. "I wish, my lords," he said, "not to lose a day in this urgent, pressing crisis. An hour now lost in allaying ferments in America may produce years of calamity. For my own part, I will not desert for a moment the conduct of this weighty business, from first to last. Unless nailed to my bed by the extremity of sickness, I will give it unremitting attention. I will knock at the door of this sleeping and confounded ministry, and will rouse them to a sense of their important danger." Chatham knocked in vain to awaken these sleepers. His voice, whose noble utterance cannot now be read without stirring the heart, was called by George III. "a trumpet of sedition." Again, on the 1st of February, that voice was heard, when Chatham presented "a provisional Bill for settling the troubles in America." On the first occasion he had only eighteen peers to vote with him against sixty-eight; on the second occasion he had thirty-two against sixty-one. Franklin heard the great speech of the 20th January, having been conducted into the House by Chatham himself, who said to him, "I am sure your presence at this day's debate will be of more service to America than mine." This was some compensation to that eminent man for the insults of Wedderburn. Chatham's second son, the child of his hopes, then only sixteen, wrote to his mother an account of that memorable debate. It is touching to observe the young William Pitt's deep sympathy with his father's efforts: "Nothing prevented his speech from being the most forcible that can be imagined; and administration fully felt it. . . . He

is lame in one ankle, near the instep, from standing so long. No wonder he is lame; his first speech lasted above an hour, and the second half an hour—surely, the two finest speeches that were ever made before, unless by himself. . . . I wish I had time and memory to give an account of all I heard, and all I felt.”* Chatham’s oratory was in vain. The ministry that night declared they would send out more troops, instead of recalling any. Chatham’s conciliatory Bill made some impression upon lord North, who proposed a very weak measure, as a Resolution of the House of Commons, that if any of the American provinces, by their legislature, should make some provision for the defence and government of that province, which should be approved by the king and parliament, then it might be proper to forbear imposing any tax. This was to attempt to put out a conflagration with a bucket of water.

If the highest efforts of argument could have been availing, the speech of Edmund Burke, on the 22nd of March, would have arrested the headlong course of the government. At this moment a Bill was passing both Houses which Burke called “the great penal Bill by which we had passed sentence on the trade and sustenance of America.” It was a Bill to prohibit certain Colonies from fishing on the banks of Newfoundland. Great Britain was not ashamed to resort to this petty measure of retaliation against the American non-importation agreements. Burke proposed a series of conciliatory Resolutions, of a less sweeping nature than those of Chatham, and therefore more likely to be acceptable to men of temperate opinions. They were rejected on a division of two hundred and seventy against seventy-eight. The speech of the great statesman presented a masterly review of the wonderful growth of the American Colonies,—their successful industry,—their commercial importance to Great Britain. The whole export trade of England, including the colonial trade, was six millions and a half in 1704. The export trade to the colonies alone was six millions in 1772. These statistical facts were suddenly illumined by a burst of oratory, perhaps unrivalled. Allen, lord Bathurst, to whom Pope addressed his “Epistle on the Use of Riches,”—Bathurst “unspoiled by wealth,” the father of the Lord Chancellor of 1775,—was cited by Burke as one that might remember all the stages of the growth of our national prosperity. He was in 1704 “of an age at least to be made to comprehend such things.” “Suppose that the angel of that auspicious youth” had opened to him in vision the fortunes of his house in the twelfth year of the

* “Chatham Correspondence,” vol. iv. p. 376.

third prince of the line of Brunswick: "If amidst these bright and happy scenes of domestic honour and prosperity, that angel should have drawn up the curtain, and unfolded the rising glories of his country, and whilst he was gazing with admiration on the then commercial grandeur of England, the genius should point out to him a little speck, scarce visible in the mass of the national interest, a small seminal principle, rather than a formed body, and should tell him—'Young man, there is America—which at this day serves for little more than to amuse you with stories of savage men, and uncouth manners; yet shall, before you taste of death, show itself equal to the whole of that commerce which now attracts the envy of the world. Whatever England has been growing to by a progressive increase of improvement, brought in by varieties of people, by a succession of civilizing conquests and civilizing settlements in a series of seventeen hundred years, you shall see as much added to her by America in the course of a single life.' If this state of his country had been foretold to him, would it not require all the sanguine credulity of youth, and all the fervid glow of enthusiasm, to make him believe it? Fortunate man, he has lived to see it! Fortunate indeed, if he lives to see nothing that shall vary the prospect, and cloud the setting of his day!"

Allen, earl Bathurst, lived long enough to see the prospect clouded over, but not to behold that sun set which was predicted to follow the separation of Great Britain from her North American Colonies. It was for later times to behold the cloud passing away from the old monarchy and the young republic. In that year of 1775, when Burke was thus pointing to the remembrances of an eminent living man, to contrast "the little speck scarce visible in the mass of the national interest," with the continent which contained two millions of prosperous colonists,—in that year there came to England an American painter, with a son who would gradually comprehend the mighty changes which were then going on in the country of his birth. If the angel of this auspicious boy should have drawn up the curtain, and unfolded the glories of America when he was to be Lord Chancellor of England, would it not have required all the sanguine credulity of youth, and all the fervid glow of enthusiasm, to have made John Singleton Copley believe that the woods in which his father taught himself to paint should be covered with mighty cities, that the Republic of the United States should contain a population of twenty-three millions, and that the commerce of those States should, next to that of Great Britain, be the largest in the world?

The contrarieties of public opinion in Great Britain and Ireland

upon the American question, were exhibited in petitions from various corporate bodies. Many manufacturing towns petitioned against the coercion Acts, as destructive of the commerce of the country. Other petitions called for an enforcement of the legislative supremacy of Great Britain, as the only means of preserving a trade with the Colonies. There were war-petitions and peace-petitions. Those who signed the war-petitions were held to be mere party-men known as Tories. Those who signed the peace-petitions were discontented Whigs, or something worse. The Quakers, whilst they exhorted to peace, maintained the loyalty of all religious denominations in America to the king's person, family and government. The citizens of London, with Wilkes at their head as lord-mayor, presented an Address and Remonstrance to the king on the throne, in which they denounced the measures of the government as deliberately intended to establish arbitrary power all over America. The king answered, that it was with the utmost astonishment that he found any of his subjects capable of encouraging the rebellious disposition which existed in some of his Colonies in America. From such different points of view did men regard this great argument. As usual in England, the most serious questions had their ludicrous aspect. Caricatures were numerous. One represented America as a struggling female, held down by lord Mansfield, whilst lord North was drenching her with "a strong dose of tea." In another, Britannia is thrown down upon her child America, whilst lord North is pumping upon both of them, looking exultingly through his eye-glass.* The partisans of the minister struck a medal in his honour.

The close of 1774 was, in Massachusetts, the silence before the storm. The people were arming. The Provincial Congress had formed an arsenal at Concord, an inland town. The British troops made no movements during the winter to interfere with these hostile demonstrations. In his speech of the 27th of January, Chatham alluded to the position of the royal forces: "Their situation is truly unworthy; penned up; pining in inglorious inactivity. . . . I find a report creeping abroad that ministers censure general Gage's inactivity. . . . It is a prudent and necessary inaction. . . . This tameness, however contemptible, cannot be censured; for the first drop of blood shed in civil and unnatural war might be *inmedicabile vulnus*." That incurable wound was, too soon, to be inflicted.

On the evening of the 18th of April, lieutenant-colonel Smith, of the 10th foot, marched, by order of governor Gage, with a body of

* See Wright's "House of Hanover," vol. ii. p. 22.



THE COLONISTS UNDER LIBERTY TREE.— Vol. vi. 168.

grenadiers and light infantry, for Concord, with the purpose of destroying all the military stores collected there. "Notwithstanding," writes lieutenant-colonel Smith in his dispatch, "we marched with the utmost expedition and secrecy, we found the country had intelligence or strong suspicion of our coming, and fired many signal guns, and rung the alarm bells repeatedly; and we were informed, when at Concord, that some cannon had been taken out of town that day; that others, with some stores, had been carried away three days before, which prevented our having an opportunity of destroying so much as might have been expected at our first setting off." Six light infantry companies were dispatched to seize two brigades on different roads beyond Concord. They found country people drawn on a green, with arms and accoutrements. The troops advanced, according to the lieutenant-colonel, without any intention of injuring the people; but, nevertheless, they were fired upon, and the soldiers fired again. When the detachment reached Concord, there was a more serious skirmish, with a very considerable body of countrymen. "At Concord," the narrative continues, "we found very few inhabitants in the town; those we met with, both major Pitcairn and myself took all possible pains to convince that we meant them no injury, and that if they opened their doors when required to search for military stores, not the slightest mischief would be done. We had opportunities of convincing them of our good intentions, but they were sulky, and one of them even struck major Pitcairn. On our leaving Concord to return to Boston, they began to fire on us from behind walls, ditches, trees, &c., which, as we marched, increased to a very great degree, and continued without the intermission of five minutes altogether, for, I believe, upwards of eighteen miles; so that I can't think but it must have been a preconcerted scheme in them to attack the king's troops the first favourable opportunity that offered, otherwise I think they could not, in so short a time as from our marching out, have raised such a numerous body, and for so great a space of ground."* The destruction of the detachment under lieutenant-colonel Smith by a large body of infuriated men, was averted by the arrival at Lexington of a reinforcement sent out by general Gage. The British continued to retreat before their resolute opponents. They did not reach their quarters till night had fallen—worn out with fatigue, and with a loss of two or three hundred in killed, wounded, and prisoners. There was no open fight, for the minute-men were in ambush, and picked off the officers and men of

* From despatch in the State Paper Office—given by Mahon, Appendix to vol. vi.

the detachment from their secure hiding amongst trees and behind stone walls.

The news of the affair of Lexington arrived in England at the end of May. The Provincial Congress of Massachusetts knew the effect that would be produced upon public opinion in the mother country when it should be learnt that the king's troops had been defeated. The day after the skirmish, this Congress dispatched a vessel to England, without freight, for the sole purpose of carrying letters detailing his triumph. Walpole has described the impression produced by the receipt of this intelligence in London;—"May 28. Arrived a light sloop, sent by the Americans from Salem, with an account of their having defeated the king's troops." He then gives details of the news received, which seems to have been free from exaggeration. "The advice was immediately dispersed, while the government remained without any intelligence. Stocks immediately fell. The provincials had behaved with the greatest conduct, coolness, and resolution. One circumstance spoke a thorough determination of resistance: the provincials had sent over affidavits of all that had passed, and a colonel of the militia had sworn in an affidavit, that he had given his men orders to fire on the king's troops, if the latter attacked them. It was firmness, indeed, to swear to having been the first to begin what the Parliament had named rebellion. Thus was the civil war begun, and a victory the first fruits of it on the side of the Americans, whom lord Sandwich had had the folly and rashness to proclaim cowards."

Whilst the provincials of Massachusetts and the troops of general Gage had thus been brought into a collision which had more the character of accident than of preconcerted hostilities, a bold and successful attempt was made in another quarter, which could only be interpreted as a deliberate act of warfare. Forty volunteers, well armed, had set out, at the instigation of some leading men of Connecticut, to form part of an expedition which was to attack Ticonderoga, a fort on Lake George, and Crown Point, a fort on Lake Champlain. If these were taken, the invasion of Canada by the American militia would be greatly facilitated. The Connecticut volunteers were joined on their march by Ethan Allen, who had many volunteers under his command; and by Benedict Arnold, who subsequently obtained a celebrity not the most honourable. Ticonderoga was garrisoned by only forty-four soldiers, under the command of captain De la Place. On the morning of the 10th of May, the commander was roused in his bed; saw his fort surrounded by several hundred men in arms; and was required to surrender "in the name of the Great Jehovah and the Continental

Congress." The demand was not resisted. Crown Point was also surprised by the same body of adventurers.

The affair of Lexington was the commencement of the American war. More decisive encounters very speedily followed between the king's troops and many thousand Americans in arms. How this first contest was regarded by the noblest of the men who built up the independence of their country, we find in a letter from Washington to a friend in England: "General Gage acknowledged, that the detachment under lieut.-colonel Smith was sent out to destroy private property; or, in other words, to destroy a magazine, which self-preservation obliged the inhabitants to establish. And he also confesses, in effect at least, that his men made a very precipitate retreat from Concord, notwithstanding the reinforcement under lord Percy; the last of which may serve to convince lord Sandwich, and others of the same sentiment, that the Americans will fight for their liberties and property, however pusillanimous in his lordship's eye they may appear in other respects Unhappy it is, though, to reflect that a brother's sword has been sheathed in a brother's breast, and that the once happy and peaceful plains of America are either to be drenched with blood, or inhabited by slaves. Sad alternative! But can a virtuous man hesitate in his choice?"

On the day that Ticonderoga fell in the hands of these American partisans, the General Congress assembled for the second time at Philadelphia.

We have dealt somewhat fully with the circumstances which preceded the unfortunate contest between Great Britain and her North American Colonies. We have endeavoured to exhibit the general agreement which existed between the principles maintained by the Colonists, and those of the English statesmen who are now regarded as the true representatives of the national mind in its highest sense—the mind of the dispassionate and enlightened few of those times, and that of the more general enlightenment of our own time. Happily the day has long since past when either the citizen of the Republic of the United States, or the subject of the Monarchy of the United Kingdom, can read a narrative of the great struggle which resulted in American Independence, with any sentiment of vindictiveness. In the circumstances which preceded the actual war, and during the continuance of the war, there were noble feelings called forth in the parent country, and in the revolted provinces, which showed how truly that spirit of liberty was up-

held which was common to both:—which had descended from the time of Alfred ; which had never been lost under Plantagenet or Tudor ; which had gone forth to colonize New England when a Stuart made Old England unsafe for free men to dwell in ; which, having expelled the oppressors, drew new breath under a Bill of Rights. It was the spirit which spoke in the eloquence of Chatham ; which asserted itself in the sagacity and moderation of Washington. Looking at the other side in the great contest, whether the majority of the legislature and people of Great Britain, or the American Royalist, it would not be just to view them as assertors of arbitrary doctrines, intent upon reducing their fellow-men to slavery. They acted upon a mistaken principle, which they believed to be a constitutional right. The errors have not been without their use, if they have led to that better understanding of the relations between a State and its Colonies which prevails in our own day.

CHAPTER X.

Franklin's return to America.—Meeting of Congress at Philadelphia.—Washington elected Commander-in-chief.—Events at Boston.—Battle of Bunker's Hill.—Washington blockades Boston.—Public opinion in England.—Petition from Congress to the King.—Mr. Penn, the bearer of the petition, examined in the House of Lords.—Lord North's Prohibitory Bill.—Invasion of Canada.—Silas Deane sent to Paris.—Declaration of Independence adopted by Congress.—Note: The Declaration.

AT the end of March, 1775, that remarkable man, Benjamin Franklin, who, fifty years before, had been working in London as a journeyman printer, turned his back upon that England where he had received all honour as a philosopher, to become one of her most strenuous opponents in the struggle of his native country for independence. He left England—as we learn from a letter written a short time before his departure—with a firm conviction that her system of government was conducting her to ruin and disgrace. He deprecated any further attempt to restore united interests between the mother-country and her colonies: "When I consider," he writes, "the extreme corruption prevalent among all orders of men in the old rotten state, and the glorious public virtue so predominant in our rising country, I cannot but apprehend more mischief than benefit from a close union. . . . Here, numberless and needless places, enormous salaries, pensions, perquisites, bribes, groundless quarrels, foolish expeditions, false accounts or no accounts, contracts and jobs, devour all revenue, and produce continual necessity in the midst of natural plenty."* Making every allowance for one whose endeavours to promote peace had been met with neglect and insult, much of this severe description is undoubtedly true. But Franklin still shrunk from war. "I would try anything, and bear anything that can be borne with safety to our just liberties, rather than engage in a war with such relations, unless compelled to it by dire necessity in our own defence." On the 5th of May he arrived in Philadelphia. On the 6th he was elected by the Assembly of Pennsylvania one of the deputies to the Continental Congress appointed to meet on the 10th. In a few days came the news of the first fatal contest at Lexington; and

* "Franklin's Works," by Sparks, vol. viii. p. 146—Letter to Galloway, February 25,

then Franklin writes to Priestley in England: "All America is exasperated. The breach between the two countries is grown wider, and in danger of becoming irreparable."*

The Congress assembled at Philadelphia, composed of deputies from thirteen States, held at first a common agreement only upon one principle,—the determination to resist the claim of the British government to tax the American colonies without their consent. But the mode of resistance, and the probable consequences of resistance, involved great differences of opinion. The provincial Assemblies which had elected these deputies were composed of members who, in their aggregate character, represented various interests,—the agricultural and the commercial; who had varieties of national origin, Dutch, German, Swedish, as well as English; who professed various forms of religion. In the State where the Congress assembled, the majority were Quakers, who would cleave, as long as possible, to peaceful councils. The deputies from Massachusetts, on the contrary, irritated in their continual struggle with the authority of England, deprived of their charter, ruined in their commerce, would see no solution of their difficulties but in open war. There were several weeks of indecision; but, gradually the more timid councils yielded to the bolder. The moderate—who clung to union with England, from the thought of a common ancestry, from respect to the state which had given them the model of free institutions, from commercial interests—were alienated by the obstinate refusal of the British legislature to adopt reasonable measures of conciliation. The local Assemblies were using more determined language, and were organizing their provincial forces, as if there were to be a foreign enemy to be resisted. At Boston, the military authority of the Crown, and the armed resistance of the colonists, stood face to face; and no one could doubt that a more deadly trial of strength than that of the 19th of April, would speedily be the result. On the news of that day, numerous bodies of militia-men were on the march towards Boston, under bold leaders, who left their ordinary occupations to place themselves at the head of their neighbours. Such was Israel Putnam, a farmer and tavern-keeper, who became one of the generals of the revolutionary war. For a month, the British troops, who had exclusive possession of Boston, were harassed by the incessant activity of partisans who cut off supplies from the interior. General Gage was blockaded in his stronghold, having only communication by sea. Many of the inhabitants had been permitted to leave the city with their effects. Others remained, not being allowed to

* "Franklin's Works," by Sparks, vol. iii. p. 154.

consider their merchandise as effects. On the 25th of May, reinforcements arrived from England, under the command of generals Burgoyne, Howe, and Clinton; and the force under general Gage now reached ten thousand men. Such an army, it might well be imagined, would be powerful to crush the irregular troops which were surrounding Boston. Martial law was proclaimed by the British commander, and a pardon offered to all who would lay down their arms, except John Hancock and Samuel Adams. The two proscribed men were naturally the boldest advocates for warlike measures in the Congress at Philadelphia. That body had resolved to petition the king; still clinging to hopes of pacification. But the course of events rendered such a policy hopeless. The olive branch had been sent to England; the sword had been drawn in America. The Congress passed from a deliberative assembly into an executive power. The deputies had agreed upon articles of confederation and perpetual union, under the name of "The United Colonies of North America;" with authority to determine on war and peace, and on reconciliation with Great Britain; to raise troops; to appoint all officers civil and military. They resolved to provide for munitions of war by the issue of a paper currency. They appointed a commander-in-chief of the confederate forces now to be called the Continental Army. That commander was George Washington.

The early military career of Washington has been briefly traced in a former chapter.* Twenty years before he was thus selected for the greatest trust that could be reposed in a man, he was fighting in the British ranks against the French on the Ohio. He had no subsequent military experience. Possessing ample means, he resided upon his estate in Virginia, called Mount Vernon, a plain country gentleman, managing his property with a skilful economy; engaging in those field sports which were agreeable to his vigorous constitution; reading and meditating upon the past and the present with intelligent curiosity; giving a month or two of the year to his public duties as a member of the House of Burgesses. He was neither learned nor eloquent; he was modest and retiring. But by the undeviating exercise of his sound judgment and his rigid integrity he had required a reputation in his own colony which had extended to other States. His strongest recommendations as Commander-in-Chief came from Massachusetts. The consistent force of his character procured for him a confidence that the noisy demagogue or the dashing partizan could not obtain. On the 16th of June his appointment was officially announced to him when he took

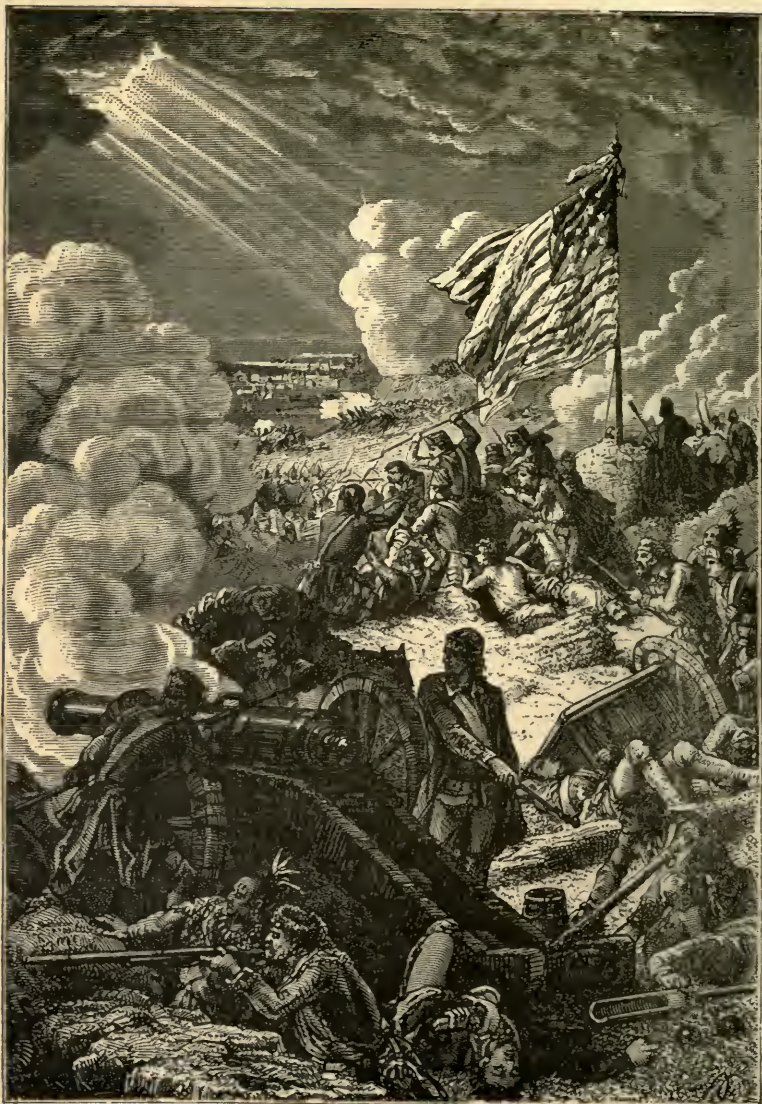
his seat in the Congress. He would enter, he said, upon the momentous duty, although he did not think himself equal to the command he was honoured with. He added, that as no pecuniary consideration could have tempted him to accept this arduous employment at the expense of his domestic ease and happiness, he had no desire to make a profit by it. He would take no pay. He would keep an exact account of his expenses, and those he doubted not would be discharged. To his wife he wrote that it was utterly out of his power to refuse the appointment, although he had used every endeavour to avoid it. "But as it has been a kind of destiny that has thrown me upon this service, I shall hope that my undertaking it is designed to answer some good purpose."

The Congress, upon the acceptance by Washington of his appointment, resolved that it was necessary that he should immediately proceed to Boston to take upon himself the command of the army round that town. That army has been described as a mixed multitude, under very little discipline or order. They wanted many of the necessaries of war, especially ammunition. The men were brave—far braver than some of the insolent dependents upon the British ministry were willing to believe. "It was romantic to think they would fight," said Rigby, one of the parliamentary jobbers who lived upon corruption. "There was more military prowess in a militia drummer."* Before Washington arrived at the camp near Boston, on the 3rd of July, the Provincials had shown how "they would fight."

Boston is built upon a peninsula. An isthmus on the south connected the peninsula with the mainland. A promontory, then called Dorchester Neck, now South Boston, had heights which commanded the town, and which are now fortified. On the east was the harbour; on the west the Charles River. Divided from Boston on the north by this river, was Charles Town, also a peninsula. At the northern extremity, bounded by the Mystic River, is the height of Bunker's Hill; and lower down, nearer Charles Town, is Breed's Hill. An army having possession of these two hills on the north, and of Dorchester heights on the south, would have Boston at its mercy.† The British generals had seen the importance of the acclivities of Charles Town, and had determined to land a force to take possession of them on the 18th of June. This became known to the Massachusetts Committee of Safety; and it was resolved to anticipate the movement of the British, by establishing a post on Bunker's Hill. After sunset on the 16th of June, a

* Walpole—"Last Journals," vol. i. p. 481.

† See plan of Boston, in Maps of Useful Knowledge Society.



BATTLE OF BUNKER HILL.— Vol. vi. 177.

brigade of a thousand men, under the command of William Prescott, assembled on Cambridge Common, armed mostly with fowling-pieces, and carrying their powder and ball in horns and pouches. A proclamation had been issued from the British head-quarters, that all persons taken in arms should be hanged as rebels. The rebels marched on with a determination never to be taken alive. They crossed Charles Town Neck; and took up their position, not on Bunker's Hill, as the Committee of Safety had proposed, but on Breed's Hill. They had an engineer with them, and abundance of intrenching tools. The lines of a redoubt were drawn; and the troops who, in their occupations of husbandmen had useful familiarity with spades and pickaxes, worked through the night, whilst their commander anxiously listened for any extraordinary movement that would indicate they were discovered by the ships of war in the harbour. The defences were nearly completed as day dawned. Then the redoubt, which had arisen in the night, as if by magic, was visible to the British naval and land officers, with throngs of men still labouring at their entrenchments. The cannon of the Lively sloop commenced a fire upon the earth-works; and a battery was mounted on the Boston side, on a mound called Copp's Hill. The Americans continued to extend their lines, whilst shot and shell were dropping around them. The cannonade was the prelude to something more serious. Two thousand soldiers, with field artillery, embarked in boats, and landed under cover of the shipping on a north-eastern point of the Charles Town peninsula. They were under the command of major-general Howe Prescott and his band waited for their approach. The British halted for some time, expecting additional force. The Americans had their rear protected by a low stone wall, surmounted with posts and rails. The ground was covered with mown grass, browning under a hot midsummer sun; and there was time to interweave the hay between the rails and form a temporary shelter. When the British troops went forth in their boats from Boston, numbers also hurried from the American camp at Cambridge to share the dangers of their comrades. Howe's reinforcements at length arrived. Before they advanced to attack the irregular force that had made such a bold show of defiance, Charles Town, a mass of wooden buildings, was set on fire by a bombardment from Copp's Hill, and from the ships of war. Between two and three o'clock the British, under the command of General Pigot, advanced up the hill steadily in line, to attack the redoubt. Prescott had commanded his men not to fire till the British were within eight or ten rods. When he gave the word, there was one simultaneous discharge from the

muskets and fowling-pieces of the skilful marksmen. The front rank of the British was swept away. The rear ranks advanced to meet another discharge equally fatal. The whole line staggered, and retreated down the hill. From another point Howe led up his men to attack the fence. They were met by a volley, and fell back in confusion. Their officers rallied those who had retreated; and again the columns advanced upon the redoubt and the grass-woven rails. There was the same carnage as before. Officers had fallen in unusual numbers. It was a terrible scene. The town below Breed's Hill was furiously burning. The hill was covered with the dead, "as thick as sheep in a fold." The colonists were ready to meet a third attack, when it was discovered that their ammunition was nearly spent. This final assault of the British was conducted with a better estimate of the courage of their enemy. Cannon were brought up so as to rake the breastwork of the redoubt, against which all the available force was concentrated. The fire from the breastwork gradually ceased. The redoubt was scaled. Resistance was no longer possible; and the Americans gave way, some retiring in order, but most escaping as they best might. There was little pursuit. The British lost above a thousand killed and wounded, of whom more than eighty were officers. The American loss was represented as less than half that of the royal forces. General Gage wrote home to lord Dartmouth. "The success, which was very necessary in our present condition, cost us dear. . . . The trials we have had show the rebels are not the despicable rabble too many have supposed them to be."

Within a week after the arrival of Washington at the camp at Cambridge, he had employed all his energies to place his troops in a position of security. The British were now entrenching on Bunker's Hill, where the bulk of their army, commanded by general Howe, were encamped. Within half a mile of the British camp the Americans had thrown up entrenchments on Winter Hill and Prospect Hill; and there were other strong works at weak points. In his letter to Congress detailing these circumstances, Washington says, "considering the great extent of line, and the nature of the ground, we are as well secured as could be expected in so short a time, and with the disadvantages we labour under. These consist in a want of engineers to construct proper works and direct the men, a want of tools, and a sufficient number of men to man the works in case of attack." Nevertheless, the council of war had determined to hold and defend these works as long as possible. Under such difficulties, it is easy to conceive the arduous task that was imposed upon the commander of a body of undisciplined

lined men, imperfectly armed and wanting ammunition. He had to contend also against the constant solicitations of the Assembly of Massachusetts to send portions of his force upon detached services. These he steadily resisted; and, concentrating his army, was enabled to continue the blockade of Boston through the autumn and winter.

Public opinion in Great Britain, on what had now become a war with America, found its expression in the usual form of Addresses to the throne. The majority of these Addresses went to urge a vigorous prosecution of coercive measures against rebellious subjects. On the 23rd of August, the king issued a proclamation for the suppression of rebellion and sedition in America, and forbidding assistance and traitorous correspondence with the rebels. In the City, Wilkes being lord-mayor, the corporate authorities did not join the procession of heralds when the proclamation was read at the Royal exchange. On the other hand, Manchester and many trading towns sent up loyal Addresses for the prosecution of the war. "The Addresses must have been dearly bought," says Walpole.* The king appears to have made a very sensible estimate of the value of these productions. He writes to lord North, on the 10th of September, "Address from Manchester most dutiful and affectionate. As you wish the spirit to be encouraged I have no objection; though I know from fatal experience that they will produce counter Petitions." Parliament met on the 26th of October. The encouragement which the ministry had given to "the spirit" of hostility was now to exhibit its fruits in the royal Speech. Conciliation was to be cast to the winds. The strongest words in the vocabulary were selected to terrify the men to whom the British bayonet brought no terror. "Desperate conspiracy"—"rebellious war"—were to be put an end to by "decisive exertions." The "unhappy and deluded multitude" were not only to be subdued by the naval and military armaments of their mother-country, but his majesty did not hesitate to inform his Parliament that he had condescended to implore the aid of other countries in this work: "I have the satisfaction to inform you that I have received the most friendly offers of foreign assistance." Hessians were indeed levied; and Hanoverians received British pay. But the king was disappointed in some of his overtures to great powers. He writes to lord North, only ten days after this boast of foreign aid: "The answer of the empress of Russia to my letter is a clever refusal, not in so genteel a manner as I should have thought might have been expected from her. She has not had the civility to an-

* "Last Journals," vol. i. p. 502.

swer me in her own hand." As might be expected, the parliamentary majorities in support of the views of the Court were very large. An amendment to the Address on the first night of the session was rejected by a majority of forty in the House of Lords; by a majority of a hundred and seventy in the House of Commons. The duke of Grafton, after voting with the minority, resigned his office of Privy Seal. Two months before the meeting of Parliament he had pressed upon lord North the necessity of conciliation, but had received no reply except a draft of the king's speech. When the duke waited upon the king to resign, his majesty entered upon a discussion of this most grave subject: "He informed me that a large body of German troops were to join our forces; and appeared astonished when I answered earnestly that his majesty would find too late that twice that number would only increase the disgrace, and never effect his purpose."* Lord Dartmouth succeeded the duke of Grafton as Privy Seal; and lord George Germaine (Sackville) became Secretary of State. In spite of the disgrace of Minden, the military experience of the clever Secretary was now to conduct the war with the Colonies. General Gage had been previously called home, and the chief command left with general Howe.

The king, before the opening of the session, said to lord North, "I am fighting the battle of the legislature, therefore have a right to expect an almost unanimous support. After a ministerial triumph on the 1st of November, his majesty wrote to express his hope that the "very handsome majority would have the effect of shortening the debates. The House cannot possibly hear the same speeches frequently repeated, or the House of Commons must be composed of more politeness than formerly." It was difficult to treat this great question with any novelty of argument. The controversy had gone out of the region of argument into that of brute force. Nevertheless, in spite of the sanguinary conflict of the 17th of June, the Congress assembled at Philadelphia had on the 8th of July confided to Richard Penn, governor of Pennsylvania, a petition to the king, to be presented on his arrival in England. The petition, according to Mr. Jefferson, was adopted merely to please its mover, Mr. Dickinson; but "the disgust against its humility was general." This document, denominated the Olive Branch, was delivered to lord Dartmouth on the 1st of September, and in three days, Penn and his companion, Arthur Lee, were informed by letter that no answer would be given to it. This contemptuous rejection of the humble petition of Congress

* MS. Memoirs.

went upon the ground that the body petitioning had no legal existence. The Americans,—who knew that the deputies of thirteen States, who signed the petition, were real representatives of the opinions of the majority of the people,—from the time of that rejection of their last humble effort at pacification held that to British councils, and not to American, all the bloodshed and guilt of the war were to be ascribed. The British government considered, or professed to consider, that with “vague expressions of attachment to the parent state,” the rebellious-war was “manifestly carried on for the purpose of establishing an independent empire.”* The Americans maintained, up to that period, that they entertained no such purpose. In the House of Lords, on the 7th of November, the petition of the Congress to the king was to be taken into consideration, and having been read, the duke of Richmond moved that Mr. Penn be examined. That examination, which took place on the 10th, was a very important testimony to the state of opinion in the Colonies.

The questions proposed to Mr. Penn, as he stood at the bar of the House of Lords, were chiefly those of the duke of Richmond and other supporters of the opposition; but he was subjected to a cross-examination by the earl of Sandwich and others of the ministry. He had resided four years in America; he was two years in the government of Pennsylvania. He thought the members of Congress were men of character, and capable of conveying the sense of America; they undoubtedly convey the sense of the provinces they represent, and he firmly believed the provinces would be governed by their decisions. He was acquainted with almost all the members of the Congress. “Do you think,” he was asked, that “they levy and carry on this war for the purpose of establishing an independent empire?” His answer was, “I think they do not carry on the war for independency; I never heard them breathe sentiments of that nature.” He was asked, “For what purpose do you believe they have taken up arms?” Brief and emphatic was his answer: “For the defence of their liberties.” At the close of his examination Mr. Penn distinctly stated that the most opulent inhabitants of the American provinces would prefer freedom under this country to any other state of freedom; and that while supporting the measures of the Congress they wished at the same time a reconciliation with Great Britain.† The opinions of Mr. Penn on the subject of independence have been confirmed by those held by Washington, Madison, Franklin, and

* King’s Speech, October 26.

† “Parliamentary Debates,” vol. xviii. cols. 911 to 961.

Jefferson, before the commencement of hostilities. Even after that commencement Jefferson affirms that the possibility of separation was "contemplated with affliction by all." Mr. Jay marks more distinctly the period when the notion of separation began to be received: "Until after the second petition of Congress in 1775, I never did hear an American of any class, or of any description, express a wish for the independence of the colonies. . . . Our country was prompted and impelled to independence by necessity and not by choice."

A motion that the petition of Congress brought by Mr. Penn afforded grounds for conciliation was rejected by an overwhelming majority. In vain Shelburne and Grafton in the Lords,—in vain Burke, Fox, and Barré in the Commons,—supported propositions "for composing the present troubles in America." The government carried its measures with a high hand. Chatham was again incapable through sickness of taking part in the debates of this solemn period. Lord North's Prohibitory Bill, forbidding any commerce with the thirteen American Colonies, was carried, in all its severe enactments, without Chatham's voice being heard to reprove Mansfield for hounding on the people to the extremities of war. But Chatham emphatically manifested the consistency of his opinions. General Carleton, the commander in Canada, had sent home lord Pitt, Chatham's eldest son, with despatches; and in a letter to the father had expressed the most favourable opinion of his aide-de-camp. The countess of Chatham writes to general Carleton to convey the gratitude of her husband; who, from ill health, was unable fully to testify his sense of obligation: "Feeling all this, sir, as lord Chatham does, you will tell yourself with what concern he communicates to you a step that, from his fixed opinion with regard to the continuance of the unhappy war with our fellow-subjects of America, he has found it necessary to take. It is that of withdrawing his son from such a service." *

General Carleton, in his letter to Chatham from Montreal, in September, says, of lord Pitt, "I would it had been in my power to send him with more agreeable news for the public." The Congress had sanctioned an invasion of Canada, under the command of general Montgomery. Benedict Arnold had received a detachment of a thousand men from Washington's army in Massachusetts; and Ethan Allen was ready for a repetition of some such dashing exploit as his capture of Ticonderoga. Allen was marching to attack Montreal when he fell in with the British troops; was made prisoner; and was sent to England. Arnold, having

* "Chatham Correspondence," vol. iv. p. 420.

surmounted great difficulties in penetrating through a country of woods and rocks,—his men sometimes wading through rapid rivers, and sometimes carrying their boats over barren heights—appeared suddenly before Quebec. Arnold was repulsed by colonel Maclean, who came in time to save the capital of Canada. But Montgomery was approaching with a larger force. Carleton, with energetic resolution, set off from Montreal disguised as a fisherman; and, passing in a whale-boat through the American flotilla on the St. Lawrence, got into Quebec, and took the command. On the 31st of December the united forces of Montgomery and Arnold climbed the heights of Abraham, and attacked the city. They were met by a formidable resistance. Montgomery was killed, and Arnold severely wounded. But the Americans blockaded Quebec throughout the winter.

From July, 1775, to February, 1776, Washington had continued the blockade of Boston. He was tired of what he describes as the irksomeness of his situation. The frost had formed some pretty strong ice over the river Charles, and he contemplated an assault upon the town.* He was over-ruled by a council of war. Meanwhile the British army, in camp round Boston, was suffering great privations and miseries. The small-pox had broken out among the troops. The want of fresh provisions and of fuel made sickness and cold more fatal. In March, Washington had taken possession of Dorchester Heights, and was about to secure other points, from which measures he hoped it would be in his power “to force the ministerial troops to an attack, or to dispose of them in some way that will be of advantage to us.” † No attack was made by the British; and on the 19th of March, Washington wrote to the President of Congress, “It is with the greatest pleasure I inform you, that on Sunday last, the 17th instant, about nine o’clock in the forenoon, the ministerial army evacuated the town of Boston, and that the forces of the United Colonies are now in possession thereof.” General Howe sailed for Halifax to wait for reinforcements. Washington and his army marched for New York; against which city he felt assured that the British arms would be next directed. The Congress ordered a gold medal to be struck to commemorate the evacuation of Boston.

On the 20th of February, 1776, lord North presented copies of treaties between Great Britain and the duke of Brunswick, the landgrave of Hesse Cassel, and the count of Hanau, for the hire of troops. The prime minister said, “that the force which this measure would enable us to send to America would be such as, in

* “Despatch to Congress,” February 18.

† *Ibid.*, February 26.

all human probability, must compel that country to agree to terms of submission, perhaps without any further effusion of blood." The petty German princes made a hard bargain with the British government. Mr. Hartley, the friend of Franklin, said with a clear prospect of the future, "When foreign powers are once introduced in this dispute, all possibility of reconciliation and return to our former connection is totally cut off. You have given a justification to the Americans by your example, if they call in the assistance of foreign powers." The measure was supported by a majority of a hundred and fifty-four. On the 3rd of March, Silas Deane was dispatched by the Congress to Paris, with instructions to inform the French minister for foreign affairs, that in the event of the probable separation from Great Britain, France would be regarded as the power whose friendship it would be fittest for the United Provinces of America to obtain and cultivate.

At the beginning of 1776, the Americans had been defeated by general Carleton, and had retired from Quebec. In other engagements they had been equally unsuccessful; and Canada, in the summer of that year, was in the unmolested possession of the king's troops. In June, general Howe had left Halifax, and had landed his forces on Staten Island. In July, admiral lord Howe arrived with reinforcements from England. The two brothers had been authorised, as Commissioners, to receive the submission of insurgent colonists, to grant pardons, and inquire into grievances. At an earlier period the appointment of these Commissioners, who were men of sense and moderation, might have had beneficial results. But the state of feeling amongst the colonists was hurrying onward that measure of separation, which the most sagacious saw would be the inevitable result of an obstinate assertion of authority opposed to an ardent desire for independence—a desire at first timidly avowed by a few, dreaded by most, and at last matured into a sentiment which it would have been dangerous in the minority to oppose.

Whilst the British forces under Howe were taking a position on Staten Island, and the American, under Washington, were collecting on Long Island and in the city of New York, each preparing for hostilities, the Congress at Philadelphia took a decisive resolution which gave to the war a character somewhat different from an insurrection. In the Convention of Virginia the delegates to Congress had been instructed to propose that the Colonies should declare themselves independent of Great Britain. The proposal was submitted to the Congress at the beginning of June, and was debated for some days with slight prospect of unanimity. Six

of the Colonies were opposed to the immediate adoption of such a measure. Nevertheless, a committee of five was appointed to prepare a manifesto embodying this principle. Jefferson was selected to make the draught of a Declaration of Independence. It was submitted and discussed on the 1st of July when the delegates of Pennsylvania and South Carolina voted against it. Those of Delaware were divided in opinion; and those of New York withdrew. On the next day, by a compromise and a change of delegates, three of the dissentient provinces gave their adhesion to the majority. The draught prepared by Jefferson was discussed during sittings of three days; and it was finally agreed to by the members present of the twelve States, with the exception of one. The delegates from New York were subsequently impowered to give their assent. Thus, on the 4th of July, was completed what has been not unjustly termed "the most memorable public document which history records." * We give the document in a note to this chapter. The long catalogue of "injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny," must be regarded, in many particulars, rather as overstrained inferences from impolitic acts, than as evidences of deliberate oppression. Like most of the manifestoes in any great conflict of principles, these charges must be viewed rather as a demonstration of temporary feeling than as incontrovertible truths. But the opening paragraphs of the Declaration are very remarkable as an exposition of doctrines which had a different origin than the Anglo-Saxon institutions upon which the American Colonies were founded. The deputies of Congress say, "We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and their happiness." These were not American ideas. They were based upon the "Social Contract" of Rousseau, and reflected the popular philosophy which was destined to produce a far mightier revolution than that of the separation of America from the British Crown. In France, where inalienable rights—life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness—were too fre-

* Tucker—"Life of Jefferson," vol. i. p. 90.

quently trampled upon by the governing classes, the American Declaration of Independence was hailed as a beautiful illustration of that theory of liberty and equality which was delightful to speculate upon in the Parisian *salons*—a theory calling forth a delicious enthusiasm, provided it could be kept at a safe distance. If we look back with wonder and pity upon the obstinacy of the British government in the attempt to coerce the Americans into submission, we may regard as a stronger manifestation of political blindness, the support which the French government gave to that practical assertion of republican freedom, which was to convert the ideal democracy of which courtly aristocrats delighted to talk, into the terrible reality in which a long-suffering people roused themselves to act, in a fearful revenge of centuries of misrule.

A DECLARATION BY THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, IN GEN- ERAL CONGRESS ASSEMBLED.

WHEN, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth the separate, and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident : that all men are created equal ; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights ; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness ; that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed ; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes ; and accordingly all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies ; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former systems of government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these states. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world.

He has refused his assent to laws the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.

He has forbidden his governors to pass laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his assent should be obtained ; and, when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

He has refused to pass other laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of representation in the legislature, a right inestimable to them, and formidable to tyrants only.

He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.

He has dissolved representative houses repeatedly for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people.

He has refused for a long time after such dissolutions to cause others to be elected, whereby the legislative powers, incapable of annihilation, have returned to the people at large for their exercise, the state remaining, in the meantime, exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without and convulsions within.

He has endeavoured to prevent the population of these states ; for that purpose obstructing the laws for naturalization of foreigners, refusing to pass others to encourage their migrations hither, and raising the conditions of new appropriations of lands.

He has obstructed the administration of justice, by refusing his assent to laws for establishing judiciary powers.

He has made judges dependent on his will alone for the tenure of their offices and the amount and payment of their salaries.

He has erected a multitude of new offices, and sent hither swarms of new officers to harass our people and eat out their substance.

He has kept among us in times of peace standing armies without the consent of our legislatures.

He has affected to render the military independent of, and superior to, the civil power.

He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitutions and unacknowledged by our laws, giving his assent to their acts of pretended legislation for quartering large bodies of armed troops among us ; for protecting them by a mock trial from punishment for any murders which they should commit on the inhabitants of these states ; for cutting off our trade with all parts of the world ; for imposing taxes on us without our consent ; for depriving us in many cases of the benefits of trial by jury ; for transporting us beyond seas to be tried for pretended offences ; for abolishing the free system of English laws in a neighbouring province, establishing therein an arbitrary government, and enlarging its boundaries, so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these colonies ; for taking away our charters, abolishing our most valuable laws, and altering fundamentally the forms of our governments ; for suspending our own legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.

He has abdicated government here by declaring us out of his protection and waging war against us.

He has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.

He is at this time transporting large armies of foreign mercenaries to complete the works of death, desolation, and tyranny already begun with circumstances of cruelty and perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the head of a civilized nation.

He has constrained our fellow citizens taken captive on the high seas to bear arms against their country, to become the executioners of their friends and brethren, or to fall themselves by their hands.

He has excited domestic insurrections among us, and has endeavoured to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers the merciless Indian savages, whose known rule of warfare is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes, and conditions.

In every stage of these oppressions we have petitioned for redress in the most humble terms : our repeated addresses have been answered only by repeated injuries.

A prince whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.

Nor have we been wanting in attentions to our British brethren. We have warned them from time to time of attempts by their legislature to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here, we have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the ties of our common kindred to disavow these usurpations which would inevitably interrupt our connexion and correspondence. They too have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity. We must therefore acquiesce in the necessity which denounces our separation, and hold them as we hold the rest of mankind, enemies in war, in peace friends.

We therefore the representatives of the United States of America in General Congress assembled, appealing to the supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do in the name and by the authority of the good people of these colonies, solemnly publish and declare, that these united colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent states ; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British crown, and that all political connexion between them and the state of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved ; and that as free and independent states, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and to do all other acts and things which independent states may of right do.

And for the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honour.

CHAPTER XI.

Lord Howe, as the British Commissioner, addresses a letter to Washington.—The letter refused.—The British on Long Island.—Battle of Brooklyn.—Washington retreats.—His exploit at Trenton.—His success at Princetown.—Franklin dispatched by the Congress to Paris.—Underhand proceedings of France.—John the Painter, the incendiary.—Manning the navy.—Defences of the country.—Chatham appears again in Parliament.—Steuben.—LaFayette.—Kosciusko.—Battle of the Brandywine.—The British in Philadelphia.—Burgoyne's army enters the United States from Canada.—The convention of Saratoga.—Parliament meets.—Chatham's speech on the Address.—On the employment of Indians.—Washington in winter-quarters at Valley Forge.—Steuben re-organizes the army.

THE first measures of lord Howe, upon his arrival off New York, were of a conciliatory nature. He arrived on the 12th of July. On the 14th, he sent a flag on shore with a letter, addressed "George Washington, Esquire." One of Washington's colonels told the officer who brought the letter, that there was no such person in the American army. The officer expressed great concern; and finally went back, receiving as his answer, that a proper direction would obviate all difficulties. Washington wrote to Congress, "I deemed it a duty to my country and my appointment to insist upon that respect which, in any other than a public view, I would willingly have waived." A letter on the 16th, from general Howe, similarly addressed, was similarly refused. The British adjutant-general, lieutenant-colonel Paterson, then came to Washington's quarters to explain the matter. He laid the letter on the table, and Washington refused to open it. The conversation on both sides was that of two high-minded gentlemen; but Washington was firm in declining to accept the direction of "George Washington, Esquire, &c., &c., &c.," as a proper address to himself in his public station. Colonel Paterson wished his visit to be considered as the first advance towards that accommodation of the unhappy dispute which was the object of the appointment of Commissioners, who, he said, had great powers. Washington replied that he was not invested with any powers on this subject, from those from whom he derived his authority; but from what had transpired, it appeared that lord Howe and general Howe were only to grant pardons;—those who had committed no fault wanted no pardon. Paterson departed, having declined Washington's invitation to a collation. He had expressed his

apprehension that an adherence to forms was likely to obstruct business of great moment. Washington had signified to Congress his unwillingness to sacrifice essentials to punctilio; but it is clear that he thought the maintenance of his own dignity was an essential. No further attempt was made at negotiation with Washington.

A large division of the British troops, on the 22nd of August, landed on Long Island. A portion of Washington's army was stationed near Brooklyn, a small town at the western angle of the island. Washington, with the greater number of his troops, remained in New York, an attack upon which city was not improbable. The Americans were under the command of general Putnam; the British, and their Hessian auxiliaries, were under sir William Howe. On the 27th, was fought the battle of Brooklyn, in which the Americans were defeated with great loss, and were driven back to their lines. But Howe did not follow up his advantage; and Washington, hurrying from New York, rallied his troops, and waited for two days an attack upon his position, which the British commander did not care to risk. Washington then determined to make no further attempt to hold Long Island; and with consummate prudence and ability, favoured by a dense fog, embarked his troops in boats, and landed them with the military stores and artillery in safety at New York. Lord Cornwallis, who had sailed from Cork in February, with seven regiments of infantry, was in the action of Brooklyn, Two of the American generals, Sullivan and Stirling, were taken prisoners. On the 15th of September, Washington evacuated New York. The reverses in the field were not so dangerous to the cause of Independence as the want of discipline in the American troops. Their general was half-despairing, and exclaimed, "Are these the men I am to defend America with?" When the British entered New York, they were received by a large number of the inhabitants as deliverers from the plunder and oppression of the troops of the Congress. From the heights of Haarlem, about nine miles from New York, where Washington was some time encamped, he moved further up the country to White Plains. There was a serious skirmish between the two armies on the 28th of October; but Howe was deterred from following up the retiring enemy by the apparent strength of their lines. Washington was astonished that the British general did not attempt something. His own army was so disorganized and weakened by desertions that a vigorous attack might have annihilated his remnant of effective men. Fort Washington and Fort Lee, each situated on the bank of the Hudson, were cap-

tered by the British in the middle of November. They followed up their success by overrunning Jersey. Washington continued to retreat before Cornwallis. Lee, the general who had been directed to join him, was taken prisoner, through his own imprudence in lodging out of his camp.

The British generals now thought they had done enough for one campaign. They had an enemy to deal with who had the old English spirit of not knowing when he was beaten. There appeared no obstacle to the advance of the royal army to Philadelphia ; and in that apprehension the Congress had dispersed to meet at Baltimore. But the passage of the Delaware had been rendered impracticable to the detachment under Cornwallis, for Washington had destroyed the boats on the river. Howe had directed that the men should go into winter cantonments, "the weather having become too severe to keep the field," as he wrote home on the 20th of December, expressing his confidence that, from the general submission of the country and the strength of the advanced posts, the troops would be in perfect security.* Washington had destroyed the boats by which the British might pass the Delaware ; but the frost was setting in, and in a few days the British might pursue their way to Philadelphia over the frozen river. He had about five thousand men. On the evening of Christmas-day he embarked about half his forces on the Delaware ; and continuing his passage through the night, impeded by floating ice, and struggling with snow-storms, he landed his men at Trenton at eight o'clock in the morning, surprised the outposts of the Hessians, and made the main body prisoners, with very slight loss on his own side. Washington went back to secure his prisoners, and again crossed the river, the outposts of the British being abandoned without a struggle by panic-stricken fugitives. Cornwallis, who had gone to New York, with the purpose of returning to England, hurried back with fresh troops, and collected those who had been posted on the Delaware. Washington, on the approach of Cornwallis, abandoned Trenton, and established himself in a strong position beyond the river Assanpink. It was not his purpose to hazard a general engagement. By a rapid and secret night march, whilst Cornwallis judged by the burning of the watchfires that the enemy was before him, Washington was far away in the rear of the British, and reached Princetown on his road to Brunswick. Here he encountered three British regiments and three troops of light horse marching to join Cornwallis. The 17th regiment cut its way through the American columns ; the 40th and 55th were driven back to Bruns-

* "Correspondence of Cornwallis," vol. i. p. 25.

wick, with the loss of three hundred prisoners. Washington was unable to follow up his advantage, for his men were exhausted by fatigue and hunger. He took up a position on the hills; and his well-timed success brought him large reinforcements, with which he held Jersey, which a month before was in the possession of the British. Washington's second campaign, although marked by great reverses—some of which the candid soldier attributed to his own inexperience—must have shown the British commanders that they were opposed by no common man; that in courage, endurance, and vigilance, this gentleman of Virginia was equalled by few whose military training had been more regular and complete. It was clear that Congress had found the right man for command. It was more than probable that if there had been no such man the event of the war would have been very different.

When lord Howe arrived off New York in July, he addressed a kind letter to Dr. Franklin as "his worthy friend," to inform him that he was sent on a mission which would be explained by the official dispatches that he forwarded at the same time. Franklin replied in a like spirit of former friendship; but said, as the dispatches only showed that lord Howe was to offer pardon upon submission, he was sure it must give his lordship pain to be sent so far upon so hopeless a business.* In September, lord Howe arranged with general Sullivan, a prisoner of war, to proceed to Congress upon his parole, to inform them that although he could not treat with that Assembly as a body, he was desirous of having a conference with some of the members. Franklin, with John Adams and Edward Rutledge, had accordingly a meeting with lord Howe; but the conference was quickly broken off when the British Commissioner was informed that the United Colonies could only treat for peace as free and independent States. Franklin was now dispatched upon a more hopeful negotiation. He was to join Silas Deane in Paris; and these two, with Arthur Lee, were appointed as Commissioners to take charge of the American affairs in Europe, and to endeavour to procure a treaty of alliance with the court of France. At the beginning of November Franklin left America. On the 8th of December he had landed in France, and wrote from Nantes to the President of Congress. He says, "I understand that Mr. Lee has lately been at Paris, that Mr. Deane is still there, and that an underhand supply is obtained from the government of two hundred brass field-pieces, thirty thousand firelocks, and some other military stores, which are now shipping for America, and will

* These Letters are in the "Annual Register" for 1777.

be conveyed by a ship of war." * From this period the French government is to be traced in many other "underhand" proceedings hostile to England. On the 31st of October, in the debate on the Address at the opening of the Session, lord North and lord George Germaine expressed their reliance on the assurances of the pacific intentions of France. Franklin and Lee, early in January, saw the count de Vergennes, the French minister for foreign affairs, who received their memorial; and told them that the French and Spanish courts would act in perfect concert. "Their fleets," Franklin writes, "are said to be in fine order, manned and fit for sea. The cry of this nation is for us; but the court, it is thought, views an approaching war with reluctance." Franklin, in Paris, was in a singular position to form a just estimate of "the cry of this nation." He writes to a lady in England, "Figure to yourself an old man, with gray hair appearing under a martin-fur cap, among the powdered heads of Paris." He looked with wonder upon the ladies at a ball in Nantes, with head-dresses five lengths of the face above the top of the forehead. At court the mode was less extravagant: "We dined at the duke de Rochefoucauld's, where there were three duchesses and a countess, and no heads higher than a face and a half." † Schlosser, a German historian, has described Franklin's appearance in the Paris salons: "The admiration of Franklin, carried to a degree approaching folly, produced a remarkable effect on the fashionable circles of Paris. His dress, the simplicity of his external appearance, the friendly meekness of the old man, and the apparent humility of the Quaker, procured for freedom a mass of votaries among the court circles, who used to be alarmed at its coarseness an unsophisticated truths." ‡ During several years, when he resided at Passy, a village about three miles from Paris, the shrewd old man in the fur cap was a constant visitor in the highest society. To his exertions is to be chiefly attributed the eagerness with which the aristocracy embraced those vague notions of freedom which, misunderstood and exaggerated, were to become their own destruction.

In the letters of Franklin there is no allusion to a very remarkable series of occurrences in England in which his coadjutor, Mr. Silas Deane, was asserted to have been mixed up in a manner disgraceful to his character. On the 7th of December, 1776, the rope-house of the dockyard at Portsmouth was burnt down. With difficulty the flames were prevented from reaching other buildings. The fire was considered accidental, until, on the 15th

* Franklin's Works, vol. viii. p. 191.

† "Works," vol. viii. p. 195 and 197.

‡ Quoted in "Life of Steuben," p. 89. New York. 1859.

of January, 1777, a quantity of combustibles were found in the hemp-house of the same yard. About this period an incendiary attempt was also made upon the docks at Plymouth, and then some warehouses were set on fire upon the quay at Bristol, with an evident design to burn the shipping lying alongside. Suspicion at length fell upon a man who had been seen lurking about the dock-yard at Plymouth, on the day of the fire, who was known to some person as John the painter. He was apprehended at Odiham early in February; and having been induced to confide in another painter, who was permitted to visit him, he at length revealed to his supposed friend the transactions in which he had been engaged. The incendiary's real name was Aitken; his native place Edinburgh; he had been in America three years, and had returned from France a short time before these fires broke out. In March he was brought to trial at the Winchester Assizes, and then, to his surprise, his confidential friend came forward as evidence against him. This suspicious testimony was, however, confirmed by a variety of circumstances proved by other witnesses; and John the Painter paid the penalty of his crimes. His own confession, of which the following is the substance, removed every possible doubt of his guilt. After his return from America he followed the trade of a painter at Birmingham, and also at Titchfield, in Hampshire. Here he conceived the first idea of setting fire to the dockyards. He went to France, and applied to Mr. Silas Deane, who told him, when the work was done, he should be rewarded. On his return to England, and after setting fire to the rope-yard at Portsmouth, he went to London, and waited on Dr. Bancroft, to whom he had a verbal recommendation from Mr. Deane; but the doctor gave him no countenance. He afterwards wrote to Bancroft, and the day following met him at the Salopian coffee-house, and told him he would do all the prejudice he could to this kingdom; but the doctor not approving of his conduct, he took his leave, hoping that the doctor would not inform against him, to which the doctor said, he did not like to inform against any man. At Plymouth, he twice attempted to set fire to the dockyard, and twice reached the top of the wall for that purpose; but the watchman being within hearing, he desisted. He then went to Bristol, where he attempted to set fire to the shipping in the harbour, and afterwards set fire to a warehouse in Quay-lane. These details are given in the Annual Register for 1777, so that Silas Deane had ample opportunity to deny the charges under which he laboured. Dr. Bancroft, an American by birth, was settled as a physician in London, and was favourably known as a man of science

and an author. Silas Deane was instructed by the Committee of Secret Correspondence of Congress to communicate with Dr. Bancroft, who could give him a good deal of information about what was going on in England. He saw Deane in Paris, where he remained several months. "He then returned to London," says Mr. Jared Sparks, "and being attached to the interests of the United States, he rendered some valuable assistance to the American agents and ministers in Europe." *

Great Britain, at this period, was ill-prepared for a naval war. Her system of manning the navy was as inefficient as it was disgraceful to a country calling itself free. And yet, like many other evil things, it was long held essential to the safety of the nation. On the 11th of March, Mr. Temple Luttrell proposed to the House of Commons a measure for the more easy and effectual manning of the navy. In describing the horrors of impressment, he showed the tumults, fear, and confusion which arose in every town and village within ten or twelve miles of a press-gang. In Yorkshire the labourers were so terrified by a press-gang at Tadcaster, that they fled from their work like a covey of partridges. In the West of England the fishermen had deserted the coast, and their families were reduced to poverty. Seamen had been drowned in attempting to swim from their ships to the shore, or were shot by the sentinels. Some committed suicide; some mutilated themselves. In the impress-tenders, where captive seamen were thrust together, fevers and other contagious diseases broke out. The guard-ship at the Nore was a seminary of contagion to the whole fleet. The inefficiency of the system was shown to be as palpable as its cruelty. In 1770, during five months when press warrants were in execution through the kingdom, only eight thousand persons could be added to the navy, although the refuse of the jails, and the outcasts of every town and hamlet, were of the number. The motion was of course negatived by a large majority. Any system of rational expenditure for the defence of the country was constantly opposed by the jobbers in parliament. A plan of registry for seamen, and of bounties for enlistment, was rejected for that plan of brute force which was far more costly, and made the naval service so hateful that not a ship of the line in commission was properly manned. "You have a goodly show of pendants and streamers waving at Spithead," said Mr. Luttrell, "but so far are they from being formidable, as their appearance bespeaks, that your ships hardly ride secure against the equinoctial gales of the present season, much less are they in any condition to put to sea, and

* Franklin's Works, vol. viii. Note on p. 266.

bid defiance to an enemy." * The coast defences were so neglected as to leave England equally exposed to attack. Marshal Conway writes in 1774 : " The most important places in the English dominions are either left quite defenceless, or such scanty provision made, from the horror of expense, as will neither give security to the objects concerned, nor do honour to those who have the conduct of the works. I speak feelingly, when I consider that even Portsmouth is in this case." † Looking back upon many such instances of the neglect of the commonest means of national preservation, we can scarcely regard our country in any other light than as an energetic man, who, by the inherent vigour of his constitution, has survived the cruelty and folly of the silly nurses of his childhood, of the ignorant quacks who were the torment of his youth, and of the venal guardians who starved him in his adult age.

On the 28th of May, lord Camden acquainted the House of Lords that the earl of Chatham intended to move the consideration of the American war on the 30th. Two years had elapsed since Chatham had made his appearance in public. These were days of suffering and solitude. On the 17th of November, 1776, lady Chatham transmitted to Dr. Addington, " a Memorandum of that declaration concerning America which, from his confidence in your experienced friendship, he reposed, last July, in your breast." ‡ The memorandum, " expressed with due precision, and in the exact terms," in the hand-writing of lady Chatham, is a document of singular interest. It set forth, " That he continued in the same sentiments, with regard to America, which he had always professed, and which stand so fully explained in the Provisional Act offered by him to the House of Lords. Confiding in the friendship of Dr. Addington, he requested of him to preserve this in memory ; that in case he should not recover from the long illness under which he laboured, the doctor might be enabled to do him justice, by bearing testimony that he persevered unshaken in the same opinions. To this he added, that unless effectual measures were speedily taken for reconciliation with the colonies, he was fully persuaded that, in a very few years, France will set her foot on English ground. That, in the present moment, her policy may probably be to wait some time, in order to see England more deeply engaged in this ruinous war, against herself, in America, as well as to prove how far the Americans, abetted by France indirectly only, may be able to make a stand, before she takes an open part by declaring

* " Parliamentary Debates," vol. xix. col. 89.

† Unpublished Collection of Letters.

‡ " Chatham Correspondence," vol. iv. p. 423.

war upon England." The great statesman did recover for a short period. The sensation his appearance produced is forcibly described in the speech of the duke of Grafton on that occasion. After Chatham had spoken, the duke congratulated the House and the nation upon the evidence that the people retained a grateful sense of the high obligation they owed to the great man who had returned to his duty in parliament. The space before the bar, he said, was filled by gentlemen of all parties; the avenues of the house were so crowded as not to leave room for the peers to come to their seats. Swathed in flannel, and tottering on his crutch, Chatham had passed through this admiring crowd, and not a sound was heard as that melodious voice, a little enfeebled, again charmed every listener. His speech is imperfectly reported; but a few passages show how the pristine vigour of his intellect survived his bodily infirmities: "America has carried you through four wars, and will now carry you to your death, if you don't take things in time. In the sportsman's phrase, when you have found yourselves at fault, you must try back. You have ransacked every corner of Lower Saxony; but forty thousand German boors never can conquer ten times the number of British freemen. You may ravage—you can not conquer; it is impossible; you can not conquer the Americans. You talk, my lords, of your numerous friends among them to annihilate the Congress, and of your powerful forces to disperse their army. I might as well talk of driving them before me with this crutch! . . . You have been three years teaching them the art of war; they are apt scholars; and I will venture to tell your lordships that the American gentry will make officers enough, fit to command the troops of all the European powers. What you have sent there are too many to make peace—too few to make war. If you conquer them, what then? You cannot make them respect you; you cannot make them wear your cloth; you will plant an invincible hatred in their breasts against you. Coming from the stock they do, they can never respect you. The motion of Chatham was for an humble Address to the king, to advise his majesty to take the most speedy and effectual measures for putting a stop to such fatal hostilities. The motion was lost by a majority of 76 against 26. The king wrote this note the next day to lord North:—"Lord Chatham's motion can have no other use but to convey some fresh fuel to the rebels. Like most of the other productions of that most extraordinary brain, it contains nothing but specious words and malevolence."

Lord Chatham, in his declaration to his physician, conjectured rightly that France would abet the Americans indirectly only till

they were able to make a stand; after which she would declare open war against England. In May, 1777, Von Steuben, who had been aide-de-camp to Frederick of Prussia, went to Paris; and had various interviews with the count de St. Germain, secretary-at-war, and with the count de Vergennes, the minister of foreign affairs. The German was sent for by St. Germain, who, spreading a map upon the table, and pointing to America, said "Here is your field of battle; here is a republic which you must serve." Steuben was told that the Congress and the commander-in-chief wanted an officer of military experience, who would bring their army into a regular and permanent formation. He was referred to Beaumarchais, the author of *Figaro*, who made him acquainted with Silas Deane, and Deane introduced him to Franklin. The wary American would make no promises about money payments; but talked about presenting him with two thousand acres of land. Steuben did not relish the prospect of these distant advantages, and went away to Germany. But he was persuaded to return to Paris, and finally determined to cross the Atlantic as a volunteer. Vergennes said to him, "You know very well it is impossible for us to make conditions with you. I can only say, Go, succeed, and you will never regret the step you have taken." The French ministers suggested to him that he should pretend to the Americans that he had been a major-general in the service of the margrave of Baden, which imposing title, says his biographer, "secured to Steuben the right place in the American army." With letters to Franklin, the self-created major-general sailed to America in September, in a ship freighted with materials of war by Beaumarchais, who lent the volunteer money to start with. Two remarkable men engaged the same year in the American cause—La Fayette, and Kosciusko. La Fayette, one of the noble subalterns of the French army, was secured before he became of age, by the promise given to him by Silas Deane that he should have the commission of a major-general in the army of the United States. Franklin gave Kosciusko a letter to Washington, describing him as "a man of experience in military affairs and of tried bravery; who had lost his family and estate in Poland by fighting there in the cause of liberty, and wishes, by engaging in the same cause, to find a new country and new friends in America."* But the old man of Passy was harassed out of his wonted equanimity by incessant applications to recommend officers for the American service. He says, in answer to an application of this nature, "I am afraid to accept an invitation to dine abroad, being almost sure

* "Works," vol. viii. p. 221.

of meeting with some officer, or officer's friend, who, as soon as I am put in good humour by a glass or two of champagne, begins his attack upon me."

The British under the command of Howe, and the Americans under Washington, were engaged till the middle of June in watching and checking the movements of each other. After several indecisive encounters, Howe, at the beginning of July, evacuated Jersey; and leaving a part of his force at New York, embarked with a large body of infantry, and two battalions of cavalry, with the intent to reach Philadelphia by sea. Washington was at first perplexed by this sudden change of plan; and thought Howe's conduct "puzzling and embarrassing beyond measure." His first notion was that Howe would endeavour to form a junction with Burgoyne, who was preparing to enter the States from Canada; but he was at last convinced that the British general's object was Philadelphia. To reach this city Howe had employed many weeks in sailing round a great extent of coast, before he entered the Chesapeake. When he had landed his troops at the head of the Elk river he was as far from Philadelphia as if he had remained in his position on the Delaware. Washington marched to oppose him. On the 11th of September lord Cornwallis, with a strong detachment, was sent forward; and on the 13th encountered the American army on the Brandywine, a stream which flows into the Delaware. The Americans were routed with considerable loss; and on the 27th Cornwallis was in the occupation of Philadelphia. There were several smaller actions, especially that of Germantown, before the winter set in; but Washington could not be brought to a general engagement. He went into winter quarters at Valley Forge, a strong position on the banks of the Schuylkill, with an army not exceeding four thousand men, who were wretchedly lodged. In the comfortable quarters of Philadelphia the British indulged in excesses by which all discipline was relaxed, and the sober inhabitants so disgusted that the feelings of loyalty which many cherished were quickly destroyed. The success at the battle of Brandywine, and the possession of Philadelphia, were advantages that offered no compensation for a terrible blow to the royal cause in another quarter.

It had been determined to invade the United States from Canada, with an army of seven thousand troops, British and German, under general Burgoyne. Indians were engaged as auxiliaries; and a co-operation with general Clinton's forces from New York was expected. At the end of June Burgoyne marched. His first exploit was the re-capture of Ticonderoga. He next secured

Fort Edward, which the Americans abandoned on his approach. Before he accomplished this last success, he had to encounter the most formidable interruptions to his march, from the nature of the country, and the artificial obstacles which the enemy had created. There were no adequate supplies to be obtained as they proceeded; and the army depended upon salt provisions brought by the lakes from Canada. The Indians who had joined Burgoyne committed atrocities without rendering any effectual aid; and their employment by the British provoked a determined resistance in the New England States. To encounter invaders, whose cruelties were proclaimed with violent exaggerations throughout every town and hamlet, a large irregular army was speedily collected. The command was given to general Gates and to general Arnold. Burgoyne too soon found the enormous difficulties of his enterprise. "In all parts," he wrote home, "the industry and management in driving cattle, and removing corn are indefatigable and certain." He could obtain no intelligence of general Howe. With stores for thirty days, which he had collected during a month, he crossed the Hudson to Saratoga. The army of Gates was encamped on a range of hills called Behmus's Heights. On the 19th of September a battle was fought, in which the victory of the British secured no real advantage, for the Americans retired to their lines. The two armies continued in front of each other till the 7th of October. The stores of Burgoyne were rapidly diminishing; and on that day he sent out a detachment of fifteen hundred men for the purpose of covering a foraging party. Arnold attacked them, and compelled a retreat, with a loss of six cannon. He then assaulted Burgoyne's lines; and was repulsed where the British occupied them, but succeeded in forcing the entrenchments defended by a German reserve. The royal army quitted their encampment in the night, and sought a safer position on some higher ground. The next day Burgoyne saw the necessity of retreating to Saratoga, leaving his sick and wounded behind him. He was now encompassed with enemies on every side; and, worst of all, his provisions were nearly exhausted, though for some days the troops had been upon short rations. Three thousand five hundred men were all that remained. The general called a council of war; and it was determined to treat with the enemy. A message was sent to the American head-quarters with a flag of truce. The answer of general Gates was, that as the army of general Burgoyne was reduced in force, their provisions exhausted, their horses and baggage taken or destroyed, their retreat cut off, their camp invested, they could only be allowed to surrender as prisoners of war, and were required to ground their



GENERAL BURGoyNE ADDRESSING THE INDIANS. — Vol. vi. 200.

arms within their lines. The unanimous resolve in the British camp was to reject the terms. It was finally agreed that the army should march out of the camp with the honours of war, and pile their arms at the command of their own officers; that a free passage should be granted to Great Britain, upon the condition that the troops should not serve again in North America during the war. On the 17th of October the Convention was signed; and the small and disheartened army received a supply of fresh provisions, and commenced their march to Massachusetts. The conduct of the American army towards the vanquished was marked by the utmost delicacy and consideration. The conduct of the Congress was very different. They refused to permit the embarkation of Burgoyne and his men from Boston till the court of Great Britain had ratified the Convention; and under various pretences the British were detained for so long a period as to justify the indignation of contemporary statesmen and of future historians, against this signal instance of bad faith on the part of the American government.

The Session of Parliament was opened on the 18th of November. There was no change in the tone of the royal speech. The "obstinacy of the rebels—a deluded and unhappy multitude—called for a steady pursuit of measures for the re-establishment of constitutional subordination." It was known that Chatham, greatly restored in health, intended to move an amendment upon the Address. By general consent, the great orator, in all the fire of his youth and all the majesty of his maturity, never exceeded this almost last effort of his genius. The duke of Grafton says, "in this debate he exceeded all that I had ever admired in his speaking." This speech was admirably reported by Hugh Boyd, and thus, taken altogether, gives the most correct idea of Chatham's peculiar powers. He set forth the encouragement which France was giving to the ministers and ambassadors of those who are called rebels. "Can there be a more mortifying insult? Can even our ministers sustain a more humiliating disgrace? Do they dare to resent it?" He foreshadowed the fatal event of Saratoga. "My lords, you cannot conquer America. What is your present situation there? We do not know the worst; but we know that in three campaigns we have done nothing and suffered much. Besides the sufferings, perhaps total loss of the Northern force, the best appointed army that ever took the field, commanded by sir William Howe, has retired from the American lines. . . . As to conquest, therefore, my lords, I repeat, it is impossible. You may swell every expense and every effort still more extravagantly; pile and accumulate every assistance you can buy or borrow; traffic and

barter with every pitiful little German prince that sells and sends his subjects to the shambles of a foreign prince; your efforts are for ever vain and impotent—doubly so from this mercenary aid on which you rely; for it irritates, to an incurable resentment, the minds of your enemies, to overrun them with the mercenary sons of rapine and plunder, devoting them and their possessions to the rapacity of hireling cruelty. If I were an American, as I am an Englishman, while a foreign troop was landed in my country, I never would lay down my arms—never—never—never.” He then exclaimed, Who is the man who has dared to authorize and associate to our arms the tomahawk and scalping-knife of the savage? and dwelt on this stain on the national character. Though the orator was indignant at the manner in which the war was carried on, the statesman did not give his approval to the object which the Americans now proposed to themselves. “The independent views of America have been stated and asserted as the foundation of this address. My lords, no man wishes for the due dependence of America on this country more than I do. To preserve it, and not confirm that state of independence into which your measures hitherto have driven them, is the object which we ought to unite in attaining. The Americans, contending for their rights against arbitrary exactions, I love and admire. It is the struggle of free and virtuous patriots. But, contending for independency and total disconnection from England, as an Englishman, I cannot wish them success; for in a due constitutional dependency, including the ancient supremacy of this country in regulating their commerce and navigation, consists the mutual happiness and prosperity both of England and America.”

Chatham having moved his amendment to the Address, lord Sandwich replied, and was succeeded by lord Suffolk, one of the Secretaries of State. One passage of his lordship’s speech was as follows: “The noble earl, with all that force of oratory for which he is so conspicuous, has charged administration as if guilty of the most heinous crimes, in employing Indians in general Burgoyne’s army; for my part, whether foreigners or Indians, which the noble lord has described by the appellation of savages, I shall ever think it justifiable to exert every means in our power to repel the attempts of our rebellious subjects. The Congress endeavoured to bring the Indians over to their side, and if we had not employed them, they would most certainly have acted against us; and I do freely confess, I think it was both a wise and necessary measure, as I am clearly of opinion, that we are fully justified in using every means which God and Nature has put into our hands.” The duke

of Grafton thus describes the reply of Chatham to this position : "He stood up with a degree of indignation that added to the force of the sudden and unexampled burst of eloquence which must have affected any audience, and which appeared to me to surpass all that we have ever heard of the celebrated orators of Greece or Rome." Having denounced the horrible notion of attributing the sanction of God and Nature to the massacres of the Indian scalping-knife, he thus proceeded : "These abominable principles, and this more abominable avowal of them, demand the most decisive indignation. I call upon that right reverend bench, those holy ministers of the Gospel, and pious pastors of our Church—I conjure them to join in the holy work, and vindicate the religion of their God. I appeal to the wisdom and the law of this learned bench, to defend and support the justice of their country. I call upon the Bishops to interpose the unsullied sanctity of their lawn ; upon the learned Judges to interpose the purity of their ermine, to save us from this pollution. I call upon the honour of your lordships, to reverence the dignity of your ancestors, and to maintain your own. I call upon the spirit and humanity of my country, to vindicate the national character. I invoke the genius of the Constitution. From the tapestry that adorns these walls, the immortal ancestor of this noble lord frowns with indignation at the disgrace of his country. In vain he led your victorious fleets against the boasted Armada of Spain ; in vain he defended and established the honour, the liberties, the religion—the Protestant religion—of this country, against the arbitrary cruelties of popery and the Inquisition, if these more than popish cruelties and inquisitorial practices are let loose among us—to turn forth into our settlements, among our ancient connections, friends, and relations, the merciless cannibal, thirsting for the blood of man, woman, and child ! to send forth the infidel savage—against whom ? against your Protestant brethren ; to lay waste their country, to desolate their dwellings, and extirpate their race and name with these horrible hell-hounds of savage war—hell-hounds, I say of savage war ! Spain armed herself with blood-hounds to extirpate the wretched natives of America, and we improve on the inhuman example even of Spanish cruelty ; we turn loose these savage hell-hounds against our brethren and countrymen in America, of the same language, laws, liberties, and religion, endeared to us by every tie that should sanctify humanity."

"My lords, I am old and weak, and at present unable to say more ; but my feelings and indignation were too strong to have said less. I could not have slept this night in my bed, nor reposed my head on my pillow, without giving this vent to my eternal abhorrence of such preposterous and enormous principles."

On the 3rd of December, colonel Barré, having called upon lord George Germaine "to declare, upon his honour, what was become of general Burgoyne and his brave troops," he admitted that he had received a piece of very disastrous intelligence from Quebec. Furious was the indignation against the ministry. Charles Fox declared that an army of ten thousand men, destroyed through the obstinate wilful ignorance and incapacity of the noble lord, called loudly for vengeance. A gallant general was sent like a victim to be slaughtered. He was ordered to make his way to Albany to wait the orders of sir William Howe; but general Howe knew nothing of the matter, for he was gone to a different country, and left the unhappy Burgoyne and his troops to make the best terms for themselves. Fox moved for copies of instructions to Burgoyne, which motion was negative.

Washington's position in his winter quarters of Valley Forge was such as to demand the utmost exercise of his energy and fortitude. His commissariat department was in a frightful state of incapacity. He wrote to Congress on the 23rd of December, "Unless some great and capital change suddenly takes place in that line, this army must inevitably be reduced to one or other of these three things—starve, dissolve, or disperse, in order to obtain subsistence in the best manner they can." In answer to some presumptuous remarks of members of Congress, reprobating his going into winter quarters, he says, "I can assure these gentlemen that it is a much easier and less distressing thing to draw remonstrances in a comfortable room by a good fireside, than to occupy a cold bleak hill, and sleep under frost and snow, without clothes or blankets." Steuben arrived in Washington's camp at this period of suffering. He found the military administration entrusted to departments having separate powers—quartermaster-general, war-commissary, provisions' commissary, commissary of the treasury, paymaster of forage,—"bad copies of a bad original—that is to say, they had imitated the English administration, which is certainly the most imperfect in Europe. . . . The English system, bad as it is, had already taken root. Each company and quarter-master had a commission of so much per cent. on all the money he expended. It was natural, therefore, that expense was not spared."* In the condition of the troops he found disorder and confusion supreme. The men were engaged only for three, six, or nine months, so that it was impossible to have a regiment or a company complete. "I have seen a regiment consisting of thirty men, and a company of one corporal." A general would have

* "Steuben's Life," p. 114—Extracts from his MS. papers.

thought himself lucky to find a third of the men ready for action whom he found upon paper. "The arms at Valley Forge were in a horrible condition, covered with rust, half of them without bayonets, many from which a single shot could not be fired." The men were literally naked. Officers mounted guard in a sort of dressing-gown made of an old blanket. The formation of the regiments was as varied as their mode of drill, which only consisted of the manual exercise, each colonel having a system of his own. They could only march in files, after the manner of the Indians. Such, according to Steuben, was the condition of an army that was to resist the regularly disciplined troops of England, provided with necessaries of war at an unbounded expense. It may be instructive to see how the Prussian officer set about bringing this irregular force into something like military order, with the sanction of Washington. He drafted a hundred and twenty men from the line, as a guard for the chief-in-command. He drilled them himself twice a day. "In a fortnight my company knew perfectly how to bear arms, had a military air, knew how to march, deploy, and execute some little manœuvres with excellent precision." In the course of instruction he departed altogether from the general rule. "In our European armies a man who has been drilled for three months is called a recruit; here, in two months, I must have a soldier. In Europe, we had a number of evolutions very pretty to look at when well executed, but in my opinion absolutely useless so far as essential objects are concerned." He reversed the whole system of eternal manual and platoon exercises, and commenced with manœuvres. He soon taught them something better than the pedantic routine which was taught in manuals of tactics. To the objectors against Steuben's system it was answered, "that in fact there was no time to spare in learning the minutiae—the troops must be prepared for instant combat." The sagacious German had his men at drill every morning at sunrise; and he soon made the colonels of regiments not ashamed of instructing their recruits.

CHAPTER XI.

Public opinion on the American War.—Measures of conciliation proposed by lord North. — France concludes a treaty of amity with America.—Chatham's last speech in Parliament.—His sudden illness in the House of Lords.—His death.—Propositions of lord North rejected by Congress.—French fleet under d'Estaing arrives in America.—Attack on Rhode Island impeded by fleet under lord Howe.—Admiral Keppel takes the command of the Channel Fleet.—Engagement off Ushant.—Court-martial on Keppel.—Burgoyne's defence of himself in Parliament.—Destruction of Wyoming.—Spain declares war against Great Britain.—Apprehensions of invasion.—The national spirit roused.—Enterprises of Paul Jones.—Military operations in America in 1779.

THE voice of Edmund Burke was rarely heard in parliament on the subject of America during the two Sessions of 1777. In his remarkable "Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol," he says: "It is some time since I have been clearly convinced, that in the present state of things, all opposition to any measures proposed by ministers, where the name of America appears, is vain and frivolous. . . . Everything proposed against America is supposed, of course, to be in favour of Great Britain. Good and ill success are equally admitted as reasons for persevering in the present method. Several very prudent, and very well-intentioned, persons were of opinion, that during the prevalence of such dispositions, all struggle rather inflamed than lessened the distemper of the public counsels. Finding such resistance to be considered as factious by most within doors, and by very many without, I cannot conscientiously support what is against my opinion, nor prudently contend with what I know is irresistible." The tone of this letter sufficiently indicates the conviction of one who sagaciously watched the course of public opinion, that the contest with America had reached such a stage, that those who continued to advocate principles of conciliation, were not supported by the majority of the British nation. Burke saw the injury that the prevailing sentiment was producing upon the national character: "Liberty is in danger of being made unpopular to Englishmen. Contending for an imaginary power, we begin to acquire the spirit of domination, and to lose the relish of honest equality. The principles of our forefathers become suspected to us, because we see them animating the present opposition of our children." At the commencement of the war this state

of public opinion was wholly irrational and almost base. In 1776, the American Declaration of Independence turned aside many friends of pacific measures, to regard the conflict as one which it became the dignity of Great Britain to carry on to a successful assertion of national rights. But in 1778, when France was ostensibly preparing to support the cause of the revolted colonies, there could be little doubt that the advocates for recognizing the claim to independence, thus enforced by a power systematically hostile to British interests, would form a very inconsiderable portion of the people;—that continued opposition to the government upon this question would be “considered factious by most within doors, and by very many without.”

At the beginning of 1778 Manchester and Liverpool came forward in a marked display of loyalty. Each community offered to raise a regiment of a thousand men at their own expense. Edinburgh, Glasgow, and parts of the Highlands, exhibited a similar spirit. Large subscriptions were provided in London for raising men for his majesty's service. These proceedings took place during the recess; and when the Houses met in January, strong objections were taken to what was held to be the unconstitutional measure of levying troops by private subscription without the consent of parliament. Lord North rejoiced in the manifestation of public spirit, which he regarded as a tribute to the conduct of the administration. But the prime minister, whilst thus exulting that “a very loyal part of his majesty's subjects had expressed their abhorrence of an unnatural rebellion,” was about to depart very widely from the principle on which the contest had been hitherto conducted. On the 17th of February lord North brought in two Bills,—the first of which was entitled, “For removing all doubts and apprehensions concerning Taxation by the Parliament of Great Britain in any of the Colonies.” This was a complete and utter renunciation of the right of Great Britain to impose any tax upon the American Colonies, except only such duties as it might be expedient to impose for the regulation of commerce, the net produce of which was always to be applied to the use of the Colony in which the duties were levied. The second Bill was to enable the king to appoint commissioners with ample powers to treat upon the means of quieting the disorders in America; and they were authorized to treat and agree with any body or bodies politic; or any person or persons whatsoever. The commissioners were thus empowered to treat with the Congress as if it were a legal body, and as if its acts and concessions would bind all America. The Congress, said lord North, had raised a difficulty with the former commission, on pre-

tence of the non-admission of their title to independent States. "As the Americans might claim their independence in the outset, he would not insist on their renouncing it till the treaty should receive its final ratification by the king and parliament of Great Britain." The minister, in recapitulating the circumstances of this unhappy contest, from the period of the Stamp Act, maintained that, from the beginning, he had been uniformly disposed to peace. In the historical part of the Annual Register, written no doubt by Burke, the temper of the House is thus recorded: "A dull melancholy silence for some time succeeded to this speech. It had been heard with profound attention, but without a single mark of approbation to any part, from any description of men, or any particular man, in the House. Astonishment, dejection, and fear, over-clouded the whole assembly. Although the minister had declared, that the sentiments he expressed that day had been those which he always entertained, it is certain that few or none had understood him in that manner; and he had been represented to the nation at large, as the person in it most tenacious of those parliamentary rights which he now proposed to resign, and the most remote from the submissions which he now proposed to make. It was generally therefore concluded, that something more extraordinary and alarming had happened than yet appeared, which was of force to produce such an apparent change in measures, principles, and arguments."

The "something more extraordinary and alarming than yet appeared," was soon to be manifested. On the 17th of March, a royal message was presented to both Houses, stating that his majesty had been informed, by order of the French king, "that a treaty of amity and commerce had been signed between the court of France and certain persons employed by his majesty's revolted subjects in North America;" and that in consequence of this offensive communication the king had sent orders to his ambassador to withdraw from the French court. The communication was made to the British secretary-of-state, by the French ambassador in London, on the 13th of March. On the 14th, lord North earnestly pressed the king to accept his resignation, and to send for lord Chatham. The letters of the king sufficiently manifest the strong aversion which his majesty had taken to the statesman who, in this crisis of his country's fate, was looked up to as the only Englishman who was likely to conciliate America whilst he alarmed France. The king, on the 15th of March, declared that he did not object to lord North applying to lord Chatham to support his administration; but adding, that no advantage to my country, nor personal

danger to myself, can make me address myself to lord Chatham or to any other branch of opposition. Honestly, I would rather lose the crown I now wear than bear the ignominy of possessing it under their shackles." In another letter of the same day he says, "I don't expect that lord Chatham and his crew will come to your assistance." Lord North continuing to press for a more complete change of ministers than the king contemplated, the correspondence continued for several days in the same determined exhibition of the sovereign's implacability. Chatham he terms "that perfidious man." He would not have him, "as Dictator, planning a new administration." Lord North at length consented to go on as the head of a ministry till the Session of Parliament was closed. A few official changes were made, the most important of which was the appointment of the Attorney-General, Thurlow, to be Lord Chancellor. The national feeling, with regard to Chatham, was expressed in a letter to lady Chatham, by Thomas Coutts, the eminent banker. He said that lord Chatham's health "becomes every day more interesting, in the present desponding state of the people. Every rank looks up to him, with the only gleam of hope that remains." In a few weeks a higher power than courts or senates decided that Chatham should be at rest—indifferent to the hatred of a king, or the veneration of a people.

The duke of Richmond had given notice in the House of Lords of a motion which he intended to make on the 7th of April, "for an address to the king upon the state of the nation." On the 5th the duke sent to lord Chatham the draft of his proposed Address; which Chatham returned the next day, expressing his concern "to find himself under so wide a difference with the duke of Richmond as between the sovereignty and allegiance of America." * Chatham was slowly recovering from a fit of the gout; but he determined to go to town from Hayes, and take his place in Parliament. Lord Camden, in a letter to the duke of Grafton, describing the closing scene of the great earl's public life, says, "he was not in a condition to go abroad; and he was earnestly requested not to make the attempt." Camden saw him in the Prince's Chamber before he went into the House; and remarked "the feeble state of his body, and the distempered agitation of his mind." An eye-witness has recorded his appearance. "Lord Chatham came into the House of Lords, leaning upon two friends, lapped up in flannel, pale, and emaciated. Within his large wig, little more was to be seen than his aquiline nose and his penetrating eye. He looked like a dying man,

* "Chatham Correspondence," vol. iv. p. 518

yet never was seen a figure of more dignity." * The two friends were his son, William Pitt, and lord Mahon, his son-in-law. The duke of Richmond had made his motion for an Address. Viscount Weymouth had opposed the motion. The earl of Chatham, continues the narrative of the eye-witness, "rose from his seat with slowness and difficulty, leaning on his crutches, and supported under each arm by his two friends. He took one hand from his crutch, and raised it, casting his eyes towards heaven, and said, 'I thank God that I have been enabled to come here this day, to perform my duty, and to speak on a subject which has so deeply impressed my mind. I am old, and infirm—have one foot, more than one foot, in the grave—I am risen from my bed, to stand up in the cause of my country, perhaps never again to speak in this House.'" He rejoiced that he was still able to lift up his voice against the dismemberment of this ancient and most noble monarchy. "My Lords, his majesty succeeded to an empire as great in extent as its reputation was unsullied. Shall we tarnish the lustre of this nation by an ignominious surrender of its rights and fairest possessions? Shall this great kingdom, which has survived whole and entire the Danish depredations, the Scottish inroads, and the Norman conquest—that has stood the threatened invasion of the Spanish armada—now fall prostrate before the House of Bourbon? Surely, my lords, this nation is no longer what it was. Shall a people that, fifteen years ago, was the terror of the world, now stoop so low as to tell its ancient inveterate enemy, Take all we have, only give us peace?" Lord Camden describes the words of Chatham as "shreds of unconnected eloquence, and flashes of the same fire which he, Prometheus-like, had stolen from heaven; and were then returning to the place from whence they were taken." That withering sarcasm which occasionally found its place in his impassioned harangues, was not absent in this last effort. Speaking of the probability of invasion, he said, "Of a Spanish invasion, of a French invasion, of a Dutch invasion, many noble lords may have read in history; and some lords may perhaps remember a Scotch invasion." He looked at lord Mansfield. The duke of Richmond replied; and then Chatham made an effort again to address the House. "He fell back upon his seat," writes Camden, "and was to all appearance in the agonies of death. This threw the whole House into confusion. Every person was upon his legs in a moment, hurrying from one place to another, some sending for assistance, others producing salts, and others reviving spirits; many crowding about the earl to observe his countenance; all affected; most part really concerned; and even

* "Seward's Anecdotes," vol. i. p. 383. Fifth edit.

those who might have felt a secret pleasure at the accident yet put on the appearance of distress, except only the earl of M., who sat still, almost as much unmoved as the senseless body itself." There was one who, though "born and bred a Briton," felt no regret that one of the noblest vindicators of Britain's honour had, in all human probability, concluded his eventful career. The king the next day wrote to lord North, "May not the political exit of lord Chatham incline you to continue at the head of affairs?" The political exit was quickly followed by the close of the "last scene of all." Chatham died at Hayes on the 11th of May. On the day after his decease, the House of Commons unanimously resolved to honour his memory by a public funeral and a public monument. The king was "rather surprised," he said in a note to lord North, at such a testimony; but trusted it would be merely an expression of gratitude for Chatham's having roused the nation at the beginning of the late war, and his conduct as Secretary of State. "This compliment, if paid to his general conduct," added his majesty, "is rather an offensive measure to me personally." The funeral in Westminster Abbey was attended by few of the party in power. The monument, by Banks, "erected by the King and Parliament as a testimony to the virtues and abilities of William Pitt, earl of Chatham," records that during his administration, "Divine Providence exalted Great Britain to an height of prosperity and glory unknown to any former age." The cenotaph erected by the Corporation of London has an inscription of higher import. The monument to William Pitt is placed in the Guildhall of the City of London, "that her citizens may never meet for the transaction of their affairs without being reminded, that the means by which Providence raises a nation to greatness are the virtues infused into great men; and that to withhold from those virtues, either of the living or the dead, the tribute of esteem and veneration, is to deny to themselves the means of happiness and honour."

The news of the French alliance being concluded reached Washington's camp at Valley Forge on the 4th of May. The biographer of Steuben records that "suddenly the public distress seemed to be forgotten amidst universal joy." Many supposed that immediate peace would be the natural consequence of this change of circumstances. Steuben wrote to Henry Laurens, then President of Congress, to offer his congratulations "in seeing the independence of America established on so solid a basis." The cautious President replies, "It is my opinion that we are not to roll down a green bank and toy away the ensuing summer. There is blood, much blood, in our prospect. Britain will not be hummed

by a stroke of policy. She will be very angry, and if she is to fall, her fall will be glorious, We, who know her, ought to be prepared.”*

The pacific measures of the British government produced not the slightest change in the policy of the leaders of the American revolution. Washington held that the propositions and the speech of lord North must have proceeded from despair of the nation's succeeding against the United States. When the Commissioners under lord North's bill arrived at Philadelphia, they found the army about to evacuate the town; having received positive orders to that effect from home. Howe had resigned his command, which had been transferred to sir Henry Clinton. The abandonment of Philadelphia; the certainty of the French alliance; the contempt which was felt at the vacillating policy of the ministry, emboldened the Congress to treat the royal Commissioners with little ceremony. That body refused to hold a conference with them, unless they should withdraw the naval and military power of Great Britain, or acknowledge the Independence of America in direct terms. No reply was given to the explanatory offers of the Commissioners—offers which, if made in the early days of the contest, would have commanded not only willing obedience but fervent gratitude. The Commissioners determined to return to England; but they first took the somewhat dangerous step of addressing a Manifesto to the American people, remonstrating against the decision of the Congress, and holding out the threat that if peace and union were refused, the war would in future be conducted upon different principles. “The policy, as well as the benevolence, of Great Britain, have thus far checked the extremes of war, when they tended to distress a people still considered as our fellow subjects, and to desolate a country shortly to become again a source of mutual advantage; but when that country professes the unnatural design, not only of estranging herself from us, but of mortgaging herself and her resources to our enemies, the whole contest is changed.” Upon this plea, it was affirmed that the laws of self-preservation called upon Great Britain, if her colonies were to become an accession to France, “to render that accession of as little avail as possible to her enemy.” When this Manifesto was brought before Parliament at the end of the year, there were different opinions as to the meaning to be attached to such a threat; but most men, not wholly subservient to the ministry, agreed with Burke, that “if the war was to be changed,—if the lenity, the humanity, the toleration, which had been hitherto observed, was to be foregone,—and we

* “Life of Steuben,” p. 138.

had foreborne nothing that the rights of war could authorize,—then the plan now to be prosecuted was different from lenity and toleration, and was different from the laws of war; for war was constantly to be limited by necessity, and its calamities and ravages to be bound in by that plea alone. . . . The extremes of war, and the desolation of a country, were sweet sounding mutes and liquids, but their meaning was terrible; they meant the killing of man, woman, and child, burning their houses and ravaging their lands, annihilating humanity from the face of the earth, or rendering it so wretched, that death would be preferable.”*

The war of Great Britain against France and America at once became a fierce struggle by land and sea. When sir Henry Clinton had marched through Jersey with Washington following him, and a partial battle had been fought on the 28th of June, the British army was at last established at New York, with a large garrison at Rhode Island. A French fleet from Toulon, under the count d’Estaing, had appeared off New York on the 5th of July. It consisted of twelve sail of the line and six frigates, with a large number of troops on board. It was determined to attack the British on Rhode Island, by a combined army of four thousand French and ten thousand Americans. The garrison of five thousand retired within their lines at Newport. The Americans had crossed the narrow strait called the Seaconnet Channel; and d’Estaing was about to land his troops on the west side of the island, when the fleet under lord Howe appeared in sight, and the French admiral put to sea to offer battle, leaving his allies to pursue the siege of Newport alone. The fleets were prevented engaging by a violent storm, by which they were both dismantled. Each went into port to refit; the British to New York, the French to Boston. The abandonment of the Americans by d’Estaing compelled them to relinquish their enterprise upon Rhode Island; and bitter was their indignation against their allies. The French admiral finally sailed to pursue his own plans of attacking the British West Indian Islands, or defending those of France. The island of St. Lucia was taken by the British, and Dominica by the French.

In the House of Commons, on the 5th of May, Thomas Townshend noticed the sailing of the French fleet from Toulon, whilst our fleet was merely exhibited as a pageant at Portsmouth—a “puppet-show,” as Walpole terms it. Lord North said the utmost exertions had been made. Though no fleet had sailed, the ministers were not to be accused of incapacity; for the French at all

* “Parliamentary Debates,” vol. xix. col. 1400.

times, by their mode of supply of seamen from their registers, could man a fleet sooner than England. Admiral Keppel, an experienced officer, and highly popular with the navy, had been appointed to the command of the Channel fleet. The appointment was creditable to the ministry, for Keppel was, as a member of Parliament, strongly opposed to their policy. When he first accepted the command he found only six ships of the line fit for service; but before the middle of June the number was increased to twenty. He sailed from St. Helen's on the 17th of June. Two French frigates, reconnoitring, were attacked by his squadron; one of which was captured and the other driven on shore on the coast of France. Amongst the papers of the *Lecorne* thus captured, he discovered that anchorage was ordered at Brest for an immense fleet, with which he thought his own unable to contend. He sailed back to Portsmouth. The public feeling is expressed in a letter of Gibbon:—"Keppel's return has occasioned infinite and inexpressible consternation, which gradually changed into discontent against him." The Admiralty made great exertions; and Keppel, on the 9th of July, again put to sea with a reinforcement of ten ships. The French fleet, consisting of thirty-two sail of the line, and a considerable number of frigates, had come out from Brest, under the command of count d'Orvilliers. After four days' manœuvring, an engagement took place off Ushant, which had no decisive result. Night was coming on with a heavy squall. Keppel signalled to the second in command, sir Hugh Palliser, to come up to renew the fight; but that admiral was unable to obey the order, from the damage which his ship had sustained. The French admiral got back to Brest, and Keppel sailed to Plymouth. The conduct of the two admirals became the subject of warm debates when the Parliament met in November. Attacks and recriminations were conducted with all the heat of party; Keppel being upon terms of friendship with the leading members of the Opposition; Palliser a supporter of the ministry, and a lord of the Admiralty. Each admiral blamed the other; and, finally, upon charges made by Palliser against Keppel for misconduct and incapacity, a court-martial was ordered. The trial lasted thirty-two days, and ended in a unanimous verdict of the Court, that Keppel had acted with bravery and judgment, and that the charges were ill-founded and malicious. This court-martial has been rendered illustrious by a passage of Burke, in which he describes "with what zeal and anxious affection I attended him through that his agony of glory. . . . If to the eternal disgrace of this nation, and to the total annihilation of every trace of honour and virtue in it, things

had taken a different turn from what they did, I should have attended him to the quarter-deck with no less good will, and more pride, than I partook of the general flow of national joy that attended the justice that was done to his virtue." * The popular enthusiasm in favour of Keppel was indeed remarkable. It may be attributed, in part, to a conviction that the government was unequal to the conduct of the war. The people could not be supposed to feel with Burke that Keppel was "one of the greatest and best men of his age;" but they illuminated and rioted for his acquittal; and his portrait became a favourite sign in town and country. Palliser demanded a court-martial upon himself, and received an acquittal of a very qualified character. The extravagant admiration of Keppel, and the proportionate depreciation of Palliser, may suggest the opinion that admirals and generals may receive a more impartial judgment from their contemporaries by withholding their support from extreme parties in politics.

General Burgoyne returned to England in the spring of 1778, Congress having consented to give him passports, upon the condition that he would go back to America, and abide the fate of the rest of the army, should their embarkation continue to be prevented. He was treated coldly by our government, and refused admission to the royal presence. A court of inquiry into his conduct was refused, upon the ground that he was a prisoner on parole to the Congress. As a member of Parliament, he had an opportunity of vindicating the Convention of Saratoga. The blame that had been attached to him for the employment of Indians in his campaign appears to have wounded him very deeply. He stated that he always believed the Indian alliances to be, at best, a necessary evil. He had declined their offers and solicitations to be employed separately. He had presided at one of the greatest councils with the Indians that had been held at Montreal. It was their custom to offer the pipe of war to the representative of the power they meant to serve. It was pressed upon him by the chiefs present; and it was at his option, by a single whiff of tobacco, to have given flame and commotion to a dozen nations. He had acted in this matter under the instructions of sir Guy Carleton in 1776; and when he came to England in that year he found the system of restraining the impetuous passions of these people unpopular with those official persons who had adopted the reasoning, in their zeal against the colonists, that partial severity was general mercy. He returned to Canada, determined to be the soldier, not the executioner, of the State. The eloquent invective of Chatham, we thus see, had

* "Letter to the Duke of Bedford."

in view the ministerial directors of the war rather than the commander who succumbed to unavoidable difficulties.

Connected with the subject of the barbarities of the Indians, there is an event of the year 1778, which has been rescued from the possible oblivion of History by the more enduring associations of Poetry.* Wyoming, on the Susquehanna, consisting of eight townships, was a new settlement. The soil was fertile; the climate genial; the inhabitants unusually prosperous. Happy they were not, for a minority amongst them was bitterly opposed to those who resisted the British government. The people were removed from the scene of hostilities; yet the greater number took a deep interest in the contest for independence, and had sent a large proportion of their adult male population to the army of the Congress. The infant settlement was comparatively defenceless; although four forts had been constructed to resist the inroads of the savages. The right to the soil was a disputed point between the States of Connecticut and Pennsylvania; and in the absence of central control those who were loyalists, or Tories, were exposed to rigorous treatment. The mutual hatred between the two parties of Americans was too often marked by persecution; and political differences became the justification for rapine and revenge. Many of the Tories of Wyoming had abandoned the settlement. Some strangers had come amongst the inhabitants of the townships under suspicious circumstances, and had been arrested and sent to Connecticut. At the beginning of July, a body of armed men, amounting to sixteen hundred, appeared on the Susquehanna. One fourth of these were Indians. The whole force was commanded by a partisan known as colonel Butler; and according to the accounts of the time, by one Brandt, half Indian by blood, ferocious and cruel beyond example—"the Monster Brandt."† One of the smaller forts was first taken by storm, and all the men were massacred. The commander of another fort was induced to march out with four hundred men to hold a parley; and after a murderous struggle only seventy escaped. In a third fort the men were slaughtered, or burnt alive. In a fourth the same indiscriminate havoc was pursued, with similar cruelty. Then commenced such a wholesale destruction of houses, corn-ricks, standing corn, as the terrible devastations of what some have called regular warfare could scarcely parallel. The sufferings of those who fled from

* Campbell's "Gertrude of Wyoming."

† "Gertrude of Wyoming," Mr. Campbell, in a note to the latter editions of his poem, says he was misled by popular accounts, and that Brandt was not present at Wyoming.

the scenes of devastation, to endure all the miseries of inhospitable woods, were almost as great as those of the victims of the Indian tomahawk. Other such scenes of havoc took place in back settlements.

The Annual Register of 1779, opens with a sentence that can scarcely be held as founded merely upon vain apprehensions: "The year of which we treat presented the most awful appearances of public affairs, which this country had perhaps beheld for many ages. . . . Mankind seemed to wait, with an aspect which at best bespoke indifference, for the event of that ruin which was expected to burst upon us." The writer proceeds to say, that "the expected evil and danger were less dreadful in the encounter than in the distant appearance." In that year Spain joined France in the alliance against Great Britain. On the 16th of June the king sent a message to parliament announcing that the Spanish minister had delivered a state-paper which amounted to a declaration of war. Invasion was expected; and a proclamation was issued, charging all civil and military authorities to remove horses, cattle, and provisions from the coast in case of a descent. An extraordinary measure was carried through parliament, by a suspension of the Standing Orders, to do away with all exemptions from impressment into the royal navy. Ships of the line were rotting in the harbour for want of sailors, it was affirmed—"Will you trust the existence of this country to the fate of a battle on shore?" An encampment of large bodies of militia was formed on Cox Heath. The spirit of the country was again roused, as when Spain threatened England in days of yore. Her fleet, combined with that of France, rode in the Channel, with as mighty a display as when Drake went out from Plymouth to encounter the galleons. The united fleet consisted of sixty-six sail of the line, with a large number of frigates, and smaller vessels. Sir Charles Hardy left Portsmouth with thirty-eight ships; and although the combined armament was insulting the coast, he could not venture on an action with a force so superior. But in avoiding an engagement he did good service in leading the enemy to pursue him; and thus diverting their object of landing an invading army. The stormy season was approaching whilst time was thus gained. The ships of both the hostile nations were in bad condition. A malignant disease had broken out amongst their crowded sailors and troops. The Spanish admiral declared to the French admiral, that he must return to his own ports. The French admiral chose the same prudent course. When the king opened the parliament in November, he exulted that the designs and attempts at invasion had, by the

blessing of Providence, been frustrated. Lord North in the debate on the Address, spoke with a British spirit that found a response in the national feelings. The combined powers of France and Spain "had fitted out a powerful armament; they appeared upon our coasts, it is true; they talked big, threatened a great deal, did nothing, and retired. It should be remembered that the enemy professed themselves to be acting on the offensive; we were as professedly acting on the defensive. They came with a declared intention to invade, we to resist such an attempt; they were therefore foiled, for they had not dared even to make the attempt. Their immense armaments paraded to no purpose; and their millions were spent in vain. Had they landed, and indeed he almost wished they had, their reception, he was confident, would have been such as would have added to their disgrace; and would have convinced them, that a British militia had spirit enough to defend their country, and repel invaders."

In May, 1779, Benjamin Franklin was accredited by the Congress as the sole representative of the United States at the court of France—their Minister Plenipotentiary. In a letter from Passy he describes his gracious reception by Louis XVI. at Versailles; and his constant weekly attendance at the royal levée. To a friend in America he says, "Perhaps few strangers in France have had the good fortune to be so universally popular."* The society and conversation of the French ladies he describes as extremely agreeable. But the energetic old man was occupied in more serious affairs than the enjoyment of a brilliant society, in which his brown cloth coat was a remarkable contrast to the velvet and embroidery of all around him. His abilities were constantly directed to the difficult task of raising money upon American credit and of employing it to organize attacks upon the coasts of Britain. Franklin's correspondence shows that he was the active agent in the employ and direction of John Paul Jones, who, with a little squadron in the American service, did considerable damage to British commerce, and produced no small amount of alarm, in 1779. The first notion was to fit out an expedition, in which the sea forces should be commanded by Jones, and the land forces by La Fayette. Franklin's instructions to his American captain refer to this expedition "as an introduction only to greater trusts and more extensive commands." The French government hesitated about this joint adventure; and finally Paul Jones sailed with three ships and a brigantine, and did surprising feats which justified his selection as a bold captain and a skilful seaman. What he was

* "Correspondence," vol. viii. p. 401.

encouraged to do may be collected from Franklin's letters. "It was intended to send him with some transports and troops to make descents in England. Had not the scheme been altered by a general one of a grand invasion, I know he would have endeavoured to put some considerable towns to a high ransom, or have burnt them. He sailed without the troops, but he nevertheless would have attempted Leith, and went into the Firth of Edinburgh with that intention, but a sudden hard gale of wind forced him out again." Franklin adds, that the burning of Fairfield and other towns by the British in America had demolished all his moderation. We may consider that Leith and perhaps Edinburgh were providentially saved by the "sudden hard gale of wind" from the fate which this unscrupulous rover had prepared for them. Sir Walter Scott, when a boy, was in Edinburgh when Jones came into the Firth; and "the capital of Scotland was menaced by three trifling sloops or brigs, scarce fit to have sacked a fishing-village." An old Highland chief, Stuart of Invernahyle, was the only man who thought of a feasible plan of resistance. "A steady and powerful west wind settled the matter." But Paul Jones had better work before him than sack and plunder. "Going north about," writes Franklin, "he fell in with a number of ships from the Baltic, convoyed by a fifty-gun ship and a twenty-four-gun frigate, both of which he took." These vessels were the *Serapis* and the *Scarborough*. The engagement was a desperate one; and the largest vessel of the American squadron, the *Bonhomme Richard*, sank two days after the action. "The three trifling sloops, or brigs," described by Scott, were in truth large vessels, formidably armed and well-manned. His two prizes were carried by Jones into a neutral port in Holland. The English captains, Pearson and Piercy, fought their vessels with the most desperate courage. The colours of the *Serapis* were not struck till two-thirds of her men were killed or wounded. Paul Jones, a native of Scotland, had been bred to the sea; had settled in Virginia; and had received a commission from Congress on the breaking out of the war.

The military operations in the Northern States of America, during 1779, were not of much importance with reference to the superiority of either army. There were successes on either side which are scarcely necessary to be detailed in our brief general history. Washington was doing every thing that a prudent commander could accomplish in the face of great difficulties. He was more apprehensive of the consequences of corrupt and evil management than of any struggle in the field. He writes in March to

general Warren, "Our conflict is not likely to cease so soon as every good man could wish. The measure of iniquity is not yet filled; and, unless we can return a little more to first principles, and act a little more upon patriotic ground, I do not know when it will, or what may be the issue of the contest." He complains of speculation, speculation, engrossing, which afford too glaring instances of its being the interest and desire of some to continue the war. He laments the depreciation of the currency. This depreciation had now gone beyond any example of European history in which the promises to pay of a government were treated as little better than waste-paper." "A waggon-load of money," wrote Washington, "will now scarcely purchase a waggon-load of provisions." He held that this depreciation, with the manifest proofs of speculation, stock-jobbing, and party-dissensions, kept the arms of Britain in America, and led the British government and their friends to believe that the Americans would be their own conquerors.

The inactivity of the British army in the Northern States was compensated by successes in the South. Towards the end of 1778, sir Henry Clinton despatched an expedition by sea to Georgia. Savannah was taken; and the province was reduced to submission. Georgia and South Carolina were occupied through the winter by British troops; the fertility of these countries affording a plentiful supply of stores. This occupation materially facilitated the success of the Southern campaign of 1780.

CHAPTER XIII.

Associations for redress of grievances.—Meetings in Yorkshire and other Counties.—Burke's proposals for Economical Reform.—Dunning's motion on the influence of the Crown.—Decreasing strength of the Opposition.—Protestant Associations in Scotland.—They extend to England.—Lord George Gordon.—Procession to Parliament.—Roman Catholic chapels burnt.—Newgate set on fire.—Lord Mansfield's House sacked.—The library burnt.—Continued riots.—A council called.—Wedderburn's opinion on the employment of military.—The riots stopped by military force.—Naval affairs.—The war in America.—Charleston taken by the British.—Lord Cornwallis.—His severities.—French armament under Rochambeau.—Treachery of Benedict Arnold.—Major André seized.—Verdict of a Council of Officers.—His execution.

THE internal affairs of the country in the year 1780 are, in many respects, as interesting and instructive as those of any year in our annals. England was, unquestionably, distinctly threatened with some great political convulsion. The obstinate persistence in the war with America had brought upon the country its natural consequences,—excessive taxation, and interruption to the usual course of profitable industry. Twenty years only had elapsed since the nation looked back upon a period of unexampled prosperity, and of signal triumph: of victory abroad and of tranquillity at home. The nation had then confidence in the directors of its affairs; regarded the parliament as the true representative of public opinion; and viewed the sovereign power, according to the principles of the Revolution, as the especial guardian of the freedom and happiness of the people. A young prince had come to the crown, with every apparent disposition to rule righteously and constitutionally; and yet, from the first year of his accession, a system of favouritism had surrounded the throne with a host of placemen, who were chosen to assert an invidious distinction between the interests of the king and the measures of the responsible servants of the State. During these twenty years a great change had come over the popular convictions. The parliament had become opposed to the people; and the executive power had grown out of harmony with the theory of the constitution, through the tendency to govern by the corruption of the parliament. The preponderating influence of a great aristocratic party had indeed been weakened, and in many essentials destroyed; but with that

weakness had come a proportionate weakness of the democratic element of the constitution. The time had arrived when the minority in parliament, whether Peers or Commoners, saw that, to renew their strength as a governing power, they must identify themselves more distinctly with the people. The abuses consequent upon the excessive number of sinecure offices, and of large pensions unsanctioned by parliamentary authority, called for Economical Reform. The scandalous proportion of members of the House of Commons returned for rotten boroughs demanded Reform in Parliament. A vast amount of public opinion was brought to bear upon these two points, in the form of Associations for the redress of grievances. During the Christmas recess a spirit burst forth in many of the most influential counties of England, to which there had probably been no parallel since the days of Hampden. Had the gross ignorance of large masses of the populace not taken the form of brutal riot, in a direction opposed to the progress of tolerant opinions, this spirit might have produced some great change in our representative system,—a change dangerous, because premature; unsubstantial, because an extended suffrage required a solid foundation of popular intelligence. Burke, in vindicating the scheme of Economical Reform which he advocated at that time, as a moderate concession to a just public demand, says of “the portentous crisis from 1780 to 1782,” that “it was one of the most critical periods in our annals. . . . Such was the temper of the public mind, that there was no madman, in his maddest ideas, and maddest projects, who might not count upon numbers to support his principles and execute his designs.”*

On the 8th of February, sir George Savile, the respected member for Yorkshire, presented to the House of Commons the Petition of a great meeting of the Gentlemen, Clergy, and Freeholders of his county, which was signed by eight thousand persons. “It was first moved,” said sir George, “in a meeting of six hundred gentlemen and upwards. In the hall where this petition was conceived there was more property than within the walls of this House.” He said that there was a committee appointed to correspond on the subject of the petition with the committees of other counties. The Yorkshire petition set forth, as the consequences of a most expensive and unfortunate war, a large addition to the national debt, heavy accumulation of taxes, a rapid decline of the trade, manufactures, and land-rents of the kingdom. It then came to the chief grievance: “Alarmed at the diminished resources and growing burdens of this country, and convinced that rigid frugality is now

* “Letter to a Noble Lord.”

indispensably necessary in every department of the State, your petitioners observe with grief, that notwithstanding the calamitous and impoverished condition of the nation, much public money has been improvidently squandered, and that many individuals enjoy sinecure places, efficient places with exorbitant emoluments, and pensions unmerited by public service, to a large and still increasing amount; whence the Crown has acquired a great and unconstitutional influence, which, if not checked, may soon prove fatal to the liberties of this country."

The great meeting in Yorkshire gave an example to the rest of England. Twenty-three counties adopted similar petitions, and appointed their corresponding committees. Motions for Economical Reform had been brought forward in the House of Lords before the recess; and Burke had given notice of the measure which he intended to propose. On the 11th of February he accomplished this intention, in the delivery of a speech which is amongst the master-pieces of English composition,—unsurpassed in lucidness of detail, force of reasoning, historical research, and gleams of wit and poetry, by any example of parliamentary rhetoric. The perusal of this speech will show how many gross abuses have been corrected during the eighty years that have elapsed; and, what is better, how much wiser and honester a spirit has arisen to govern the public expenditure in every department,—making it shame to fill an office without its duties, or to receive a pension without desert. Many of the details of reform treated of in this speech are now, happily, things of a past time. The royal household, whose manifold offices were derived from the feudal principle and the system of purveyance, is now conducted upon the same plan as that of a nobleman's establishment. The turnspit in the royal kitchen is no longer a member of parliament. The number of covers on the royal table is no longer determined by a Board of Green Cloth. Offices, whose very names sound strange to us, were then kept up for parliamentary influence alone. They are gone. Some great officers are attached to the royal person, as of old; though they are not perhaps retained upon the principle laid down by Burke, that, because "kings are fond of low company," it is of importance to provide such an establishment as will bring about the royal person a great number of the first nobility. General principles too often fall short in their practical application. Burke proposed to abolish the offices of master of the buck-hounds and harriers, as they answered no purpose of utility or of splendour. "It is not proper that great noblemen should be keepers of dogs, though they were the king's dogs." Many other courtly ap-

pointments are vanished. The master of the buck-hounds remains, and if the office is filled by a courteous gentleman and a bold rider, its utility is not too curiously investigated. Though some of the details of Burke's bill present evils no longer unreformed, his general principles of reform will always remain as a guide to honest administrators. Out of seven fundamental rules which he lays down, three, especially, will apply to all time; and, it may be feared, will never cease to require a vigilant application.

“That all jurisdictions which furnish more matter of expense, more temptation to oppression, or more means and instruments of corrupt influence, than advantage to justice or political administration, ought to be abolished.

“That all offices which bring more charge than proportional advantage to the State; that all offices which may be engrafted on others, uniting and simplifying their duties, ought, in the first case, to be taken away; and in the second, to be consolidated.

“That it is right to reduce every establishment, and every part of an establishment (as nearly as possible), to certainty, the life of all order and good management.”

Burke, in his truly statesmanlike speech upon Economical Reform, argued that a temperate reform is permanent, because it has a principle of growth. “Whenever we improve, it is right to leave room for a further improvement.” It is the recognition of this principle which has enabled us gradually to effect many improvements which Burke did not think ripe for advocating in his own day. He proposed to reform the crying abuses of the offices of Paymaster of the Forces and Treasurer of the Navy, each of which officers had a separate treasury, and derived large profits from the use of money which they retained in their hands. The first William Pitt, as we have seen, disdained such an irregular addition to the profits of place. His rival, Fox, and his successors, were not so scrupulous. Burke proposed to reduce the enormous profits of the Auditors of the Exchequer. In our own times such profits of patent places were made odious by the disinterested renunciation of lord Camden. Public opinion in our country is ultimately potential in effecting what corrupt influences resist. The philosophical reformer did not suggest depriving the Crown of its constitutional right of granting pensions. He proposed to limit the amount to a sum which would now be considered extravagant. He abstained from attempting even the reduction of exorbitant emoluments to efficient offices. He did not think the great efficient offices of the State overpaid. They were paid at a much higher rate than in our own time; and the question may now sometimes present itself to

dispassionate minds, whether they are not underpaid. The reasons which Burke then gave for not putting the service of the public to auction, and knocking it down to those who will execute it cheapest, is of wider application now, when larger expenses are attached to the holders of office with comparatively small salaries, than in days when statesmen in power might accumulate fortunes out of the profits of place. It is an honourable characteristic of public service in England that ambition and the lucre of gain have ceased to go together in rendering power attractive. An honourable and fair payment for service is grudged by none but the wildest self-styled reformers. Burke did not go too far when he said that, "if men were willing to serve in such situations without salary, they ought not to be permitted to do it. Ordinary service must be secured by the motives to ordinary integrity."

Burke's proposals were so temperate, and so incapable of being refuted by argument, that lord North offered no opposition to the reception of the first Bill which was founded upon them. Other members were ready to go further than Burke. Sir George Savile, on the 15th of February, moved for an account of all places for life or lives, whether held by patent or otherwise; and also for an account of all subsisting pensions, granted by the Crown, during pleasure or otherwise. The motion was opposed by lord Nugent, upon the ground that many reduced gentry enjoyed his majesty's private bounty, and would not like their names to be made public—"many lady Bridgets, lady Marys, and lady Jennys." Lord North proposed an amendment, limiting the account to pensions payable at the Exchequer. The whole amount payable under the name of pensions, he said, did not exceed £50,000. To publish a list would "prepare a feast for party-writers, and furnish materials for magazines and newspapers." Happy is the government that does not shrink from the eye of magazines and newspapers! Lord North carried his amendment only by a majority of two in a full House. The Session was a series of parliamentary conflicts, some conducted with personal acrimony which involved the ridiculous arbitrement of duelling. A Bill was carried in the House of Commons against contractors sitting in Parliament, which was rejected in the House of Lords. Burke's own Bill encountered every obstruction in its progress through Committee; and the Session was concluded without any practical result of the great statesman's incontrovertible exposition of abuses which agitated the minds of a whole people.

The 6th of April is described as a day which "was to distin-

guish the present Session from every other since the Revolution." * It was a day that might have brought back to some persons, whether of those who dreaded or those who hoped for change, recollections of the Long Parliament. Another, and perhaps a fiercer, conflict between prerogative and the people might have appeared at hand. Charles Fox harangued the petitioners of Westminster in the Hall; and resolutions were carried for annual parliaments, and an addition of a hundred knights of the shire to the representation. Tumults were expected; and bodies of guards were in readiness in the neighbourhood of the Houses. Tumult there was none. The Order of the Day was for taking into consideration the petitions of the people of England—petitions which were so numerously signed as to occupy "such an immense quantity of parchment, as seemed rather calculated to bury than to cover the Speaker's table." † In a Committee of the whole House Mr. Dunning rose. The general prayer of the petitions was for a reform in the public expenditure; and for limiting and restraining the increasing influence of the Crown. He passed a splendid eulogium upon Mr. Burke's Bill, which, when first proposed, received the approbation of every individual in that House. A different feeling was soon indicated—a temper and disposition which originated out of the House, and not within those walls. Ministers have now said that the influence of the Crown is not too much; that it is not competent for the House to inquire into the expenditure of the Civil List. He would bring both these points fairly to issue. He first moved, "That it is the opinion of this Committee that the influence of the Crown has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished." The resistance offered to the motion was feeble and indirect. One of its immediate consequences was to disturb lord North from his usual placidity. He accused the Opposition of pursuing measures likely to overturn the Constitution. There was immense confusion, amidst the cry of "take down the words." The motion was carried by 233 against 215. Another motion, that it is competent to the House to examine into and correct abuses in the expenditure of the Civil List, as well as in every other branch of the public revenue, was agreed to without a division. A third motion, that it was the duty of the House to provide a remedy for the abuses complained of in the petitions, was also agreed to. Contrary to the ordinary usage, the resolutions were reported before the House adjourned. Only nine county members voted with the government. "The exultation and triumph on one side of the House was only equalled by the

* "Annual Register," 1780, p. 164.

† *Ibid.*

evident depression and dismay which prevailed on the side of administration. . . . The system of the Court was shaken to its foundations."* The king the next day expressed his belief to lord North that the Resolutions could not be regarded as personal to the minister, and adds, "I wish I did not feel at whom they were personally levelled." On the 18th of April, Dunning made another motion, that it is incompatible with the independence of parliament that persons holding certain offices about the Court should sit in Parliament. This was carried only by a majority of 215 to 213. The king exults that "things begin to wear a better aspect. Lord North shall see that there is at least one person willing to preserve unspoiled the most beautiful Constitution that ever was framed." The minority rapidly gained strength, and soon became a large majority. Abstract propositions had been carried. The practical measures which were to render them of effect were rejected. On the 18th of May, the most important clauses in Burke's Bill were lost in Committee. The king has triumphed. "You cannot doubt," he writes to lord North, "that I received with pleasure the account of Mr. Burke's Bill having been defeated." His majesty was looking to a new Parliament to continue the abuses that were odious to the nation, or, as it appeared to the royal mind, "to keep the present Constitution of the country in its pristine lustre."

According to the theory of a narrow-minded king, the pristine lustre of the Constitution would have been shorn of its beams, if fifty useless places had not been held by members of parliament, to do the bidding of the Court without the slightest reference to the interests of the nation. According to the theory of a large section of a somewhat intolerant public, the Protestant succession would have lost the best part of its value, if English Roman Catholics were allowed to hold property in land; if their spiritual instructors were not subject to the penalties of treason or felony; if a Protestant son could no longer eject his Papist father from his estate. These severities of the Statutes of the tenth and eleventh of William III. had ceased to be applied; but they existed as a temptation to informers to extort money from the timid, and as a stigma upon the loyal and peaceful. In 1778, upon the motion of Savile, seconded by Dunning, these obsolete penalties were repealed, with the approbation of men of all parties. The Acts of William III., dating before the Union with Scotland, did not affect the position of Roman Catholics there; and it was subsequently contemplated to repeal a Statute of the Scottish Parliament, which was as odious to right-thinking persons as the enactments of the

* "Annual Register," p. 171.

days when Popery was the great terror of England. The proceedings of the parliament in 1778 stirred up the fanaticism of Edinburgh and Glasgow at the beginning of 1779. Riots took place in Edinburgh. Houses of reputed Roman Catholics were assailed and damaged. A house where Catholics assembled for worship was set on fire. Those who by speech or writing advocated freedom of opinion, were threatened with vengeance; the brutal zealots selecting as one of the objects of their hostility their distinguished countryman, the historian Robertson. A Protestant Association and Committee was set up in Scotland; and a silly nobleman, lord George Gordon, was chosen as its President. This fanatic had sat in Parliament for several years, raving and gesticulating when any debate excited his monomania. Contemptible as he was in intellect, he acquired some consideration from the position he had obtained as the leader of a body of people, large in numbers and dangerous in their enthusiasm. The Protestant Associations of Scotland had multiplied in England. On the first day of the Session in November, 1779, lord George Gordon declared that the indulgences given to Papists had alarmed the whole country. He did not speak his own sentiments only. Government should find a hundred and twenty thousand men at his back, who would avow and support them, and whose warmth of spirit was still greater than his own.

The contempt in which the public character of lord George Gordon was regarded appears to have shut the eyes of the government to the danger of his proceedings. In the House of Commons he was viewed as a silly bore. He was complimented as being "a staunch Whig, an enemy to the American war, and a friend to the liberties of the people;" but the same laudatory member said, "he could not bear to see the noble lord render himself a laughing-stock and a make-game to the whole house. He had got a twist in his head."* He was endured, probably, from his high connexion, being the brother of the duke of Gordon; and for this, we must presume, the king had patience to hear him indoctrinate his majesty with a pamphlet, the reading of which went on till night put an end to the audience. The twist in lord George's head did not the less fit him to be a demagogue. He calculated that a display of physical force would serve his cause better than argument in Parliament. On the 29th of May he called a public meeting at Coachmaker's Hall; where he harangued a great audience about the dangers of Popery; and proposed a Resolution that the whole body of the Protestant Association should meet in St. George's

* Mr. Turner—April 11—"Parliamentary Debates," vol. xxi. col. 387.

Fields on the following Friday, to accompany him to the House of Commons to deliver their Petition. If less than twenty thousand persons should attend him, he would not present it. He proposed that they should assemble in four divisions—the Protestants of London the first, of Westminster the second, of Southwark the third, and the Scots resident in the metropolis the fourth; and that every real Protestant should come with a blue cockade on his hat. On Friday, the 2nd of June, a vast assemblage was gathered together in St. George's Fields—fifty or sixty thousand persons according to most accounts. Their leader marshalled them in three columns,—one to march over London Bridge, another over Blackfriars Bridge, and a third over Westminster Bridge, headed by himself. At half-past two this formidable body was assembled in Palace Yard, and intercepted all the avenues of Parliament. The quiet which had distinguished their march now took a more congenial attitude of insult to every obnoxious Peer or Commoner. They filled the lobbies; and twice attempted to force the doors of each House. The fanatic rose in his place, and presented the petition, praying for a repeal of the Act passed in favour of Roman Catholics. He moved that the petition be referred to a Committee of the whole House. This necessarily produced a debate. For several hours the members were unable to go out, the lobby being filled with a furious mob. Lord George went several times to the top of the gallery stairs; harangued the people, telling them that their petition was likely to meet with ill success; and pointed out to their vengeance such members as had spoken against its consideration. Expostulation was in vain. At last, colonel Gordon, a near relative, went up to him, and said, “My lord George, do you intend to bring your rascally adherents into the House of Commons? If you do, the first man of them that enters—I will plunge my sword not into him, but into your body.” A party of horseguards at length arrived, with a magistrate at their head; and eventually the lobby was cleared, and the rabble went home. The House then divided, six for the petition, and a hundred and ninety-two against it. During this scene, the terror in the House of Lords was kept up by the constant arrival of Peers announcing the insults to which some of their body were exposed in the streets, and exhibiting the outrages which had been inflicted upon themselves. Dishevelled hair, clothes covered with mud, proclaimed that the hootings in Palace-Yard were not those of a good-tempered English mob. The disgusting excesses of that day had an influence, and not altogether an unnatural influence, upon the political condition of the British people for many years. Most inopport-

tunely, whilst the strongest evidence of popular ignorance was before the eyes of Parliament, the duke of Richmond, according to notice, rose to introduce a Bill, for declaring and restoring the natural, inalienable, and equal right of all the Commons of Great Britain (infants, persons of insane mind, and criminals incapacitated by law, only excepted) to vote in the election of their representatives in Parliament; for regulating the mode and manner of such elections; and for restoring annual Parliaments. The duke said that he found himself exceedingly unhappy that he should have to trouble their lordships with a motion in the situation in which they were at present. He made a speech, necessarily under great embarrassment; for the practical answer to his proposition was the tumult in Palace Yard. The men who were to exercise the natural, inalienable, and equal right of voting in the election of their representatives, were interrupting the freedom of debate, demanding the re-enactment of barbarous laws, at the bidding of a madman. The Houses adjourned without further violence, on that night, in the neighbourhood of Parliament. But the spirit of bigotry took another direction. The ministers of Sardinia and Bavaria had their chapels sanctioned by law and the custom of nations. These were set on fire, and their fittings plundered and destroyed. Thirteen of the rioters were apprehended, upon the arrival of the military, and were taken to Newgate.

Saturday, the 3rd, was a day of comparative tranquillity. But busy agents of mischief were at work; and on Sunday afternoon, Catholic chapels in Moorfields were beset, and their altars and pulpits were torn down and burnt. On the Monday, the supineness of the magistrates, and the want of any efficient system of police, encouraged the No-Popery fanatics—joined by the idlers, the drunkards, and the thieves that congregate in a great city—to renewed attacks upon religious edifices and private houses. The indifference of men high in office to these continued outrages was incomprehensible. Dr. Johnson writes to Mrs. Thrale: "On Monday, Mr. Strahan, who had been insulted, spoke to lord Mansfield, who had, I think, been insulted too, of the licentiousness of the populace; and his lordship treated it as a very slight irregularity."* On that Monday the house of sir George Savile was gutted. The king writes to lord North that he had given directions to the two Secretaries of State to take measures for preventing riot on the morrow. His majesty does not appear to have contemplated any immediate danger; for he says, "This tumult must be got the better of, or it will encourage designing men to use it as a precedent

* Boswell's "Life," ed. 1848, p. 648.

for assembling the people on other occasions." On Tuesday, the two Houses again met. Detachments of guards prevented any great outbreak in the neighbourhood of Parliament; though one of the ministers, lord Stormont, was injured by the mob. Burke got into their hands; but his courageous remonstrances produced the effect by which a high spirit generally secures its ascendancy over an English multitude, ignorant but not blood-thirsty. The House of Commons agreed in a Resolution that they would take the petitions into consideration as soon as the tumults should subside. There was no appearance that they would subside quickly. The more lawless and desperate now came forth in greater numbers; and began to regard London as a city to be sacked. About six o'clock on that summer evening a fierce multitude appeared in front of Newgate, and demanded of Mr. Akerman, the keeper of the prison, the release of the rioters who had been committed for the destruction of the chapels of the foreign ambassadors. Their demand was firmly refused; and then Mr. Akerman's private house was set on fire. The present building of Newgate was then only partially completed. The greatest number of the prisoners were confined in the wretched cells of the old prison, which had existed in the time of Charles II. It was, therefore, easily assailed by a furious mob, who thundered at the entrances with sledge hammers and pickaxes; and then dragged out the furniture of the keeper's house, to pile the tables and chairs against the prison doors and set them on fire. A way was thus soon forced. The whole building was quickly in a blaze. The felons without rushed through the flames to release the felons within; and that night there were three hundred criminals loose in the streets. The prison of Clerkenwell was also broken open, and the prisoners released. The character of the riots was now altered. The objects of attack were the administrators of the law. The houses of three metropolitan magistrates were sacked. Midnight came; when a yell of havoc was raised before the house of the Chief Justice in Bloomsbury Square; and, leaving scarcely time for lord and lady Mansfield to escape, the frantic miscreants broke in, threw furniture, pictures, books, manuscripts, into the street, where they made a fire which they fed with these valuables, many of them too precious for any money estimate of their value. There perished the law library of the greatest lawyer of his age; enriched with his own notes; and with that library was destroyed the correspondence of half a century. The mansion itself became a ruin in this fiery havoc. A detachment of guards was at hand; but the officer did not dare to act without the orders of a magistrate, and the magistrates, it was given in evidence, had all run away.

“Wednesday, the 7th, was the fatal day.”* Walpole writes to a friend, “You may like to know one is alive, after a massacre, and the conflagration of a capital—the most horrible sight I ever beheld, and which, for six hours together, I expected to end in half the town being reduced to ashes.”† The first great operation of the morning was to attack to Bank of England. Two attempts were made to force an entrance; but the building was well guarded by parties of soldiers, and the assailants retreated upon the first volley. The shops were shut. The terrified inhabitants of the great thoroughfares chalked “No Popery” on their shutters. The mob appeared to have the lives and property of a population of a million wholly in their power. Yet their numbers were not everywhere formidable in comparison with the mischief they effected. Johnson observed not more than a hundred men plundering the Session House in the Old Bailey—leisurely, in full security, as men lawfully employed. This “full security,” which Johnson imputes to “the cowardice of a commercial city,” was really to be ascribed to the extraordinary timidity of the king’s responsible advisers. London and the neighbourhood were full of soldiers, who had been sent for from distant parts. But there was hesitation about their employment. There was a prevailing notion—a very proper scruple under ordinary circumstances—that the military could not act except under the direction of a magistrate; and there was a mistaken belief that they could not fire until an hour had expired after the reading of the Riot Act. The king himself called a Council on Wednesday; and submitted the question to them as to the construction of the Riot Act. In 1768 verdicts had been found by juries against officers and soldiers who had put down riots with the loss of life. The Council would not decide upon a doubtful point of law. The king turned to Wedderburn, the attorney-general, and desired his opinion. He immediately declared that military force might be exercised, if no other means of restraint are effectual, when a tumultuous assemblage are engaged in committing a felony, such as setting fire to a house. This opinion was subsequently confirmed by lord Mansfield in the House of Lords, upon a debate as to the employment of that military power which had saved the capital: “The military have been called in, and very wisely called in, not as soldiers but as citizens: no matter whether their coats be red or brown, they have been called in aid of the law.” The opinion of Wedderburn satisfied the doubts of the Council. The king declared that to have been his own opinion; and a Proclama-

* Walpole’s “Last Journals.”

† Letter to Cole.

tion was immediately issued, commanding all householders to keep within doors, with their servants and apprentices, and announcing that the king's officers were now authorized to repress the riots by an immediate exercise of force. The decision did not come an hour too soon. On that evening, when every decent citizen was hurrying home to obey the proclamation, London was on fire in thirty-six different places. "One might see," says Johnson, "the glare of conflagration fill the sky from many parts. The sight was dreadful." The most terrible scene was in Holborn, where the distillery of Mr. Langdale, a Roman Catholic, was set on fire; and the unrectified spirits pouring into the streets were lapped up by the wretched crowds of men, women, and children, who perished in helpless drunkenness amidst liquid fire or falling timbers. The military poured into every street where there was tumult. If the command of the officer to disperse was not obeyed, they fired at once. Through that terrible night sleep was banished from a metropolis wholly unused to scenes of anarchy. The next morning all was quiet. Nothing remained to do but to bury the dead, to attend the wounded, and to fill the remaining gaols with miserable prisoners.

It is unnecessary for us to pursue the painful history of these disgraceful riots into the subsequent details, which afforded abundant matter for the meagre newspapers of the time. Lord George Gordon was committed to the Tower on a charge of high treason; and, being tried early in the following year, was so successfully defended by Erskine, then rising into high reputation, that the jury returned a verdict of acquittal. Of the miserable rioters, a hundred and thirty-five were tried in Middlesex and Surrey, of whom about half were convicted, and twenty-one were executed. The Session of Parliament was approaching to a close. Matters of the greatest importance had been agitated without any practical results. Proposals for Economical Reform, which had been welcomed at the beginning of the Session, were rejected or frittered away during its progress. Parliamentary Reform came to be regarded as an impossible theory. The contemporary historian describes this period with a calm judgment: "It may be said with confidence, that so great a number of important affairs were never agitated in any one Session. The riot, in the close, threw a general damp upon all endeavours whatever for reformation, however unconnected with its particular object. Popular fury seemed, for that time at least, the greatest of all possible evils. Administration then gathered, and afterwards procured, no small degree of power, from a tumult which appeared to threaten the subversion of all govern-

ment." * The Parliament was prorogued on the 8th of July; and on the 1st of September it was dissolved.

During the domestic excitement that had lasted through the Session of Parliament, the external affairs of the country were regarded with comparative indifference. The dread of invasion had passed away. The war with America appeared to drag on without any decisive results. Gibraltar was invested by the Spaniards; but the siege had not as yet assumed the interesting character which the resolute defence of the key of the Mediterranean subsequently commanded. The naval ascendancy of Great Britain was, however, manifested in a way that gave the nation confidence that its ships could be well manned and bravely led to battle. Sir George Rodney, on the 16th of January, engaged the Spanish admiral off Cape St. Vincent, and obtained a complete victory, having captured four ships of the line, and destroyed four others. He then proceeded to the relief of Gibraltar. Sailing to the West Indies, he there encountered a combined French and Spanish fleet, but was unable to bring them to a general engagement. But the vigilance of the Spanish government inflicted a severe blow upon our mercantile marine. Knowing when the East India and West India fleets would be off the Azores, with a convoy of only two ships of war, a powerful squadron intercepted them, and carried sixty sail, laden with valuable merchandize, as prizes into Cadiz. The Dutch and English governments were beginning to squabble about violations of neutrality, which the next year gave occasion to a war with Holland. The maritime claims of England produced also an "Armed Neutrality" between Russia, Sweden, and Denmark, which threatened danger. At this period it would have been difficult to affirm that the government of George III. had a friend in Europe.

We have now to return to the events of the war in America. At the end of December, 1779, general Clinton, with a force of five thousand men, sailed from New York in the fleet of admiral Arbutnot, for the purpose of investing Charleston, in South Carolina. The American forces within this important place were under the command of general Lincoln; who, with the assistance of French engineers, had constructed some formidable defences. The progress of the expedition was delayed by bad weather. It was the first of April before the British army broke ground before Charleston. The siege was pursued with great vigour and ability, under the direction of Clinton, who had detached lord Cornwallis, with a large force, to cut off the communication between the garrison and

* "Annual Register," 1780, p. 280*.

the interior. An assault was contemplated ; but on the 12th of May, Lincoln capitulated. The surrender of six thousand men, with four hundred pieces of cannon, and large magazines, was an important triumph for the British commanders, and gave a renewed spirit to the war. General Clinton in June returned to New York, leaving lord Cornwallis in command. He had only four thousand regular troops to defend Charleston, to contend against a probable invasion of the province, and to repress a spirit of disaffection amongst the inhabitants. It is to be regretted that he considered it within the line of his duty to make severe examples of those Americans who, from those shifting influences of fear and hope which mark such contests, deserted the royal cause for which they had engaged their services. The laws of war certainly justified the punishment of desertion ; but the peculiar circumstances of this war called for the exercise of great forbearance, except in cases of signal treachery. The American army which was approaching Charleston was under the command of general Gates. The vanguards of the two armies became engaged at Camden on the 16th of August, when the Americans sustained a complete defeat. Some of the prisoners taken in this battle were hanged, they having manifested their change of opinion by having British protections on their persons. Death was denounced against all militia-men who, having served in the British armies, had joined the revolutionists. Estates were threatened to be sequestered of those who had opposed the British interests in the province. American citizens of Charleston were forcibly removed on board ship to St. Augustine, in Florida. Complaint was made of this proceeding ; and Cornwallis thus defends it : " I have only to say that the insolence of their behaviour, the threats with which they, in the most daring manner, endeavoured to intimidate our friends ; the infamous falsehoods which they propagated through the town and country, and the correspondence which they constantly kept up with the enemy, rendered it indispensably necessary that they should be either closely confined or sent out of the province." *

In a letter to Clinton of the 29th of August, Cornwallis details how he had ordered militia-men, who had been enrolled and then revolted, to be hung up. † He makes constant complaints to American generals of their severities. Washington writes a letter of remonstrance against the severities of Cornwallis, which he addresses to Clinton ; and Clinton replies, that it has been his invariable desire to soften the horrors of war, as it was the desire of every officer in his majesty's service ; " but proper punishments upon guilty per-

* " Correspondence of Cornwallis," vol. i. p. 72.

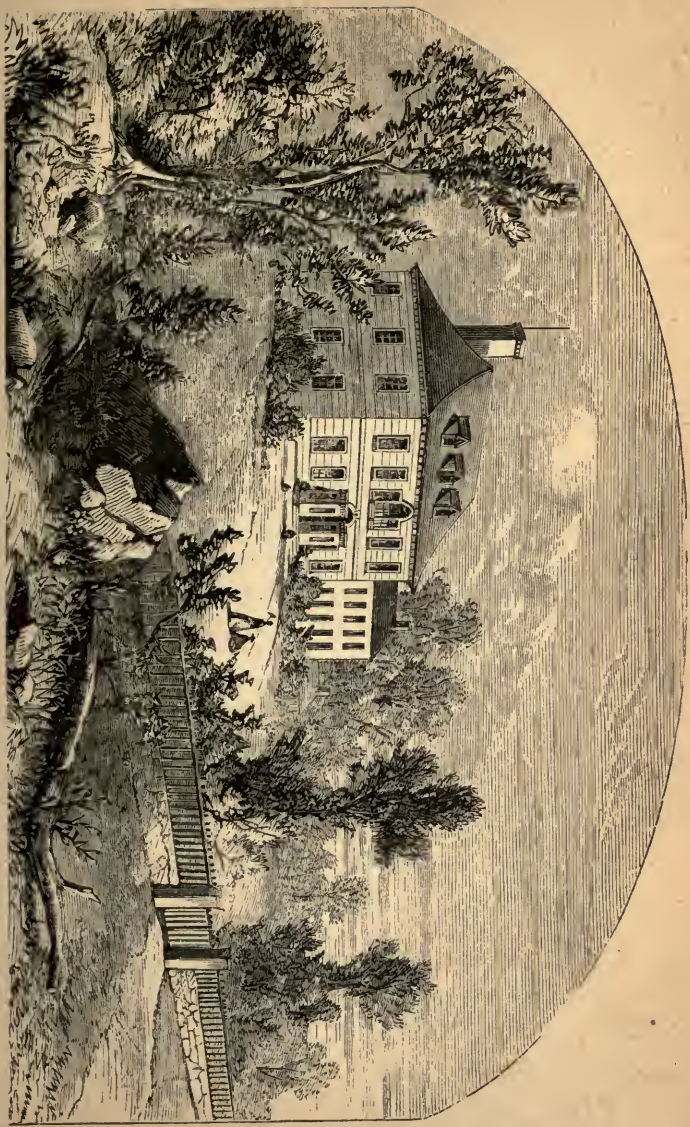
† *Ibid.* p. 61.

sons may become sometimes necessary." * Sir Henry takes rather a high tone at the notion of any remonstrance being addressed to him: "I desire to conclude this subject by informing you, sir, that I esteem myself accountable for my public conduct to his majesty the king, to my country, and my own conscience." Lord Rawdon, afterwards lord Moira, who commanded a post in connection with the main army, appears to have gone somewhat beyond the proper bounds of punishment for guilty persons. He offered a reward of ten guineas to the inhabitants of the country if they would bring in the head of any deserter, and five guineas if they would bring him in alive. He justifies his measure as being merely intended to terrify. During the war in the Southern States the severities practised by both parties were a proof that embittered feelings on both sides would endure far too long for the restoration of a cordial amity, whatever might be the issue of the war. The word "retaliation" was of too frequent use by those in command; and Cornwallis himself saw that the contest was assuming a character in which it would "become truly savage." After various encounters, each of the Southern armies went into winter-quarters.

Until the summer of 1780 the British and American armies in the Central States were comparatively inactive. Washington had to encounter the greatest difficulties in the maintenance of his troops. During the absence of Clinton the royalist forces were not strong enough to attempt any important movement. The prospect was changed by the arrival in July, off Rhode Island, of a French armament of six thousand men, under the command of the comte de Rochambeau. A commission of lieutenant-general in the French service had been sent to Washington, and the French troops were to be under his orders. This great reinforcement of the Americans landed in Rhode Island. There were various delays which prevented Clinton attacking them. But a considerable addition to the fleet under admiral Arbuthnot having arrived from England, the French troops were effectually blockaded in their position at Newport, and their purpose of combined operations with Washington was prevented. The two generals, however, arranged a meeting at Hartford, in Connecticut; Greene having the command of the American army during the temporary absence of Washington.

Benedict Arnold, who had done such signal service against the British in Canada, had, in his capacity of chief in Philadelphia, after that city had been evacuated by Clinton, been guilty of some

* "Correspondence of Cornwallis," vol. i. p. p. 58.



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irregularity for which he had been reprimanded by a court-martial. He was dissatisfied with Congress; and the French alliance was distasteful to him. Washington recommended his appointment to the charge of West Point, and other important posts, commanding the Hudson; and at West Point he was stationed in August. He had, long previously, opened a secret correspondence with sir Henry Clinton; in which he proposed to join the royal army, and give possession of the forts and their garrisons under his orders. The treacherous overture was accepted, and all honour and advantage promised to the traitor. The correspondence was conducted on the part of Clinton by major John André, the adjutant-general of the army, who signed his letters "John Anderson." Arnold adopted the signature of "Gustavus." A meeting between the correspondents was proposed to take place during the time when Washington had gone to confer with Rochambeau. Clinton consented, warning the ardent young officer against entering the American lines, carrying papers, or assuming any disguise.

On the night of the 21st of September, André went up the Hudson in the *Vulture* sloop of war, and was conveyed in a boat to the place appointed for his rendezvous with Arnold. It was on the western bank, on the neutral ground. The conference lasted till the dawn; when, to complete their arrangements, André was persuaded to accompany Arnold to a house within the American lines. When his business was finished, and he went to the river to be conveyed on board the sloop, he found that it had been compelled to drop down the Hudson nearer New York. He returned; received a pass from Arnold, under his assumed name of John Anderson; changed his uniform for plain clothes; and did the other dangerous thing against which he was expressly cautioned—he received papers from Arnold, explaining the state of the fort at West Point. Having crossed the river, with the intention of proceeding on horseback to New York, he had passed securely through the American lines, and was again on neutral ground, when he was seized by three men of the American militia. He was conducted to their commander colonel Jameson. The mode in which Arnold was informed of the capture of André does not very clearly appear, the narratives being somewhat conflicting; but, upon learning the event, Arnold saw the immediate necessity of his own escape; and getting on board the sloop which was to have secured safety to André, he reached the British quarters at New York. Two days after, Washington arrived at Arnold's house, and learnt the news of his absence and his defection.

On the return of Washington to his camp on the 28th he found

André there under arrest. He had previously received a letter from the prisoner, avowing his name and rank. The case was immediately referred to a court of general officers, fourteen in number. Twelve of these were Americans, with whom La Fayette and Steuben were associated. The deportment of the prisoner was altogether consistent with the manliness of a British officer, and his own sense of honour. He would commit no other person. He would resort to no subterfuge to defend himself. Steuben, it is reported, was exceedingly afflicted at what he considered the inevitable result. "It was impossible," said the old German, "to save him. He put us to no proof; but in an open, manly manner, confessed everything but a premeditated design to deceive."* The verdict of the council of officers was that major André ought to be considered as a spy from the enemy; and that, agreeably to the law and usage of nations, it was their opinion he ought to suffer death. Before the inquiry took place, Clinton had addressed a letter to Washington demanding André's release, on the ground that he had gone ashore with a flag of truce sent by Arnold, and when arrested was under the protection of a pass which Arnold had authority to give. Washington informed sir Henry of the decision to which the court had come. A deputation was then sent to the American head-quarters, who were received by Greene, the president of the court; but their arguments, and offers to exchange any prisoner that might be selected, were unavailing. Washington confirmed the sentence that the brave, enthusiastic, accomplished officer should die the death of a felon. André requested to die as a soldier. To that request no answer was given. He made up his mind, as expressed in a touching letter to sir Henry Clinton, for any fate to which an honest zeal for the king's service might have devoted him. On the 2nd of October that execution took place under the warrant of Washington, which is held by a very just and right-minded historian, as "by far the greatest, and perhaps the only, blot in his most noble career."† We are constrained to dissent from this opinion; but we prefer to rest our judgment upon another authority than our own. We extract the following passage from a brief memoir of André, published in one of the earliest miscellanies that was addressed to the growing power to read amongst the humbler classes:—

"At the period when the event took place, a torrent of indignation burst forth against Washington, who was charged with cold malignity, in thus sacrificing a meritorious officer, in a manner so unworthy of his character. This is the tone of feeling which

* "Life of Steuben," p. 290.

† Lord Mahon's "History," vol. vii. p. 106.

dictated Anna Seward's monody to his memory, and filled the newspapers of the day with every violent epithet. It is to be regretted that some of our historians have adopted this view of the transaction. But highly as we estimate the claims of our lamented countryman to the gratitude of this nation, we must acquit Washington of all injustice towards him. Major André fell a sacrifice to that ardent zeal which animated his whole conduct, and to the ill-advice which he received from Arnold. Against his own better judgment and intentions, he assumed a disguise in name and dress, and took charge of secret papers within the enemy's lines, which distinctly fixed upon him the character of a spy, and subjected him to all the perils of discovery. His letter to sir Henry Clinton bears witness to the personal kindness he received from Washington, who doubtless gave no reply to his last request, in order to save his feelings the pain of a refusal. Had that general consented to change the mode of his death, he would have abandoned the principle upon which his fate was determined. The critical posture of affairs at that moment compelled the American chief to avail himself of an event so important to his future success. The strong measure he adopted was designed to show that the contest must be decided by force of arms—that he had thrown away the scabbard—and that he was resolved to extinguish at a blow those intrigues by which his former operations had been betrayed. As the success of major André's confederacy with Arnold would probably have destroyed the last hope of the Revolutionists, so the terror produced by his execution, and the timely discovery of Arnold's defection, ultimately led to the independence of the United States."†

* "Plain Englishman," vol. ii. 1821. This periodical was jointly conducted by Mr. Locker, the secretary of Greenwich Hospital, and by the author of the "Popular History." Mr. Locker was selected, as the friend of the three sisters of major André, to attend on the 28th of November, 1821, as their representative, when the remains of their brother, disinterred in America, were placed in a vault in Westminster Abbey, near the cenotaph which had been erected to his memory by command of George III. The memoir of André, containing the passage we quote, was written by Mr. Locker immediately after the ceremony which he had attended.

CHAPTER XIV.

Elections of 1780.—Burke rejected for Bristol.—War with Holland.—French attack upon Jersey.—Capture of St. Eustatius by Rodney.—Privateering.—Action off the Dogger Bank.—Difficulties of Washington's army.—Mutinies.—Cornwallis in the Carolinas.—He is defeated at Cowpens.—His victory at Guilford.—Cornwallis marches into Virginia.—Fleet of De Grasse arrives in the Chesapeake.—Washington's march to Virginia.—Cornwallis fortifies York Town.—He is besieged, and his supplies cut off.—He capitulates.—Surrender of the British army.—The disastrous news received in London.

THE new Parliament assembled on the 1st of November, 1780. The elections had, in some degree, furnished a test of the popular feeling, in the choice of their members by large communities. They had certainly not manifested that the opinion of commercial cities, represented by that very ill-compounded body of voters called freemen, was favourable to the growth of a just and liberal policy. Edmund Burke was rejected by Bristol, after having served that flourishing emporium of trade for six years. The sentiment against him was so decided that he could not even venture to go to the poll. What were the public crimes imputed to him? First, that he had voted for Bills which removed some of the barbarous restrictions upon the trade of Ireland. It was in vain that he had told his constituents, whilst this measure of relief was depending in 1778, that "trade is not a limited thing; as if the objects of mutual demand and consumption could not stretch beyond the bounds of our jealousies;"* that England and Ireland might flourish together; that everything that is got by another is not taken from ourselves. Secondly, it was charged against the member for Bristol, that he had supported a Bill for reforming the law process concerning imprisonment for debt; and thus had endeavoured to mitigate some of the frightful evils of a system under which a debtor might be imprisoned for life at the bidding of an inexorable creditor, unless relieved by those occasional acts of grace "which turned loose upon the public three or four thousand naked wretches, corrupted by the habits, debased by the ignominy, of a prison."† It was in his speech to the electors, in defending his maintenance of the principle that "the counting-house has no alliance with the gaol," that Burke pronounced his splendid eulogy on Howard;

* "Two Letters to Gentlemen in Bristol."

† "Speech at Bristol."

“ He has visited all Europe,—not to survey the sumptuousness of palaces, or the stateliness of temples ; not to make accurate measurements of the remains of ancient grandeur, nor to form a scale of the curiosity of modern art ; not to collect medals, or to collate manuscripts ;—but to dive into the depths of dungeons ; to plunge into the infection of hospitals ; to survey the mansions of sorrow and pain ; to take the gauge and dimensions of misery, depression, and contempt ; to remember the forgotten, to attend to the neglected, to visit the forsaken, and to compare and collate the distresses of all men in all countries.” The third charge of the citizens of Bristol against their representative was his support of sir George Savile’s Bill for the relief of the Roman Catholics from the penal laws—that wise and politic measure which produced the riots of 1780. Burke’s manly exposure of the cowardice which argued that the Act of Relief ought not to have been passed, in deference to Protestant prejudices, is an example of the mode in which honest statesmen ought to encounter popular delusions. The spirit which dictated the peroration of his speech to the electors is worthy of the imitation of the highest and the humblest in rank or talent who aspire to be legislators : “ I do not here stand before you accused of venality, or of neglect of duty. It is not said that, in the long period of my service, I have, in a single instance, sacrificed the slightest of your interests to my ambition, or to my fortune. It is not alleged that, to gratify any anger, revenge of my own or of my party, I have had a share in wronging or oppressing any description of men, or any one man in any description. No ! The charges against me are all of one kind, that I have pushed the principles of general justice and benevolence too far ; further than a cautious policy would warrant ; and further than the opinions of many would go along with me. In every accident which may happen through life,—in pain, in sorrow, in depression and distress—I will call to mind this accusation, and be comforted.”

The elections were generally favourable to the Court. The riots of London had spread terror through the country. Opposition to the measures of government, conducted legally and peacefully, was regarded by many of the rich and most of the timid as encouragement to the outrages of ignorant multitudes. Although a hundred and thirteen new members were returned to this Parliament, there were few expensive contests, especially for counties. Of the new members, there were several young men whose names afterwards became famous. Wilberforce was returned for Hull, by a corrupt expenditure of eight or nine thousand pounds.* Pitt

* “ Life of Wilberforce,” by his sons, vol. i. p. 15.

sat for the close borough of Appleby, having unsuccessfully contested the University of Cambridge. Sheridan was elected for Stafford.

The ministry, as might be expected from the result of the elections, had acquired a firmer position. On the 25th of January a royal message announced a rupture with Holland, the reasons of which were set forth in a manifesto. An amendment to the Address in support of the war was rejected by large majorities in both houses. Burke, having been returned for the borough of Malton, brought forward his motion for the regulation of the Civil List, which had been rejected in the previous Session. It again met with the same fate. Pitt made his first speech on this occasion, in support of the Bill. Two more efforts put the young orator upon a level with the most influential members of the party that advocated retrenchment and reform, and were opposed to the American war—a war described by the son of Chatham as “a most accursed, wicked, barbarous, cruel, unnatural, unjust, and diabolical war!” Of these displays of his friend, Wilberforce thus prophesied: “He comes out as his father did, a ready-made orator; and I doubt not but that I shall one day or other see him the first man in the country.”*

At the beginning of 1781, the French made a desperate effort to secure the most important of the Channel Islands—the last possession of the duchy of Normandy which remained to the English crown. During the American war two previous attacks had been made upon Jersey, without success. The baron de Rullecourt had sailed from Granville, in Normandy, in a season of tempest, with a fleet of small vessels carrying two thousand troops. About half his force was driven back to the coast of France. But on the night of the 5th of January he landed eight hundred men at the Violet Bank, about three miles from St. Helier; and before daybreak was in possession of that town. The lieutenant-governor and the magistrates being seized, Rullecourt terrified them into signing a capitulation. The officers in Elizabeth Castle declared that they were not bound by such an act, and refused to surrender the fortress. Meanwhile a spirited young officer, major Pierson, of the 99th regiment, had collected the militia of the island, with some other troops; and, in answer to a demand from Rullecourt to capitulate, replied that if the French commander did not himself surrender in twenty minutes he should be attacked. Pierson led his columns into the town; drove the enemy from street to street; and finally compelled the whole body to surrender in

* “Life of Wilberforce,” by his sons, vol. i. p. 22.

the market-place. The gallant Englishman was shot through the heart at the moment of his triumph; and the French invader was mortally wounded.

Great Britain had now to encounter the hazards of a maritime war with France, Spain, and Holland. For two years this somewhat unequal battle was most vigorously fought, wherever there was a hostile flag to be encountered. The ancient supremacy of the seas was again maintained, single-handed, against four allied powers. Whatever were the misfortunes of the British army that terminated the conflict in America, the close of the war was marked by maritime successes, which had an important influence upon the conclusion of a peace; and whose example stimulated that heroic spirit in our naval commanders which was the chief safety of our country in another war of even greater peril.

The first signal event of the war with Holland was the capture of St. Eustatius, one of the Leeward Islands. This small possession, which had been colonized by the Dutch for a hundred and eighty years, was especially valuable to them as the seat of a great commerce—"as the grand free port of the West Indies and America, and as a general market, and magazine, to all nations."* This rock was in itself a natural fortification. Its one landing-place is now so fortified as to be considered impregnable. On the 3rd of February, 1781, when admiral Rodney, having been apprised of the declaration of war, appeared before St. Eustatius with a large fleet, and demanded an immediate surrender, the governor deemed all resistance unavailing. The riches in merchandise obtained by this success were beyond all previous conception. The whole island was one vast emporium of sugar and tobacco, and all the richer products of the West Indies. In the bay two hundred and fifty trading vessels were captured. All the valuable property belonging, not only to the Dutch West India Company and the traders of Amsterdam, but to the merchants of Great Britain and the residents of our West Indian Islands, was indiscriminately seized. Rodney, who had the command of the West India station, was beset with remonstrances and applications for redress. The merchants of St. Christopher's had been great sufferers, and the legislature of that island supported their claims to compensation, on the ground that they had lodged their property at St. Eustatius under the guarantee of several Acts of Parliament. They were told that the island was Dutch, everything in it was Dutch, was under the protection of the Dutch flag, and as Dutch it should be treated. Jews, Americans, French, and native Dutch, were suc-

* "Annual Register," 1781, p. 101.

cessively transported from the island. Their property was sold by public auction; and merchandise, to the amount of three millions, was disposed of at a terrible depreciation, and found its way chiefly to the French and Danish islands. May we not hope that such a barbarous mode of conducting warfare has passed away; and that, although merchants cannot expect to be wholly exempted from loss and suffering, it will cease to be an object with a great naval power such as Britain, so to time its declaration of hostilities, as to rush upon unprepared and unsuspecting commercial communities "like thieves who break through and steal." Rodney, in his official despatch, disclaimed any hope of private advantage. Lord North, in a debate in the House of Commons upon the question of the confiscation of the property at St. Eustatius, stated that he had received a letter from the admiral in which he had said he did not consider the property as belonging to himself but to the Crown; and Rodney, in his place as a member, declared he had no other idea at the time when he seized all the property in the island than that it belonged of right to his country. "He had not received intelligence, till long after the confiscation, of his majesty's gracious intentions of relinquishing his rights in favour of the fleet and army to whom the island was surrendered." Litigation in the courts of law left little to the captors of what had been saved from recapture by the French in its conveyance home. The nation had to endure a great amount of opprobrium in Europe; and the English flag came to be regarded in the West Indies as an ensign almost as much to be dreaded as the black flag of the pirate. The piratical flag was really raised by a squadron of privateers from Bristol, who set sail upon hearing of the rupture with Holland, without waiting for those letters of marque and reprisal under which their acts would have been legalised. The Dutch settlements in Guiana offered tempting prizes to these adventurers. To plunder the rich Hollanders appeared to be an object worthy of British enterprize, whether lawful or unlawful. The present age has grown ashamed of the system of privateering, however regularly conducted under the recognized forms. Enlightened men were always averse to this mode of private-plunder under the pretence of national advantage. Franklin, in the negotiations for the peace of 1783, proposed that Great Britain and America, as well as the other belligerent powers, should agree not to grant any commissions to private armed vessels, empowering them to take or destroy trading ships. In 1856, after the close of the war with Russia, the Conference at Paris recommended the entire abolition of the system of privateering, and the acknowledgment of the

rights of neutrals, as desirable and necessary changes for bringing the system of war into harmony with the ideas and principles of modern civilization. There was one dissentient power whose ministers thought it politic to forget the recommendation of their illustrious countryman.

It was made a charge against sir George Rodney that he lingered at St. Eustatius from February to May, for the purpose of looking after his own interests, when he might during that time have carried on offensive operations at Martinique, where the French had an inferior force to oppose him. He was busy, it was said, about the captured merchandise, while the French fleet was reinforced, and Tobago was taken. Rodney defended himself by alleging that he had sent sir Samuel Hood, as he believed with an adequate force, to oppose the armament under De Grasse that had sailed from France. The force was not adequate; for five ships came out of Port Royal harbour to join the French admiral; and although there was a partial action, the English operations were wholly inefficient. The next year Rodney nobly vindicated himself from any imputation of want of zeal and daring. It was, indeed, then time that some great effort should be made to assert the maritime eminence of England; for lord Mulgrave, according to a report of his speech in November, 1781, maintained an opinion very strangely opposed to the prevailing belief: "We are not, nor ever were, equal to France in a naval contest, where France applied all her resources and strength to the raising of a navy." * An engagement off the Dogger Bank between a squadron under admiral Hyde Parker and a Dutch squadron, recalled the memory of "those dreadful sea-fights between England and Holland which the last century witnessed." † Like many of those sea-fights, there was no result but mutual destruction and prolonged animosity. The bravery and endurance of a British garrison were never more signally displayed than in the defence of Gibraltar during this year. Of that memorable siege we shall have to relate the continuous story in a subsequent chapter.

At no period of the contest between Great Britain and the United States were the two principals in the war in a condition in which peace was more necessary to each than at the beginning of the year 1781. Washington, looking at the extensive confederacy against England, thought, towards the end of the campaign of 1780, that it would not be in her power to continue the contest. But he was soon convinced that, however menaced on every side, England was entering upon another campaign without manifesting any sign

* "Parliamentary History," vol. 22, col. 711. † "Annual Register," 1782, p. 120.

of exhaustion. The American commander looked at his own resources, and saw little to inspire him with the hope of any decisive success. At this period he writes, "I see nothing before us but accumulating distress. We have been half our time without provisions, and are likely to continue so. We have no magazines, nor money to form them. We have lived upon expedients until we can live no longer." * The Congress, at the end of 1780, transmitted a letter to Franklin, addressed to the king of France, urgently requesting arms, ammunition, clothing, and a loan of money. Franklin writes to the French minister of foreign affairs, to express his opinion "that the present conjuncture is critical; that there is some danger lest the Congress should lose its influence over the people, if it is found unable to procure the aids that are wanted; and that the whole system of the new government in America may therefore be shaken." † Franklin at this crisis, when the immediate prospect was so obscure, predicted of a more remote future, if America should fail in asserting its independence, and "if the English were suffered once to recover that country." He prophesied "that the possession of those fertile and extensive regions, and that vast sea-coast, will afford them so broad a basis for future greatness, by the rapid growth of their commerce and breed of seamen and soldiers, as will enable them to become the terror of Europe, and to exercise with impunity that insolence which is so natural to their nation." ‡ Franklin, amidst the blandishments of Paris, had become half a Frenchman. John Adams, who at this period was the American envoy at Amsterdam, reports how some of the Dutch prophesied after another fashion—"that America has the interest of all Europe against her; that she will become the greatest manufacturing country, and thus ruin Europe; that she will become a great and ambitious military and naval power, and consequently terrible to Europe." § Without regarding the possible effect of the establishment of American independence upon the future stability of the monarchy of France, the government of Louis XVI. resolved to make one more effort in this strange alliance between liberty and despotism. Six millions of livres were granted to America as a free gift. The king of France wanted to borrow money himself to support the war, and could not injure his own credit by being associated with an American loan, for the depreciation of the paper of Congress had closed the pockets of European capitalists. || To add to the gloom of the Republican leaders, on new year's day thirteen hundred of the troops raised by Penn-

* Ramsay. "Life of Washington," p. 162.

† "Works," vol. viii. p. 534.

‡ *Ibid.* § *Ibid.*, p. 494, Letter to Franklin, August, 1780.

|| *Ibid.*, vol. ix. p. 2

sylvania mutinied for redress of grievances to which Congress had given no heed. They would serve no longer without pay, without food, without clothing. They marched away from their encampment at Morristown, and were reduced to obedience with great difficulty, but without severities. A similar mutiny in the brigade of New Jersey was quelled by a superior force, and by military executions.

The capture of Charlestown in May, 1780, and the victory of Camden in the following August, had led the English government to believe that another campaign would produce a favourable termination of the war. Lord George Germaine, in a letter to Lord Cornwallis, takes the same high tone about the restoration of the constitution, and the punishment of rebels, as in the early stages of the conflict. He approves of the severities of Cornwallis towards traitors: "The most disaffected will now be convinced that we are not afraid to punish, and will no longer venture to repeat their crimes in the hope of impunity should they be detected; and those who are more moderate will be led to withdraw from a cause which is evidently declining, before it becomes desperate, and they expose themselves to the consequences they may reasonably apprehend will fall upon such as persist in rebellion to the last." * With such an adviser, we can well understand how the king could have no other notion of three or four millions of Americans in revolt, than that they were mere traitors to be conquered, and then to be wholly dependent upon his royal mercy. The people of England were now, to a certain extent, in unison with the government as to the necessity of continuing the war. Mr. Hartley writes to Franklin, "I verily believe so great is the jealousy between England and France, that this country would fight for a straw to the last man, and the last shilling, rather than be dictated to by France." † The unfortunate union of common cause between America and France had turned aside the wish of the people of England for peace. This opinion of Mr. Hartley is confirmed—as far as a general sentiment can receive confirmation from the expression of opinion in particular localities—by the tone of public meetings and the words of addresses to the crown.

Lord Cornwallis, in his camp at Wynnesborough, amidst the flooded rivers and creeks of South Carolina, was not so sanguine as the secretary at Whitehall. The whole country, he writes to Sir Henry Clinton at the beginning of January, is kept in continual alarm by perpetual risings in different parts of the province, and

* "Cornwallis Correspondence," vol. i. p. 81.

† "Franklin's Works," vol. ix. p. 119.

the invariable success of these parties against the royalist militia.* On the 7th of January, Cornwallis began his march for North Carolina. He sent forward lieut. colonel Tarleton, with seven hundred infantry and three hundred and fifty cavalry, "to endeavour to strike a blow at general Morgan." Heavy rains swelled the water-courses, and impeded the progress of the army. On the 17th Tarleton came up with Morgan; and the battle of Cowpens resulted in the total defeat of the British. The American line had given way, and the British were in disorderly pursuit, when Morgan's corps faced about and poured in a heavy fire upon the pursuers. A general panic ensued, in spite of the exertions, entreaties, and example of colonel Tarleton. More than one-half of the royalist forces were killed, wounded, or taken prisoners, by an enemy not superior in numbers. This defeat is described as "the most serious calamity which had occurred since Saratoga — and crippled lord Cornwallis for the remainder of the war." †

Morgan, after his victory at the Cowpens, was enabled, though closely pursued by Cornwallis, to unite his forces with those of Nathaniel Green, a meritorious officer, who was appointed to succeed Gates as commander of the American army in North and South Carolina. By the judicious arrangements of general Greene he was enabled to avoid a battle with the superior force of Cornwallis, and entered Virginia. Jefferson was the governor of that State. At the beginning of January, Arnold, who was now in full activity in the British service, landed about nine hundred men at James Town. They burnt all the public property at Richmond and other places, and having marched more than thirty miles into the interior, regained their vessels. This incursion occupied only forty-eight hours. Virginia had at that time a population of more than half-a-million, and there were fifty thousand enrolled militia. But these were scattered over the country; and Richmond, the capital, was a town, or rather village, of only eighteen hundred inhabitants. The militia was a force upon paper, with few men called into the field; and without money or arms it would have been useless to collect and embody them. This was the defence made by Jefferson, when his enemies accused him of neglect, and threatened impeachment.‡ Arnold made a second irruption in April, and again destroyed much property. General Greene had been reinforced with all the available militia from Virginia at the beginning of March; and on the 15th he was approaching Guilford, in North Carolina, with an army of seven thousand men. On that

* "Cornwallis Correspondence," vol. i. p. 81.

† *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 84.

‡ Tucker's "Life of Jefferson," vol. i. p. 150.

day lord Cornwallis attacked him, and after an action of an hour and a-half routed the American army, and took their cannon. The British sustained a heavy loss. "The great fatigue of the troops," writes Cornwallis to Rawdon, "the number of wounded, and the want of provisions, prevented our pursuing the enemy."* Greene who had fled twenty miles from Guilford, soon became the pursuer. By his incessant activity he cut off supplies from the British army, which was compelled to fall back to Wilmington, on the Cape Fear River. He arrived there on the 7th of April. On the 10th he wrote to major-general Phillips, "I have had a most difficult and dangerous campaign, and was obliged to fight a battle, two hundred miles from any communication, with an enemy seven times my number. The fate of it was long doubtful. We had not a regiment or corps that did not at some time give way." He adds, "I am quite tired of marching about the country in quest of adventures. If we mean an offensive war in America we must abandon New York, and bring our whole force into Virginia; we then have a stake to fight for, and a successful battle may give us America."† Cornwallis wrote home to lord George Germaine to recommend "a serious attempt upon Virginia." On the 23rd, without waiting for instructions from the ministry, or receiving orders from sir Henry Clinton, his superior officer, he resolved, upon his own responsibility, as he expressed in another letter to the Secretary of State, "to take advantage of general Greene's having left the back of Virginia open, and march immediately into that province, to attempt a junction with general Phillips." He apologizes to Clinton for deciding upon measures so important, without his direction or approbation; alleging "the delay and difficulty of conveying letters, and the impossibility of waiting for answers."‡ The opinions of Clinton and Cornwallis upon the conduct of the war were not in accord. Clinton thought the main object was to defend New York, and merely maintain the posts held in the Southern provinces. Cornwallis held that if a defensive war was the plan to be adopted, mixed with desultory expeditions, it would be best to abandon the Carolinas, which could not be held defensively whilst Virginia could be so easily armed. "Let us quit the Carolinas, and stick to our salt-pork at New York, sending now and then a detachment to steal tobacco." Whilst Cornwallis was setting forth on an undertaking which, he says, "sits heavy on my mind," Rawdon, on the 25th of April, won a battle near Camden. He sallied from that post to attack general Greene, whose force doubled his own. The Amer-

* "Cornwallis Correspondence," vol. i. p. 86.

† *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 88.

‡ "Cornwallis Correspondence," vol. i. p. 94, 95.

icans quitted the field ; but the victory had no eventual benefit for the British cause.

Lord Cornwallis crossed James River, into Virginia, on the 26th of May. General Phillips had died whilst his friend was on his march to join him. Cornwallis was, however, now strengthened by reinforcements, and proposed to dislodge La Fayette from Richmond. But La Fayette moved to the upper country, and though the English general wrote "the boy cannot escape me," the boy was too alert to be captured. The legislature of Virginia was sitting at Charlottesville, and colonel Tarleton was very near surprising the whole body. Jefferson himself had a narrow escape, having only quitted his own house at Monticello ten minutes before the British entered it. "His property, books, and papers, were all respected; with the exception of the waste which was committed in his cellars by a few of the men, without the knowledge of their commanding officer."* The Virginians bitterly complained of the mischief committed upon their plantations by the invading army,—crops of corn and tobacco destroyed, barns burnt, horses carried off. The damage of six months was estimated at three millions sterling.†

On the 2nd of August Cornwallis was in possession of York Town, on the peninsula between the river York and the river James. "The position," he writes to his friend, brigadier O'Hara, "is bad, and of course we want more troops, and you know that every senior general takes without remorse from a junior, and tells him he has nothing to fear."‡ Clinton was urging him to send men to New York. During the month of August, Cornwallis was busily employed in fortifying York Town, and also Gloucester on the opposite side of the York River. On the 29th of August, the French West India fleet, under De Grasse, entered the Chesapeake, and landed a large force at James Town. Cornwallis wrote to Clinton, to apprise him of this event, and to announce that Washington "is said to be shortly expected." Clinton replied that he had no doubt that Washington was "moving with six thousand French and rebel troops" against Cornwallis; and that all the force that could be spared from New York should be sent to him.

At the beginning of August, Washington, encamped in the neighbourhood of New York, was anxiously expecting the arrival of the fleet under De Grasse. He had conceived hopes, more than usually sanguine, that a combined attack upon New York by land and sea might have given a decisive turn to the war. The des-

* Tucker, "Life of Jefferson," vol. i. p. 160.

† *Ibid.*

‡ "Cornwallis Correspondence," vol. i. p. 112.

patches of Clinton to Cornwallis show how anxiously the British general looked to the defence of this important place, which had so long been the scene of hostilities. On the 14th of August Washington received intelligence that De Grasse had sailed to the Chesapeake. He instantly determined to abandon all idea of attacking New York, and to march for Virginia. On the 21st of August, the troops destined for the South were in motion, no attempt having been made by Clinton to interrupt their march.

Those qualities of a commander which are, at the least, as important, if not so dazzling, as his ability to "set a squadron in the field," have been rarely displayed more signally than in the provident care of Washington that no disorder should ensue from the sudden change in his whole plan of operations. He had to provide against the chance of attack on his march from New York to Trenton, and he adroitly managed to lead Clinton to believe that the march was a feint, and that he would return to his encampment. From Trenton his army had to be transported to Christiana, and from the Head of Elk down the Chesapeake. He had to make arrangements that, upon the instant of his arrival, all the craft fit for the navigation of the Delaware should be ready to embark his troops. He had to ensure a supply of salt provisions, flour, and rum, at the Head of Elk, to satisfy weary and grumbling men during their long river passage. They were grumblers because for some time they had received no pay. He arranged for "a douceur of a little hard money to put them in proper temper." He regarded the object of his movement as one of the greatest importance; and urged upon the authorities of the various States to provide the means for prosecuting a siege with rapidity. On the 6th of September, Washington was at the Head of Elk, and had put himself into communication with De Grasse. On the 10th he was for a few hours in his own home at Mount Vernon,—“a modest habitation, quite in keeping with the idea that we have of Cincinnatus, and of those of the other great commanders of the Roman republic.”* The troops had been embarked at the Head of Elk, but their general suddenly commanded them to stop. He had heard that De Grasse had gone to sea on the 5th, and he doubted whether the navigation of the bay would have been secure. De Grasse had set sail to encounter the West India fleet of sir Samuel Hood, which had effected a junction with six ships under admiral Graves, who, as senior officer, took the command. On the 5th a general engagement ensued, in which both fleets were damaged, but no vessels on either side were taken or destroyed. The French

* Steuben, p. 346.

being reinforced by the squadron from Rhode Island, Graves returned to New York, and De Grasse remained master of the Chesapeake.

On the 17th of September, Cornwallis wrote somewhat despairingly to Clinton: "I am just informed that since the Rhode Island squadron has joined, they have thirty-six sail of the line. This place is in no state of defence. If you cannot relieve me very soon you must be prepared to hear the worst."* He was promised relief, and the co-operation of a force of five thousand men, which was to be conveyed by the whole fleet on the 5th of October. On the 8th of September, Cornwallis had provisions for six weeks. The French fleet in the Chesapeake entirely cut off any chance of further supplies. On the 14th of October, then, according to this calculation, the British army would be in peril of starvation. But, according to one account, Cornwallis subsequently thought that he might hold out to the middle of November.†

On the 19th of September, Steuben, who had been appointed to a regular command in the siege of York Town, writes, "Cornwallis is fortifying himself like a brave general who must fall; but I think he will fall with honour."‡ Steuben was the only American officer who had ever taken part in a regular siege, and his assistance in the siege of York Town appears to have been especially valuable. On the 30th of September the besieging army broke ground, and constructed redoubts about eleven hundred yards from the British works. On the evening of the 9th they opened their batteries, and, writes Cornwallis on the 11th, "have since continued firing without intermission with about forty pieces of cannon, mostly heavy, and sixteen mortars." On the 12th their second parallel was opened. Cornwallis now began to lose hope: "Nothing," he says, "but a direct move to York River, which includes a successful naval action, can save me." On the 15th he apprised Clinton that his two advanced redoubts had been carried by storm; that his situation was very critical; that his first earthen works could not resist powerful artillery; and, his numbers being weakened, he concludes by saying, "the safety of the place is therefore so precarious, that I cannot recommend that the fleet and army should run great risk in endeavouring to save us." The catastrophe was close at hand. On the 20th of October, Cornwallis wrote to inform Clinton that, on the previous day, he had been forced to give up the posts of York and Gloucester, and to surren-

* "Cornwallis Correspondence," vol. i. p. 120.

† *Ibid.*, p. 123—Letter of Brodrick to Townshend.

‡ "Life," p. 466.

der the troops under his command, by capitulation, as prisoners of war to the combined forces of America and France. In this letter he describes the difficulties he had encountered since he withdrew within the works in expectation of the promised relief. He dwells on the diminution of his numbers by the fire of the enemy and by sickness; on the exhaustion of the strength and spirits of those that remained. "Under all these circumstances I thought it would have been wanton and inhuman to the last degree to sacrifice the lives of this small body of gallant soldiers, who had ever behaved with so much fidelity and courage, by exposing them to an assault which, from the numbers and precautions of the enemy, could not fail to succeed." * The garrison, at the time of the surrender, consisted of 363 officers, of whom some were sick; of 4541 non-commissioned officers and rank and file fit for duty; and of 2089 sick and wounded.

The Articles of Capitulation did not involve any degrading conditions. The garrisons of York and Gloucester were to march out to an appointed place, with shouldered arms, colours cased, and drums beating a British or German march; then to ground their arms, and return to the place of their encampment. The imagination might fill up a picture from this indistinct outline. But a very graphic representation of an extraordinary scene exists in the diary of an Anspach serjeant, who served in the British army. † We necessarily take only the prominent points of a lengthened detail. On the afternoon of the 19th of October, all the troops marched on the road to Williamsburg, in platoons, through the whole American and French army, who were drawn up in regiments. In front of each regiment were their generals and staff-officers. The French generals were attended by richly dressed servants in liveries. Count de Rochambeau, marquis de Lafayette, count de Deuxponts, and prince de Lucerne were there, wearing glittering stars and badges. The French formed the right wing. The left wing of the line was formed of the Americans. In front were their generals, Washington, Gates, Steuben, and Wayne. They were paraded in three lines. The regulars, in front, looked passable; but the militia, from Virginia and Maryland, were ragged and ill-looking. The prisoners were quite astonished at the immense number of their besiegers, whose lines, three ranks deep, extended nearly two miles. They passed through this formidable army to a large plain,

* "Cornwallis Correspondence," vol. i. p. 129.

† First published in the "Life of Steuben," from the manuscript of John Conrad Doehla, in the possession of Friedrich Kaap, the author of that life, p. 459.

where a squadron of French hussars had formed a circle. One regiment after another had to pass into this circle, to lay down their muskets and other arms. The honest narrator says, "When our colonel, baron Seybothen, had marched his men into the circle, he had us drawn up in a line, stepped in front of it, and commanded first, 'Present arms,' and then, 'Lay down arms—put off swords and cartridge-boxes,' while tears ran down his cheeks. Most of us were weeping like him." All the officers, English and German, were allowed to keep their swords. All marched back in utter silence to the camp. Their courage and their spirit were gone; "the more so," says the serjeant, "as in this our return march the American part of our conquerors jeered at us very insultingly." Upon their return to their lines and tents, they enjoyed full liberty. The French are described as behaving very well towards the conquered—altogether kind and obliging. Cornwallis, in his dispatch, makes no complaint of the Americans, but he clearly draws a distinction that seems expressive of no very cordial feeling towards those of the same race with himself: "The treatment, in general, that we have received from the enemy since our surrender has been perfectly good and proper; but the kindness and attention that has been shown to us by the French officers in particular—their delicate sensibility of our situation, their generous and pressing offer of money, both public and private, to any amount—has really gone beyond what I can possibly describe, and will, I hope, make an impression on the breast of every British officer whenever the fortune of war should put any of them into our power."* The abbé Robin noticed that there was a much deeper feeling of animosity between the English and Americans, than between the English and French. As the English officers passed through the lines they saluted every French officer, but they showed no such courtesy to the American officers.† There was no wisdom or equity in this unmerited contempt of men who were fighting for a far higher cause than their French allies. There was only a paltry display of military pride against irregulars, and a servile imitation of the temper of the English Court towards "rebels." An article of capitulation proposed by Cornwallis was rejected by Washington;—"Natives or inhabitants of different parts of this country at present in York or Gloucester are not to be punished on account of having joined the British army." It was rejected upon this principle:—"The article cannot be assented

* "Cornwallis Correspondence," vol. i. p. 130.

† Quoted by Lord Mahon, vol. vii. p. 181.

to, being altogether of civil resort. But Washington did not refuse his consent through any vindictive feeling. He allowed an article to stand, by which the Bonetta sloop of war should be left entirely at the disposal of lord Cornwallis, and be permitted to sail to New York without examination. The Anspach serjeant records that Tories of the country who were in the British army, and the French and American deserters who had joined during the siege, thus passed unmolested. This fact was probably unknown in England when Cornwallis was bitterly blamed for consenting to the refusal of the tenth article. "He ought," says Walpole, "to have declared he would die rather than sacrifice the poor Americans who had followed him from loyalty against their countrymen." *

On the day that Cornwallis signed the capitulation, Clinton despatched the auxiliary force for his relief. When Cornwallis and his superior officer met at New York, their differences of opinion became a matter of serious controversy, which was subsequently taken up in parliamentary debates, and in pamphlets not devoid of personal acrimony. These charges and recriminations were soon forgotten in the more important political events that were a certain consequence of a calamity through which the war would very soon come to an end. There can be no doubt that the government felt the capitulation as an irremediable disaster. Wraxall, in his "Memoirs of his Own Time," has related a conversation which he had with lord George Germaine, as to the mode in which lord North received the intelligence. Wraxall, a very slovenly and inaccurate writer, has confounded the official account of the surrender with a French Gazette that reached London on Sunday, the 25th of November. Clinton's despatch did not reach lord George Germaine till midnight of the 25th, as is shown by a minute on the back of the letter; and therefore Wraxall's statement that lord George read the despatch to him and others at dinner, between five and six o'clock, is certainly incorrect.† But nevertheless we cannot, in common fairness, accuse the gossiping memoir writer of having invented the conversation which he alleges took place at this dinner. He asked the Secretary how lord North took the communication when made to him. The reply was, "As he would have taken a ball in his breast; for he opened his arms, exclaiming wildly, as he paced up and down the apartment during a few minutes, 'Oh God! it is all over,'—words which he repeated many times, under emotions of the deepest consternation and dis-

* "Last Journals," vol. ii. p. 475.

† Note by Mr. Ross, in "Cornwallis Correspondence," vol. i. p. 135.

gress." * Lord George Germaine appears to have had very little official reticence, if Wraxall is to be believed, for he read to the same mixed company a letter from the king, in reply to the communication of the disastrous news: "I trust that neither lord George Germaine, nor any member of the Cabinet, will suppose that it makes the smallest alteration in those principles of my conduct which have directed me in past time, and which will always continue to animate me under every event, in the prosecution of the present contest." †

* "Memoirs," vol. ii. p. 103.

† *Ibid* p. 108.

CHAPTER XV.

The king announces to Parliament the capitulation of Cornwallis.—Debates on the Address very hostile to the ministry.—Strong expressions of Fox.—More prudent language of Pitt.—Differences in the Cabinet.—Lord G. Germaine retires.—Losses of West India Islands and Minorca.—The government in a minority.—Lord North announces that his administration is at an end.—The Rockingham ministry.—Rodney's victory over De Grasse.—Breaking the Line.—Capture of the Ville de Paris.—Change of costume in the House of Commons.—Burke's Bill for Economical Reform.—Bills on Revenue Officers and Contractors.—Pitt's motion for Parliamentary Reform.—Arming the People.—Retrospect of the state of Ireland.—Irish Parliament.—Grattan.—His efforts for legislative independence.—The Volunteers of Ireland.—The king's message to the British and Irish Parliaments.—The Statute of George I. asserting the dependence of Ireland repealed.

THE Session of Parliament was opened on the 27th of November, 1781. The Royal Speech had been prepared before the news of the capitulation of Cornwallis had reached London on the 25th. The mover of the Address had been appointed, and had got by heart the echo of the speech. The ministers had little time to prepare or alter the speech, says Walpole. They were obliged to find another mover of the Address; for the young lord Feilding, originally chosen, "avoided making himself as ridiculous as the Royal Speech."* The inconsistency of the production is manifest. The beginning and the end declare the king's resolution to persevere in extinguishing the spirit of rebellion amongst his deluded subjects in America, precisely in the same tone as if Cornwallis had sent Washington a prisoner to London. But one little sentence creeps in, which renders these words of sound and fury of no significance: "It is with great concern I inform you that the events of war have been very unfortunate to my arms in Virginia, having ended in the loss of my forces in that province." It was to be expected that the calamity of Yorktown would give new effect to the efforts of the Opposition to put an end to the war; but the temper which was evinced in this royal communication was calculated to raise hostility to a ministry into bitterness against the sovereign. Lord Shelburne talked of the greatness of mind with which his majesty could rise superior to the dreadful situation of his affairs. "He was not surprised that ministers should take advantage of the noble sentiments of their monarch, and contrive and fabricate such

* "Last Journals," vol. ii. p. 474.

a speech as should best flatter his personal feelings ; but it was to be remembered that those ministers had never governed long for the people's advantage, in any country, who had not fortitude to withstand the mere impulse of their master's sentiments." * Upon this point, it is curious to note the difference of opinion between two eminent statesmen of our own times. Lord Holland laments the weakness, while he enters into the chivalrous feelings, of lord North, which induced him, in opposition to his better judgment, not to abandon a master who expressed for him such confidence, affection, and regard. Lord John Russell holds that the king's opinion that the independence of America would be tantamount to the ruin of the country, was the opinion of Chatham and others of the most eminent of his subjects ; that the king was only blameable for the obstinacy with which he clung to this opinion ; but that lord North, who was disposed to conciliate America, and was quite ready to consent to peace, by remaining in power to carry into effect the personal wishes of the sovereign, which he preferred to the welfare of the state, exhibited a conduct which might be Toryism, but was neither patriotic nor constitutional. †

The debates in the House of Commons at this crisis, as developing the characters of the two men who were to become the great leaders of the rival parties for twenty years, are singularly interesting. Charles Fox, now in his thirty-third year, by the force of his parliamentary abilities had obtained the highest position in popular estimation. He was the recognized leader of opposition ; the most accomplished debater in either house. His notorious contempt for some of the decencies of life, unquestionably of evil example to younger men,—and therefore particularly offensive to the king,—his reckless spirit of gambling, which involved the ruin of his fortune, and all the humiliating exposures of ir retrievable debt,—these defects could not abate the love and admiration which he commanded by his frank and generous nature, and by his wonderful powers. But his capacity of winning friends was often neutralized by his rashness in making enemies. Lord North, a man of the most imperturbable good-nature, could readily forgive all the bitter things which Fox could say of him, and even smile at his threats of bringing him to the block. George III. treasured up in his memory the strong expressions of Fox, as he had treasured up those of Chatham ; and his hatred of these two amongst the most influential of his subjects was never subdued, and rarely concealed. Fox might naturally look to take a high place in the government when the ad-

* "Parliamentary History," vol. xxii. col. 644.

† "Memorials of Fox," vol. i. p. 247

ministration of lord North should come to an end, as was clearly inevitable ; but he could scarcely expect to propitiate the sovereign by the language which he used on the 27th of November, in moving an Amendment to the Address. The speech from the throne may be considered as the speech of the ministers. But if men, he said, were unacquainted with the nature of our Constitution, what would they pronounce that speech to be ? “ What ! but that it was the speech of some arbitrary, despotic, hard-hearted, and unfeeling monarch, who, having involved the slaves, his subjects, in a ruinous and unnatural war, to glut his enmity, or to satiate his revenge, was determined to persevere in spite of calamity and even of fate ;—that it was the speech of a monarch incapable of feeling his own misfortunes, or of sympathising with the sorrows of his people, when the high prerogative of his despotic will was disputed ; for despotic monarchs were the most tenacious of their rights, as they called them, and allowed nothing to the feelings or to the comforts of their fellow-creatures.”* Burke, on this occasion, used a forcible image, which passed into a proverb. Denouncing the “ miserable and infatuated men ” who claimed a right of taxing America, without the power of enforcing the claim, he employed this illustration : “ Oh ! says a silly man, full of his prerogative of dominion over a few beasts of the field, there is excellent wool on the back of a wolf, and therefore he must be sheared. What ! shear a wolf ? Yes. But will he comply ? Have you considered the trouble ? How will you get this wool ? Oh, I have considered nothing, and I will consider nothing, but my right ; a wolf is an animal that has wool ; all animals that have wool are to be shorn, and therefore I will shear the wolf.” † The Amendment of Fox was lost.

William Pitt did not speak in support of the Amendment ; but the next day, on the motion for bringing up the report of the Address, he made, according to Walpole, “ a most brilliant figure, to the admiration of men of all sides.” Fox praised him in the warmest terms. Mr. Courtenay, although he supported the government, said, “ No man could be more affected by what fell from Mr. Pitt than he was. His splendid diction, his manly elocution, his brilliant periods, his pointed logic conveyed in a torrent of rapid and impressive eloquence, brought strongly to his recollection that great and able statesman, whose memory every grateful and generous Briton reveres.” The son of Chatham, then in his twenty-third year, was a striking contrast to Fox, in the rigid decorum of his life. But he was not an unsocial young man. There was a

* “ Parliamentary History,” vol. xxii. col. 698.

† *Ibid.*, vol. xxii. col. 722.

club known as Goostree's, where he regularly supped with old University companions. He was the wittiest and most amusing amongst a party of professed wits, who spent an evening in memory of Shakspeare, at the Boar's Head in East Cheap.* But his ambition entirely subdued any disposition to surrender himself to such pleasures as those which interfered with the power and influence of Fox. Ambition was his master-passion, and it once betrayed him, in this stage of his career, when North was expected to resign, into a declaration that he would accept no subordinate post in a new administration. Walpole, who held that this arrogance proved that "he was a boy, and a very ambitious and a very vain one," states that the moment that Pitt had sat down he was aware of his folly, and said he could bite his tongue out for what it had uttered.† There was one imprudence from which this ambitious youth carefully refrained. He gave vent to those sentiments of indignation which he found it impossible to repress, against those ministers who were running headlong into measures which could end only in the ruin of the State; but he was especially careful not to say one word that could imply any disrespect to the sovereign. Dundas, the Lord Advocate of Scotland, though a ministerial officer, made a speech on this occasion which practically supported the arguments of the Opposition. Did the future follower of William Pitt already recognize his natural and rightful leader?

There were differences in the Cabinet on the question of continuing the war with America which soon became manifest. Lord George Germaine had declared in Parliament that he would never sign a treaty which should give independence to America. Lord North had felt it necessary to declare that for the future the war in America would be confined to an endeavour to retain certain posts which were necessary even for the conduct of the war against France and Spain. Lord George Germaine retired from office, and was created a peer. The naval management of lord Sandwich was vigorously assailed; for he had sent admiral Kempenfeld to intercept a French fleet sailing from Brest to reinforce their squadrons in the West Indies, and the British admiral was forced to return to England, after taking some transports, finding himself likely to be opposed by a very superior force. In the West Indies the prospect was not encouraging to a falling ministry. St. Eustatius, Demerara, and Essequibo had been re-taken by the French and restored to their original possessors. Our own colonies of St.

* "Life of Wilberforce," vol. i. p. 18.

† "Last Journals," vol. ii. p. 514.

Christopher's, Nevis, and Montserrat, had fallen into the hands of our enemies. To complete the sum of national misfortunes, Minorca, that noble harbour of the Mediterranean, which was lost in 1756, and regained at the peace of Paris, was surrendered to the French on the 5th of February, after a long siege and gallant defence.

Thus, with disasters on every side, the administration of lord North was in no condition to stand up against the repeated attacks of a powerful opposition, and the manifest defection of alarmed supporters. On the 22nd of February, general Conway, having expressed an opinion that there was a disposition in America to treat for peace, moved that an Address be presented to the king that "he will be pleased to listen to the humble prayer and advice of his faithful Commons, that the war on the continent of North America may no longer be pursued for the impracticable purpose of reducing the inhabitants of that country to obedience by force." Mr. Ellis, the new Secretary of State, resisted the motion; which was finally rejected by a majority only of one in a House of three hundred and eighty-seven members. On the 27th, general Conway renewed his motion in another form; and the government was then in a minority of nineteen, in a House of four hundred and forty-nine members. The king's reply to the Address then voted was cold and sullen: "You may be assured that, in pursuance of your advice, I shall take such measures as shall appear to me to be most conducive to the restoration of harmony between Great Britain and the revolted colonies." On the 9th of March, lord John Cavendish moved a vote of censure on the ministers for the conduct of the war, which was only rejected by a majority of ten. On the 15th, after another bare majority, the king wrote to lord North, "I am resolved not to throw myself into the hands of opposition at all events; and shall certainly, if things go as they seem to tend, know what my conscience as well as honour dictates as the only way left for me." In his Diary of the 18th of March, Walpole says, that the king "not only talked of retiring to Hanover, but it is certain that for a fortnight together the royal yacht was expeditiously preparing for transporting him." This idle threat of the king is properly ascribed by Walpole to "moody peevishness, which had not looked for, nor fixed on, any system" The king could not retain his old ministers; he threw every difficulty in the way of treating with the formidable leaders who had now the command of the House of Commons. But there was no possibility of escape, except by some course which the king knew would end in that confusion which he had the sense at last not to

risk. On the 20th of March, lord North announced in Parliament that his ministry was at an end. Lord Holland's relation of the scene on this occasion is a relief to Walpole's tedious narrative of negotiations between lord Thurlow and lord Rockingham, which have lost the interest they might once have possessed:—"I have heard my uncle Fitzpatrick give a very diverting account of the scene that passed in the House of Commons on the day of lord North's resignation, which happened to be a remarkably cold day, with a fall of snow. A motion of lord Surrey's, for the dismissal of ministers, stood for that day, and the Whigs were anxious that it should come on before the resignation of lord North was officially announced, that his removal from office might be more manifestly and formally the act of the House of Commons. He and lord Surrey rose at the same instant. After much clamour, disorder, and some insignificant speeches on order, Mr. Fox, with great quickness and address, moved, as the most regular method of extricating the House from its embarrassment, 'that lord Surrey be now heard.' But lord North, with yet more admirable presence of mind, mixed with pleasantry, rose immediately, and said, 'I rise to speak to that motion;' and, as his reason for opposing it, stated his resignation and the dissolution of the ministry. The House, satisfied, became impatient, and after some ineffectual efforts of speakers on both sides to procure a hearing, an adjournment took place. Snow was falling, and the night tremendous. All the members' carriages were dismissed, and Mrs. Bennet's room at the door was crowded. But lord North's carriage was waiting. He put into it one or two of his friends, whom he had invited to go home with him, and turning to the crowd, chiefly composed of his bitter enemies, in the midst of their triumph, exclaimed in this hour of defeat and supposed mortification, with admirable good humour and pleasantry, '*I have my carriage. You see, gentlemen, the advantage of being in the secret. Good night.*'" * On the 27th of March, the king wrote to lord North, "At length the fatal day is come, which the misfortunes of the times, and the sudden change of sentiments in the House of Commons, have driven me to, of changing my ministers, and a more general removal of other persons, than I believe ever was known before." The king refused to have any personal communication with lord Rockingham until his administration was completed and he was admitted to an audience as First Lord of the Treasury. Thurlow was continued as Chancellor. Shelburne and Charles Fox became Secretaries of State. Burke, Thomas Townshend, and

* "Memorials of Fox," vol. i. p. 295.

Sheridan held minor offices. Burke felt somewhat mortified at that exclusiveness in the party that "almost avowedly regarded power as an heir-loom in certain houses."* He wrote to an applicant for place, "I make no part of the ministerial arrangement. Something in the official line may possibly be thought fit for my measure."

At the precise period when the successors of lord North were entering upon their tenure of office, a signal triumph of the British navy was taking place, which, had it occurred earlier, might have somewhat altered the course of party movements and of national feeling. Sir George Rodney, at the beginning of the year, had left England to resume his command on the West India station. He arrived at Barbadoes on the 19th of February, with twelve sail of the line. He would learn that the surrender of St. Christopher's had taken place a week before his arrival. He would find that of all the West Indian possessions of Great Britain only Jamaica, Barbadoes, and Antigua remained. The united naval force of France and Spain in the West Indies amounted to sixty ships of the line; and it was known that a formidable armament was preparing to attack Jamaica. Fortunately Rodney was enabled to form a junction with the squadron of sir Samuel Hood, whose efforts had been unavailing to prevent the surrender of St. Christopher's. With a reinforcement of three sail of the line from England, Rodney had now thirty-six sail of the line, although several ships were in bad condition. His cruisers were watching the movements of De Grasse in the harbour of Port Royal, where he was re-fitting and taking troops on board. On the 8th of April signal was made that the French fleet had put to sea, with thirty-three sail of the line. It was the obvious policy of Rodney to engage De Grasse before a junction could be effected with the Spaniards. His fleet, which had been anchored at St. Lucia, was immediately under weigh, and in pursuit of the enemy. In the French fleet there were vessels of very heavy metal, especially the *Ville de Paris*, the flag-ship, of 110 guns, considered the pride and bulwark of their navy. In the English fleet there were five ninety-gun ships. On the 9th of April, the van under Hood became engaged with a superior number of the French ships; but the disproportion was remedied by Rodney coming up with a few ships of his division. The baffling winds prevented a general engagement, which De Grasse was evidently desirous to avoid. But on the evening of the 11th, Rodney, after a continued chase, in the endeavour to cut off two of the French ships that had made signals of distress, found himself in face of the main fleet of De Grasse

* Lord Mahon, vol. vii. p. 211.

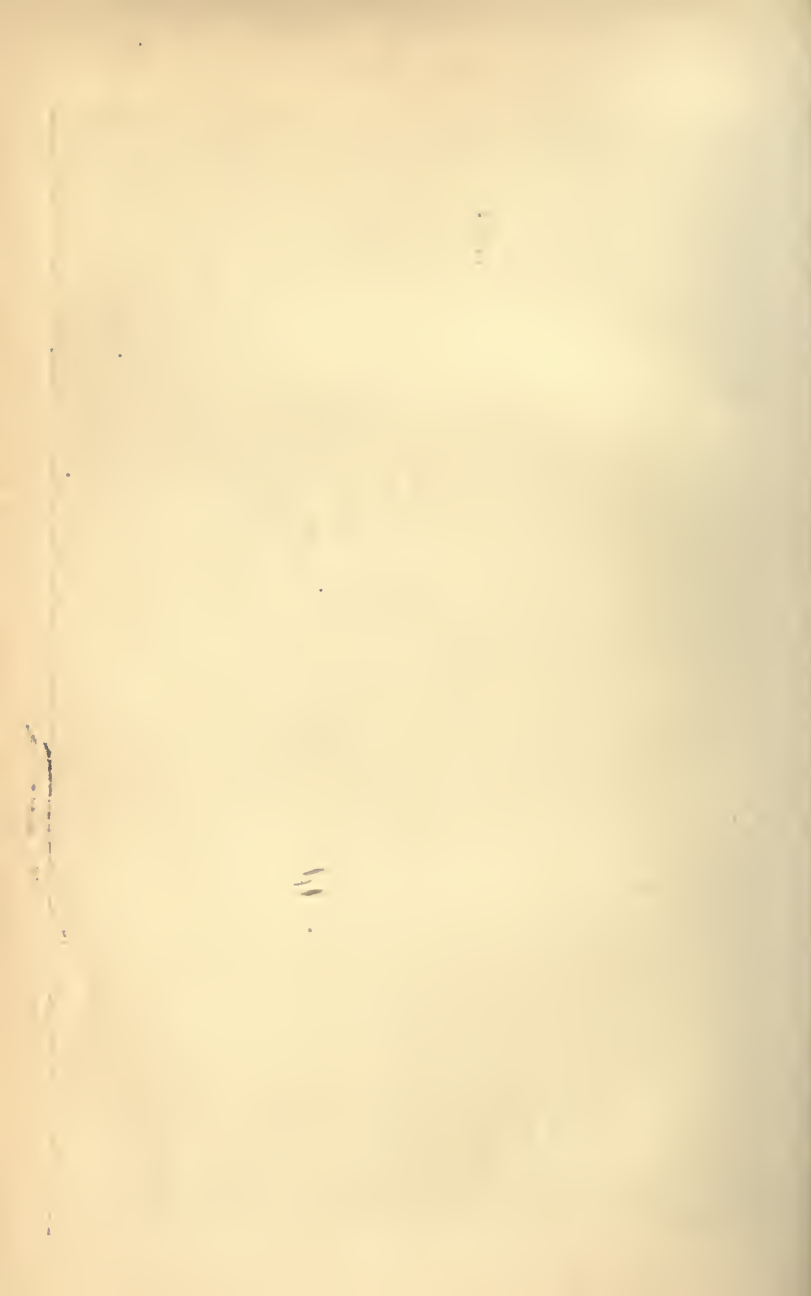
which had borne down to the assistance of the disabled vessels. It was manifest that a general battle on the next day was inevitable.

The scene of action on the memorable 12th of April has been described "as a moderately large bason of water, lying between the islands of Guadaloupe, Dominica, Saintes, and Mariegalante; and bounded both to windward and leward by very dangerous shores."* At seven in the morning the battle commenced. It was sunset before it was finished. As the British ships came up, having received the signal for close fighting, they ranged closely along the enemy's line—so close that every shot that was given or received told with fatal effect. The slaughter was tremendous in the French ships that were crowded with troops. It was about noon when Rodney, in the *Formidable*, led the way in the daring manœuvre of breaking the enemy's line. He was followed by the *Namur*, the *Duke*, and the *Canada*. They broke the French line, about three ships from the centre, where De Grasse commanded in the *Ville de Paris*. Rodney was followed by the ships astern of his division; and then wearing round, doubled upon the enemy and completed the separation of their line. It is difficult, if not impossible, to show in words the precise effect of such a manœuvre. Rodney himself, in 1789, wrote some marginal notes in a copy of a book which we shall presently notice, in which he said that it was the duty of an admiral "to bring, if possible, the whole fleet under his command to attack half, or part, of that of his enemy." He further said that, in the engagement with De Grasse, his own ship, the *Formidable*, "began a very close action within half musket-shot, and continued such action close along the enemy's lines under an easy sail, till an opening appeared at the third ship astern of the enemy's admiral, which gave an opportunity of breaking their line, and putting their rear in the utmost confusion." The French fleet was indeed thrown into confusion by a movement so wholly unknown in maritime warfare. Rodney furnished an example which was gloriously imitated by Duncan at Camperdown, by Howe, and by Nelson. There have been pages of controversy on the question whether Rodney is entitled to the merit of the idea of breaking the line, for the first time carried into effect on this 12th of April. About the period that Rodney left London to take the command in the West Indies, was printed "An Essay on Naval Tactics," by Mr. John Clerk, of Eldin. This treatise contained a very able exposition of the different principles of maritime warfare pursued by the English and the French—the one making an attack

* "Annual Register," 1782.



RODNEY'S VICTORY OVER DE GRASSE. — Vol. vi. 264.



from windward, the other courting a leeward position; which difference, the author contended, had produced many of our failures in general engagements, where the results were indecisive and totally inadequate to the bravery of our sailors and commanders. He compared the meeting of two fleets, on contrary tacks, to a rencounter of horsemen, where the parties pushed their horses at full speed, in opposite directions, exchanging only a few pistol shots as they passed; and thus two great armaments had often engaged and separated, without any serious damage or loss on either side. But Mr. Clerk held that if an enemy's line be cut in twain, that portion which is separated from the rest can more readily be destroyed. He alleged, in a later edition of his book, that before its publication he had communicated his views to Mr. Atkinson, a friend of Rodney; and that the admiral himself, before quitting London in 1782, said he would bear them in mind in engaging an enemy. On the other hand, sir Charles Douglas maintains, by a comparison of dates, that Rodney could not have acquired this information before he left to take his command at the beginning of 1782; and that his father, the captain of the *Formidable*, made the suggestion to the admiral in the heat of the engagement, when he saw a favourable opportunity of breaking the line.* In these rival claims to what has in some degree the character of an invention, most persons will be inclined to consider that the greater merit rests with the man who first gives a practical value to a theory, and especially so in the case of a naval or land commander, who, in the hurry and tumult of a battle, seizes the right moment for carrying a principle into operation.

The engagement of the 12th of April terminated in the most signal success. The admiral held that it was the severest sea-fight on record. The great triumph of the day was the capture of the *Ville de Paris*. De Grasse continued the fight in this mighty vessel—mighty as compared with the usual size of seventy-fours, and even ninety-gun ships, in that day—till the victory was decisive over the other portions of his fleet. The last broadside from the *Barfleur*, commanded by Hood, compelled him to strike. Five large ships were captured, and one sunk. Those that escaped fled to various ports, and were not again united for any continuance of the naval warfare. Jamaica was saved from the joint attack of the French and Spanish; for which vast preparations had been made in the trains of artillery that were found on board the captured

* Clerk's claims are advocated in the "Edinburgh Review," vol. vi. p. 301. The pretensions of Clerk and Douglas are minutely examined in the "Quarterly Review," vol. xlii. p. 50.

vessels. Lord Cranston, an officer who was sent, after the *Ville de Paris* had struck, to receive De Grasse's sword, described the carnage which he beheld on board the great ship as altogether terrible. Only De Grasse himself, with two or three others, remained on the quarter-deck. The French admiral was only slightly wounded, though the fire of so many hours had swept away most of his officers. De Grasse could scarcely recover from his astonishment at seeing his vessel taken, and himself a prisoner—the vessel which, on the news at Plymouth, provoked an exclamation from some French officers, of "Impossible! Not the whole British fleet could take the *Ville de Paris*." It was held that Rodney ought to have followed up his success by chasing the ships that escaped. But in those latitudes total darkness comes on immediately after sunset. He attempted a pursuit the next morning, but his fleet was becalmed for three days off Guadaloupe. On the 19th of April, Hood came up with five French vessels, in the *Mona Passage*, and captured two seventy-fours, and two frigates. Two of the French ships taken in this action never came as trophies to England. The *Ville de Paris*, and the *Glorieux*, went down in a great storm off the banks of Newfoundland in September, when three English vessels of a fleet from Jamaica also perished; leaving only two remaining of those that had sailed homeward with admiral Graves.

On the 8th of April the Parliament met after a short recess, during which the re-elections had taken place of those members who had accepted office in the new ministry. An eye-witness describes the change of costume which the House of Commons presented, when Lord North and his friends took their seats on the opposition benches, in great coats, frocks, and boots; and their successors, having thrown off the Whig livery of blue and buff, appeared in all the dignity of swords, lace, and hair-powder. One tenacious holder of office, Mr. Welbore Ellis, appeared on that 8th of April, for the first time in his life, in an undress.* The new ministers came from the *Levéé* and the *Drawing-room* in their unfamiliar and uncomfortable finery; and Fox and Burke had to hear the whispered joke circulating amidst the joke-loving Commons, that lord Nugent, whose house had been robbed of many articles of dress, fancied that he saw some of his laced ruffles on the hands of the gentlemen who now occupied the Treasury bench. The change of measures was far more remarkable than the change of costume. The opportunity for carrying those plans of salutary reform which were once so hateful to the Court, appeared to have

* Wraxall's "Memoirs," vol. ii. p. 172.

come. George III. did not even look frowningly upon the men whose advent to office was to have been the signal for his abdication. "The king appears more and more good-humoured every day," writes Fox on the 12th of April. "I believe he is really pleased with the full levées and drawing-rooms which he sees every day, and which he thinks flattering to him."* But the administration had the elements of decay and dissolution in its own bosom. Thurlow, who had continued on the woolsack because "the Tiger," as he was called, growled so ominously that the hunters were afraid to disturb him in his lair, began at the very onset to give trouble to his coadjutors. On the 12th, a royal message on the subject of Burke's measure for economical reform was discussed in the Cabinet. Thurlow was decidedly opposed to the Bill; Fox as resolute that it should be carried. The king's counsellors were wrangling till the 15th, when it was arranged that Fox should that day carry a message to the House of Commons, "which looks and points to Burke's Bill." †

The royal message was very indefinite. It recommended the consideration of an effectual plan of economy through all the branches of the public expenditure, "towards which important object his majesty has taken into his actual consideration, a reform and regulation in his civil establishment, which he will shortly lay before the House." Burke declared to the Commons that the message was the genuine effusion of his majesty's paternal care and tenderness for his subjects. Shelburne pledged himself to the Peers that the present message was the voluntary language of the sovereign himself. Horace Walpole describes Burke and Shelburne as "ridiculously extravagant in panegyrics on his majesty for this magnanimity, which certainly was no measure of his, but an artifice of their own, and but a shallow one, to persuade the people that they meant to adhere to their former principles." ‡ Burke did not desert the principles which he had advocated in the original introduction of his great scheme of reform; but like most other reformers, he was compelled to a compromise—to tolerate the continuance of some evil for the sake of securing some portion of a comprehensive good. Burke had no seat in the Cabinet, and he was thus compelled to adopt the decisions of those who were divided amongst themselves, and could only hope to hold together by mutual concessions. His bill did not interfere with the mode of supplying the Royal Household; did not abolish the two ancient

* Russell—"Memorials of Fox," vol. i. p. 313.

† *Ibid.*

‡ "Last Journals," vol. ii. p. 540.

offices of Treasurer and Cofferer,—great functionaries who carried white wands, and whose abolition might appear an encroachment upon the splendour and dignity of the Crown. He left untouched the principality of Wales and the duchies of Lancaster and Cornwall. The Ordinance and the Mint were continued in the enjoyment of their own anomalous relations with the other branches of the public service. Nevertheless, a great reform was effected. A number of useless and mischievous offices, usually held by members of parliament, were abolished, by which an annual saving of seventy-two thousand pounds was effected, and one of the readiest modes of corruption was taken away from the power of a ministry. The pension-list was limited to an annual amount of a very moderate extent, but not before extravagant pensions had been granted to Barré and Dunning. Burke, who held the office of Paymaster of the Forces, which had been a fountain of monstrous wealth to rapacious politicians, had the honour of proposing a distinct Bill for the regulation of that office, by which no balance could in future accumulate in the hands of the Paymaster, enabling him, at the public expense, to pocket the interest even of a million sterling, whilst the Chancellor of the Exchequer was raising new loans, to be followed by increased taxation.

There were two important reforms with reference to the constitution of Parliament which the Rockingham ministry lost no time in carrying. The one was to exclude Contractors from sitting in the House of Commons; the other to prevent Revenue Officers from voting at elections for representatives in Parliament. These measures for limiting the influence of the Crown did not pass without opposition from the Lord Chancellor and from lord Mansfield. To indicate how prodigal contracts were obtained through parliamentary influences, lord Shelburne pointed to the splendid palaces of contractors, that stared the people in the face all round the metropolis—the sumptuousness and expense with which they were known to live, which rivalled those of the most successful nabobs. The contractor and the nabob were not without reason the great marks for the finger of scorn to point at. To show the power of revenue officers at elections, lord Rockingham declared that in seventy boroughs the returns to parliament chiefly depended upon those functionaries. The constitutional principle of these disqualifications has never been contested since these measures became law, in spite of that opposition which Thurlow headed and Mansfield supported. A more extensive principle of Parliamentary Reform was at this time advocated by William Pitt. He held no place in the government; but he was deemed a supporter of more

liberal doctrines than some of the most influential holders of office. A large addition to the number of county members, and the repeal of the Septennial Act, had been the constant petition of the Associations in Yorkshire and other counties. The livery of London invariably maintained that the inequality of the representation was the main cause of calamitous wars and profligate expenditure. Mr. Pitt was speaking therefore the sentiments of a large body of the people, rather than representing the opinions of a party, when, on the 7th of May, 1782, he moved for a Committee to inquire into the present state of the Representation of the Commons of Great Britain. His motion pledged the House to no definite plan, but his speech sufficiently indicated the necessity for "a calm revision of the principles of the constitution, and a moderate reform of such defects as had imperceptibly and gradually stole in to deface, and which threatened at last totally to destroy, the most beautiful fabric of government in the world." There were boroughs wholly under the command of the Treasury. There were others which had no actual existence but in the return of members to the House—they had no existence in property, in population, in trade, in weight—the electors were the slaves of some person who claimed the property of the borough, and who in fact made the return. There were other boroughs where the return to parliament was sold to the best purchaser; and thus it was well understood that the nabob of Arcot had no less than seven or eight members in that House. Mr. Pitt made a pointed allusion to one, now no more, of whom every member could speak with more freedom than himself. It was the opinion of that person that without the establishment of a "more solid and equal representation of the people, by which the proper constitutional connection should be revived, this nation, with the best capacities for grandeur and happiness of any on the face of the earth, must be confounded with the mass of those whose liberties were lost in the corruption of the people." Such were the opinions advocated by the son of Chatham, "with the ardour for melioration characteristic of ingenuous youth."* The Lord Advocate of Scotland, Dundas, with that assurance which never failed him, told the ingenuous youth that he must be mistaken with regard to the opinions of his father; for on searching the Journals, he had not found that lord Chatham had ever brought in any reform whatever, and therefore plainly saw the constitution wanted no such alteration. Mr. Pitt's motion was rejected by a majority of twenty. Fox thought the defeat upon this proposition would have many bad consequences. The late ministry voted against it in a

* Aikin—"Annals of George III." vol. i. p. 306.

body. Of the new administration and their supporters friend was against friend. Fox had great difficulty to persuade Burke not to vote against the motion, but to leave the House; and Sheridan describes Burke on a subsequent debate for shortening the duration of parliaments, as having "attacked William Pitt in a scream of passion, and swore parliament was, and always had been, precisely what it ought to be, and that all people who thought of reforming it wanted to overturn the constitution." * Arguments such as those proclaimed by the younger Pitt, in 1782, were left to smoulder with occasional flickerings of combustion, under the subsequent policy of himself and his followers, till, after the lapse of fifty years, they burst out into a flame, which realized the prophecy of his father, in 1775, that either the Parliament will reform itself from within, or be reformed with a vengeance from without." Chatham assigned a term for the realization of this prediction. To the question of lord Buchan, "what will become of poor England, that doats on the imperfection of her pretended constitution?" he answered, "the gout will dispose of me soon enough to prevent me from feeling the consequences of this infatuation." He assigned the end of the century as the period when the necessity for a general reform could no longer be resisted. † Whether the Reform was to come from within or from without, it is clear that in 1782 the younger Pitt, if he had taken a statesman's view either of the power of the aristocracy or the influence of the people, could not have considered that the time had arrived for carrying to its logical conclusion of a practical change, the unquestionable theory of the inequality of the representation. It may be doubted whether Burke could have affirmed, except in a paroxysm of that temporary violence which sometimes clouded his marvellous comprehension of the great elements of a political question, that "Parliament was, and always had been, precisely what it ought to be." But we may well understand how, in his intimate knowledge of a composition of Parties, he might believe that an agitation for Reform would then be dangerous because it would be useless. It has been truly said of Burke, "that he recognized in all its bearings that great doctrine, which even in our own day is too often forgotten, that the aim of the legislator should be not truth, but expediency." ‡ We must not too hastily accept the epigrammatic reproof of his contemporary, the most delightful of writers, but no very sound judge of political action or political philosophy, that he was "too fond of the right to pursue the expedient."

* Russell—"Memorials of Fox," vol. i. p. 322.

† Note in "Parliamentary History," vol. xvii. col. 223.

‡ Buckle. "History of Civilization," vol. i. p. 416

Three days after the debate on Mr. Pitt's motion for reform, a discussion of a very interesting nature came on in the House of Commons. A Circular Letter had been issued by the earl of Shelburne, addressed to the chief magistrate of the principal cities and towns, submitting for their opinion a plan for augmenting the domestic force of the nation, by raising battalions or companies of volunteers in each locality, who were not to be moved from their places of abode except in times of actual invasion or rebellion. This plan had the support of the leading men of both parties; but some alarmists apprehended danger from arming the people, and the ministers were called upon to remember what were the consequences of putting arms into the hands of the Irish volunteers. Mr. Fox said that from the conduct of the Irish associations, the people of this country might learn a great and a laudable example of public virtue, activity and perseverance. He was answered that the volunteers of Ireland had subverted the government of their country, and overturned its constitution.* The House manifested great anxiety to stop the line of discussion. There was at that moment a crisis in the affairs of Ireland which called for the greatest forbearance and the most strenuous attempts at conciliation. We have deferred any passing glance at the affairs of Ireland, that we might present such a general view as would naturally lead to a brief narrative of the great constitutional change of 1782.

Five years before the publication of the "Drapier's Letters," in 1724, a Bill was passed by the English Parliament, denying, in its preamble, the right of the Irish House of Lords to an appellat jurisdiction, and declaring "that the king's majesty, by and with the advice of the lords spiritual and temporal, and commons of Great Britain, in Parliament assembled, had, hath, and of right ought to have, full power and authority to make laws and statutes of sufficient force and validity to bind the people and the kingdom of Ireland." † In spite of the restrictions upon its commerce, Ireland had continued to improve in wealth, and consequently in a desire for independence. When Arthur Young wrote his Tour in 1779, he said that during the previous twenty years, the towns of Ireland had been newly built over, and in a manner far superior to what was the case before. The Protestants were necessarily the sole exponents of the desire to emerge from a dependent condition; for the Roman Catholics were in complete subjection to those who alone were privileged to sit in Parliament, and who filled every office in the state. These discontents were constantly ex-

* "Parliamentary History," vol. xxxiii. col. 1 to 10.

† 6 Geo. I. c. 5.

cited by the appointments of Englishmen to the higher posts, whether ecclesiastical or civil. Swift kept up the natural jealousy during the administration of sir Robert Walpole; and under the less politic rule of the Pelhams, the desire for equal liberty and privileges took the form of a contest between the English government and the Irish House of Commons as to the applications of a surplus revenue. This dispute took place in 1753. "From this era," says Mr. Hallam, "the great parliamentary history of Ireland began, and was terminated, after half a century, by the Union." *

On the 7th of April, 1778, the British House of Commons, on the motion of lord Nugent, went into Committee on the Acts relating to the trade and commerce of Ireland; and he moved a resolution, that all goods and merchandise should be permitted to be exported direct from that kingdom to any of the plantations and settlements of Great Britain, with the exception of wool and woollen manufactures. Lord North gave his cordial consent to the proposal; and this resolution, as well as two others, permitting the importation of colonial produce to Ireland, removing the prohibition against the exportation of glass, and repealing the duties on cotton yarn of Irish manufacture, was carried unanimously. Then commenced that violent opposition from the great trading towns, with the exception of London, to which Burke referred in his letter to the people of Bristol. † The Bills which were brought in were contested in every stage; and finally a very imperfect measure—a mere promise of relief—was obtained in that Session. Popular clamour was too strong for honest statesmanship. The discontents in Ireland grew serious. The leading politicians of the Irish Parliament became naturally restless in obtaining only a pitiful instalment of their just demands. Towards Ireland George III. manifested the same exclusive spirit which he had constantly manifested towards America. He thought that every concession, however small, ought to be received with gratitude from the inferior to the superior power, and he thus wrote in November to lord North: "Experience has convinced me that this country gains nothing by granting indulgences to her dependencies; for opening the door encourages a desire for more, which, if not complied with, causes discontent, and the former benefit is obliterated." There was a national spirit rising in Ireland, which made it unsafe to dole out fragments of justice. The difficulties of the government in carrying on the war with America and France gave a new power to the Irish patriotic party. There were no English troops in Ireland. The Militia Acts were there ineffective. A descent

* "Constitutional History," chap xviii.

† *Ante*, p. 417.

upon the northern coast was expected ; and when the inhabitants of Belfast and Carrickfergus applied to the Lord-Lieutenant for forces to protect them, they were told that only sixty troopers could be sent from Dublin. The people resolved to defend themselves. They organized bodies of volunteers, without waiting for any sanction or encouragement from the State. On the 11th of May, 1779, the marquis of Rockingham stated in the House of Lords, that the independent corps and companies then in arms in Ireland amounted to ten thousand men, "all acting under illegal powers, under a kind of supposition that all government was at an end."

The Irish Parliament met in October, 1779. In the June of that year a motion of lord Shelburne, to address his majesty on the subject of the trade with Ireland, had been rejected in the British House of Lords, by a large majority. At this juncture a leader of the Irish Parliament arose, who, in all the great qualities of eloquence, vigour, and integrity, which sometimes gives to one man the power to speak and act for an entire nation, was especially fitted to be the champion of his country. Henry Grattan was then in his thirty-fourth year. He had listened to the orations of Chatham, and in a brief estimate of his character appears to have conceived the idea of what a kindred genius might accomplish. "There was in this man something that could create, subvert, or reform ; an understanding, a spirit, and an eloquence, to summon mankind to society, or to break the bonds of slavery asunder, and rule the wildness of free minds with unbounded authority ; something that could establish or overwhelm empires, and strike a blow in the world that should resound through its history." * Singular, almost grotesque, in his delivery, Grattan had borrowed none of the studied graces of Chatham, the most perfect master of elocution ; but he brought to the debates of a popular assembly the same power of reaching the point "by the flashings of his mind." The opportunity was come for exhibiting that power with a boldness and fervour which Chatham never exceeded, and which had the same character of intense nationality as the impassioned harangues of the great Englishman. On the 12th of October, Grattan moved an amendment to the Address, in which the magical words "Free Trade" carried the House with him, the members of the government not even calling for a division. In the same way he carried a vote for a money bill only of six months, instead of the usual period of two years. The government saw the necessity of yielding in the matter of Free Trade, lord North himself proposing, on the 12th of December, 1779, three Bills for the relief of the

* *Miscellaneous Works of Grattan,* p. 10.

commerce of Ireland, which were carried without opposition. This concession, like concessions to the North American colonies, came too late. "We have gotten commerce but not freedom," exclaimed Grattan, on the 19th of April, 1780, when he moved "that the king's most excellent Majesty, and the Lords and Commons of Ireland, are the only power competent to make laws to bind Ireland." The motion was then lost, by an amendment that the consideration of the question be adjourned. The question at issue of the legislative independence of Ireland has passed away; but there are passages in Grattan's speech in this memorable debate which have an enduring value. We take a few sentences as an example of the solidity of his views and the force of his expressions: "As any thing less than liberty is inadequate to Ireland, so it is dangerous to Great Britain. We are too near the British nation, we are too conversant with her history, we are too much fired by her example, to be anything less than her equal—anything less, we should be her bitterest enemies. . . . There is no policy left for Great Britain but to cherish the remains of her empire, and do justice to a country that is determined to do justice to herself, certain that she gives nothing equal to what she receives from us when we gave her Ireland. . . . It is not merely the connection of the crown, it is a constitutional annexation, an alliance of liberty, which is the true meaning and mystery of the sisterhood, and will make both countries one arm and one soul, replenishing from time to time in their immortal connection, the vital spirit of law and liberty from the lamp of each other's light. Thus combined by the ties of common interest, equal trade, and equal liberty, the constitution of both countries may become immortal; a new and milder empire may arise from the errors of the old; and the British nation assume once more her natural station—the head of mankind." *

In the course of the debate on the Irish Trade Bills in April, 1778, lord North referred to the penal laws of Ireland against Roman Catholics. He was of opinion that the Irish Parliament would see where the grievance lay, and redress it. This salutary recommendation was tardily acted upon by the Irish Parliament; but in December, 1781, upon notice being given by a member that he should bring in a Bill for the relief of the Roman Catholics, Mr. Grattan said that they deserved every encouragement, for they had united with their Protestant fellow subjects when the country was threatened with invasion, and had joined with them in a common endeavour to secure Free Trade. He quoted the observation

* "Speeches of Henry Grattan," edited by his Son, vol. i. p. 51.

of a member of the British Parliament, that Ireland could never prosper till its inhabitants were a People. The Bill for allowing Roman Catholics to enjoy property, freely to exercise their religion, educate their children, have no impediments to marriage, and retain the means of self-defence, was finally passed in February, 1782, Grattan exclaiming, as "the mover of the Declaration of Rights, I would be ashamed of giving freedom to but six hundred thousand of my countrymen, when I could extend it to two millions more." Grattan again brought forward this Declaration on the 22nd of February, two days after the question of Roman Catholic relief had been settled. The orator felt that he was supported by a physical force, much more effectual than argument: "The strength which, at your back, supports your virtue, precludes your apostacy; the armed presence of the nation will not bend." The motion was then rejected by a majority of sixty-nine. But there were eighty-eight thousand men in arms in the four provinces—thirty-four thousand in Ulster, eighteen thousand in Munster, fourteen thousand in Connaught, twenty-two thousand in Leinster. Their commander-in-chief was the earl of Charlemont; noblemen of wealth and influence were amongst their generals. The delegates of a hundred and forty-three corps had met at Dunganon on the 15th of February, and without a dissentient voice had adopted the Resolution that had been proposed to Parliament by Grattan,—that no power but the King, and the Lords and Commons of Ireland could bind that kingdom. Grattan failed in carrying his great motion upon its second proposition. He was not to be deterred from a third attempt, under more favourable auspices. At the end of February the administration of lord North was in a minority in the British Parliament. On the 14th of March, in the Irish House of Commons, a vote was passed that the Speaker should write a Circular Letter to each member, requiring him to appear in his place on that day, as he should tender the rights of the Irish Parliament. On the 27th of March, the Rockingham ministry entered upon office. The earl of Carlisle was removed from the Lord-Lieutenancy, with his Secretary Mr. Eden. The duke of Portland was appointed to the Vice-Royalty. On the first day that the new ministry took their places in the House of Commons, the late Irish Secretary, after giving a lengthened and alarming narrative of the proceedings of the Volunteers and of the Irish House of Commons, proceeded to move the repeal of the Act of the 6th of George I. He did not wish, he said, to precipitate matters, but something must be done, without the loss of a moment, to prevent consequences which it was not for him so much as to think of—to

anticipate the wishes of Ireland, previous to the discussion of Mr. Grattan's motion on the 16th. Mr. Fox was naturally indignant at such a motion having been made without any consultation with the king's present advisers, who had turned their attention, he said, to measures which would conciliate the affections of the Irish people. The ex-Secretary, having been severely reprov'd by many members for the indecency of his proceeding, withdrew the motion. On the next day Mr. Fox presented a Message from his majesty, expressing his concern that discontents and jealousies prevailed amongst his loyal subjects in Ireland, and earnestly recommending the House to take the same into their most serious consideration, in order to such a final adjustment as may give a mutual satisfaction to both kingdoms. A similar Message was delivered to the Lords by earl Shelburne.

The dreaded 16th of April arrived. The administration had earnestly desired an adjournment of the great question then to be discussed; but Lord Charlemont wrote to Fox that he should greatly fear the consequences of any postponement. Grattan was ill; but he was inflexible in determining that there should be no adjournment "unless the duke of Portland would pledge himself that all the claims of Ireland should be agreed to."* Mr. Hutchinson, the new Secretary, when the House of Commons met on the 16th, delivered a Message similar to that delivered to the British Parliament. Mr. Grattan, upon the motion for an Address, as moved by Mr. Ponsonby, rose; and considering that the battle was won, thus commenced one of his splendid harangues:—

"I am now to address a free people: ages have passed away, and this is the first moment in which you could be distinguished by that appellation.

"I have spoken on the subject of your liberty so often, that I have nothing to add, and have only to admire by what heaven-directed steps you have proceeded until the whole faculty of the nation is braced up to the act of her own deliverance.

"I found Ireland on her knees; I watched over her with an eternal solicitude; I have traced her progress from injuries to arms, and, from arms to liberty. Spirit of Swift! spirit of Molyneux! your genius has prevailed! Ireland is now a nation! In that new character I hail her! and, bowing to her august presence, I say, *Esto perpetua!*

"She is no longer a wretched colony, returning thanks to her governor for his rapine, and to her king for his oppression; nor is she now a squabbling, fretful sectary, perplexing her little wits, and

* Letter of Fitzpatrick, in "Memorials of Fox," vol. i. p. 395.

firing her furious statutes with bigotry, sophistry, disabilities, and death, to transmit to posterity insignificance and war.

“Look to the rest of Europe, and contemplate yourself, and be satisfied.”

Grattan's motion for an Amendment to the Address embraced all the points of the previous Declaration of Rights. “No one man,” wrote Fitzpatrick to Fox, “presumed to call in question a single word advanced by Grattan, and spoke only to congratulate Ireland on her emancipation, as they called it.” The triumph was soon completed by the pressure of that national will which no sane administration could resist. On the 17th of May, Mr. Fox presented to the House of Commons the Resolutions of the Lords and Commons of Ireland on the King's Message of the 16th of April, and he moved the repeal of that statute of George I. which asserted the dependence of Ireland. A Bill for this repeal passed both Houses without a division. Lord Holland ascribes the adjustment of 1782 to the confidence which Mr. Fox and Mr. Grattan placed in each other, as well as to “the force of circumstances, and the skill of negotiation.” The mutual confidence of two great men, and the skill of negotiation, would have little availed, if the Parliament of England had not acquired sufficient wisdom not to risk another civil war, with another possible dismemberment of a portion of the empire, for the sake of another assertion of legislative supremacy.

The Parliament of Ireland was overflowing with gratitude to Mr. Grattan. They desired to vote him a hundred thousand pounds for the purchase of an estate. He at first refused to receive any such public acknowledgment of his services, but eventually accepted half the amount. There was another orator in the Irish Parliament who regarded with embittered feelings the testimonies of national gratitude to one whose political experience had been far less than his own. Mr. Flood maintained that the mere repeal of the Act of George I., which was simply a declaratory law, left the question of the English supremacy undisturbed. At the time of the repeal of that statute a case of appeal from Ireland remained undecided in the Court of King's Bench, and lord Mansfield gave judgment, as he had before done, in the usual course of law. A violent contest sprang up in Ireland, which renewed the old distrust of England. Grattan lost some of his popularity. Flood laboured to stimulate the ancient jealousies. The government of lord Shelburne took the proper measure of endeavouring to quiet the alarm, by bringing in a bill, in January, 1783, “for removing and preventing all doubts which have arisen, or

might arise, concerning the exclusive rights of the Parliament and Courts of Ireland in matters of legislature and judicature, and for preventing any writ of errors or appeal, from any of his majesty's Courts in that kingdom, from being received, heard, or adjudged. in any of his majesty's Courts in the kingdom of Great Britain."

CHAPTER XVI.

Overtures for Peace between Franklin and Shelburne.—Rival negotiators from England.—Death of Lord Rockingham.—Resignation of the Secretaryship by Mr. Fox.—The Siege of Gibraltar.—Naval affairs.—Lord Howe.—Loss of the Royal George.—Howe's relief of Gibraltar after the first bombardment.—Negotiations for Peace concluded.—The Preliminaries laid before Parliament.—Parliamentary censures of the terms of Peace.—Lord Shelburne being defeated, resigns.—The king and the American minister.—Washington's farewell to his army, and his retirement.

IN securing the tranquillity of Ireland, by yielding in time to a force which could not be resisted, the administration were free to negotiate for peace, with a prospect of more favourable terms than the general issue of the war might authorise them to demand if the sister-kingdom were hostile. Ireland responded to an act of justice by an instant exhibition of cordiality. Her Parliament voted a hundred thousand pounds for the levy of twenty thousand seamen. The overtures for peace were first opened by Dr. Franklin, in a letter which he wrote to lord Shelburne. They had been known to each other during Franklin's diplomatic sojourn in London; and Franklin wrote to Shelburne on the 22nd of March, before the ministry was settled, to congratulate him on the returning good disposition of England in favour of America. When Shelburne replied, he was Secretary of State; and he adopted the course of sending a confidential friend, Mr. Oswald, to Paris, who was fully apprised of his mind, and to whom Franklin might give entire credit.* This gentleman assured Franklin that the new ministry sincerely wished for peace, and if the Independence of the United States were agreed to, there was nothing to hinder a pacification. Franklin declared that America could only treat in concert with France; and Mr. Oswald had, consequently, an interview with the count de Vergennes. This unofficial negotiator returned to England; and was authorized by a minute of the Cabinet to proceed again to Paris, to acquaint Dr. Franklin that it was agreed to treat for a general peace. A more regular envoy was sent very quickly after Oswald. Mr. Thomas Grenville, the second son of George Grenville, was the bearer of a letter to Franklin from Mr. Fox. Oswald again went back to London, and again returned, to discuss the most important

* Franklin's Works, vol. ix. p. 241.

matters with Franklin, whilst Grenville was also in constant communication with him. The shrewd old American soon found himself "in some perplexity with regard to these two negotiators." He began to suspect that the understanding between the two Secretaries of State was not perfect. "Lord Shelburne seems to wish to have the management of the treaty; Mr. Fox seems to think it is in his department."* Grenville was annoyed by the interference of Oswald, and wrote bitter complaints to Fox. In the midst of these differences, the head of the ministry, the marquis of Rockingham, died on the 1st of July. The day previous Fox was in a minority in the Cabinet upon the question of acknowledging the Independence of America, before a treaty of peace was arranged. He accordingly declared his intention to resign. It is not within the province of our history to enter into an examination of those disagreements between lord Shelburne and Mr. Fox which led to another important though partial change of administration. "Differences of opinion, suspicions of under-hand dealing, and hostile cabals and intrigues, and great resentment thereupon subsisted in the minds of Mr. Fox and Mr. Grenville." † There were the usual cabals about having another man of high title, great connections, and small abilities, to succeed lord Rockingham as prime minister. It was not a mere contest for superior power between the two able secretaries. The duke of Portland was recommended to the king to be the First Lord of the Treasury. The king appointed lord Shelburne to the high office. Fox and Cavendish resigned; Burke and Sheridan followed their example. William Pitt became Chancellor of the Exchequer; Thomas Townshend and lord Grantham, Secretaries of State. Grenville returned indignantly from his position at Paris, much to the annoyance of his brother, earl Temple, who obtained the Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland. Walpole observes that when the First Lord of the Treasury adorned his new Board with the most useful acquisition of his whole administration, his Chancellor of the Exchequer, "young William Pitt," in accepting the seals, accepted "the more difficult task of enlisting himself as the rival of Charles Fox, who had fondly espoused, and kindly, not jealously nor fearfully, wished to have him as his friend." ‡ Their fathers were rivals. But of how much greater import was the rivalry of the sons of Holland and Chatham—how much longer was its duration; what mightier events called forth its unceasing exercise!

* Franklin's "Journal of Negotiations," June 17.

† Lord Holland, in "Memorials of Fox," vol. i. p. 387.

‡ "Last Journals," vol. ii. p. 559.

The public sympathy did not go along with the popular favourite upon the question of his abdication of office, at a time when unanimity of councils was essentially important. The parliamentary explanations of Fox and Burke have floated down the stream of time, with many other historical straws. The principle of the mistake into which the great Whig leader fell has been candidly stated by one who has a claim to speak with authority. Lord John Russell says, "The field of battle was the worst that could be chosen. Lord Shelburne, the friend and colleague of lord Chat-ham, a Secretary of State under lord Rockingham, a man of varied acquirements and undoubted abilities, was, personally, far superior to the duke of Portland as a candidate for the office of Prime-Minister. The king, therefore, had a great advantage over Mr. Fox in the apparent ground of the quarrel. Had Mr. Fox declared that he would not serve under any one, or, at all events, not under lord Shelburne, who had withheld from him knowledge indispensable to his performance of the duties of Secretary of State, he would have stood on firm ground. The choice of a Prime-Minister against the choice of the Crown, and that in the person of a man whose rank and fair character were his only recommendations, appeared to the public an unwarrantable pretension, inspired by narrow jealousies and aristocratic prejudices." *

The Session of Parliament was prorogued on the 11th of July, immediately after the formation of Lord Shelburne's ministry. The king's speech was wise and temperate. He would make every effort to obtain peace; but if the hope of a speedy termination of the calamities of war should be disappointed, he trusted that the blessing of heaven upon our arms would enable him to obtain fair and reasonable terms of pacification. "The most triumphant career of victory would not excite me to aim at more; and I have the satisfaction to be able to add, that I see no reason which should induce me to think of accepting less." The contest in America was reduced to a very narrow field of exertion. Rodney's great victory had prevented any immediate attempts to renew the maritime war in the West Indies. There had been decided successes in the East Indies, after a series of events which occasionally threatened our ascendancy; but the contest there was not yet ended. † One great struggle required to be decided before Spain would be willing to relinquish the chief object for which she engaged in the war,—the re-conquest of Gibraltar.

* "Memorials of Fox," vol. i. p. 467.

† The narrative of East Indian affairs, from the period of Hastings becoming Governor-General, is resumed later on.

When the Spanish ambassador, on the 16th of June, 1779, presented a manifesto to the Court of St. James's, which was considered equivalent to a declaration of war, general Elliott, the veteran governor of Gibraltar, was not quite unprepared for the possibility of hostilities. He had a force of artillery and engineers of about five hundred men; four English regiments, and three detachments of Hanoverians,—altogether amounting to upwards of five thousand rank and file. On the 21st of June the communication between Spain and Gibraltar was closed, by an order from Madrid. A few small British ships were at that time in their usual anchorage off the fortress. A friendly intercourse had been previously carried on between the military of the fortress and the Spaniards of the neighbouring villages. Excursions into the country, and to the coast of Barbary “rendered Gibraltar as eligible a station as any to which a soldier could be ordered.”* The rock of Gibraltar, projecting into the sea from the coast of Spain, could only be approached by that low neck of sandy land called “the Neutral Ground.” The isolated fortress was very soon invested by the troops of Spain, and the supplies from the main-land were necessarily cut off. In July, the Enterprize frigate brought a small quantity of fresh provisions from Tangier; and boats occasionally arrived from the African coast with live stock and fruit. But such supplies became very precarious, through the presence of Spanish squadrons in the bay. The people of the town under the rock had always been required, even in time of peace, to have a store of six months' provisions. They had neglected this precaution, and in August many were compelled to seek subsistence elsewhere. Partial bombardments began. The apprehensions of famine in January, 1780, were very serious. Thistles, dandelions, and wild leeks, which grew upon the rocks, became the daily sustenance of the families of officers and soldiers, for whom the pittance distributed from the Victualling Office was insufficient. The ingenuity of the Hanoverian soldiers was displayed in their contrivances for hatching chickens by artificial heat. But when the most frightful extremity of hunger appeared threatening, the fleet of Rodney arrived, after his victory over the Spaniards off Cape St. Vincent. Don Juan de Langara, the Spanish admiral, was carried as a prisoner to Gibraltar; and being desirous to go on board the ship of admiral Digby, he there saw prince William Henry, afterwards William IV., serving as a midshipman. Great was the Spaniard's aston-

* In our narrative of this memorable siege, we have Captain Drinkwater's History constantly before us; but it will be unnecessary to refer to the particular passages of this excellent work.

ishment that a Prince of the Blood should tell him—with the same obedience to orders that any other petty-officer would have shown—that the boat was ready for his returning; and the Spaniard exclaimed, “Well does Great Britain merit the empire of the sea!” The example has been followed in our own day; not, we may trust, in any compromise between rank and duty, but in that spirit which prescribes that every youth who aspires to the future command of others should thoroughly learn to do the humblest and the hardest work of the profession which he has chosen.

The storehouses of Gibraltar were now full; the garrison had received reinforcements; the troops were in good heart. In June, an attempt was made to burn the British vessels by Spanish fire-ships; but it signally failed. The summer wore on without any very important incidents; although the blockade continued unremitting. But in the autumn the scurvy had broken out among the troops, from the continued use of salt provisions. Men crept to their posts upon crutches, or pined and died in the crowded hospitals. A Danish vessel, laden with lemons and oranges, was fortunately intercepted; and the sovereign remedy of lemon-juice, which Captain Cook had successfully tried, and the ignorance of which caused the ships' companies of admiral Hosier and commodore Byron miserably to perish, saved the garrison of Gibraltar. Want of provisions again became distressing. The intercourse with Tangier was prohibited by the emperor of Morocco. At last, on the 12th of April, 1781, the half-starved troops and remaining inhabitants of the town, saw a fleet of a hundred vessels entering the Gut, convoyed by men-of-war, who lay-to under the Barbary shore. The relief was well-timed. The dread of famine was at an end. But on that day the Spaniards commenced a fierce bombardment from their lines, which continued uninterruptedly through May and June. The town was nearly destroyed; but the loss of life was not considerable. The works which the Spaniards had constructed were of the most formidable character; and they incessantly laboured in making additions which became more threatening. The brave and sagacious Elliott, who had so long been satisfied with the passive resistance of firing upon the lines and batteries, now determined to hazard a sortie. At sunset, on the 26th of November, he issued his orders for two thousand men, under the command of Brigadier Ross, but accompanied by himself, to march out from the fortress, and attack the batteries which were three quarters of a mile distant. The surprise was complete; the Spaniards deserted their works in terror; and in an hour the object of the sally was effected by the destruction of the enemy's

works by fire, and by the blowing-up of their magazines. The batteries continued burning for five days ; and then nothing but heaps of sand could be seen by the gazers from the summit of the rock.

The incessant activity of the besiegers and the besieged may be estimated from an expressive entry in Captain Drinkwater's narrative of the proceedings in May, 1782 : " From seven in the evening of the 4th to the same hour the succeeding afternoon, both the garrison and the enemy were silent. This was the first twenty-four hours in which there had been no firing for the space of thirteen months." The ruined works of the Spaniards were repaired ; and it became evident that, during the year when a general pacification appeared a probable event, the Spanish monarchy would put forth all its strength to recover Gibraltar before the war should come to an end. The duke de Crillon had returned from the conquest of St. Philip, in Minorca, to take the command of the army before Gibraltar. There were thirty-three thousand French and Spanish troops encamped on the Neutral Ground. Their batteries were served by a hundred and seventy heavy pieces of cannon. Preparations were making for a conjoined attack by sea and land. In the port of Algeiras ten large ships were cut down to serve as the foundations of floating batteries, impregnable and incombustible. General Elliott also prepared for a new mode of defence, suggested by the Lieutenant-Governor. Furnaces were distributed through the works for the purpose of making balls red-hot—for roasting potatoes, as the soldiers said, with the true English humour. But the peril was imminent. Was the government at home not aware of the amazing preparations for the reduction of Gibraltar, having the knowledge that the united French and Spanish fleet, which had been threatening the Channel in July, had sailed back to the southward ? Before we pursue farther the narrative of the siege, it may be desirable to advert to the movements of the British navy.

Admiral lord Howe, in 1776, had gone as a Commissioner to America with an earnest desire to restore peace between Great Britain and her colonies. When he returned home in 1778, he and his brother were received with little cordiality by the members of the government. Until the overtarrow of lord North's administration lord Howe was unemployed. He complained, as a member of the House of Commons, of the conduct pursued towards the navy, by men who had neither the ability to act on their own judgment, nor the integrity and good sense to follow the advice of others. His value as an officer was universally known ; and in a parliamentary debate which had reference to the determination of

Howe to quit the service, admiral Pigot gave a strong though homely testimony to the affection of the sailors for the brave admiral who had seen service for forty years, by repeating their common saying, "Give us Black Dick, and we fear nothing."* When the new administration was formed in 1782, admiral Keppel was created a viscount, and was appointed First Lord of the Admiralty. Lord Howe was also raised to the peerage, and appointed to the command of a fleet to be employed in the Channel, or wherever else the king's service should require. On the 20th of April he embarked at Portsmouth for the Texel, to watch the Dutch fleet. Having confined the Dutch to their ports through the month of May, he received orders to return to Spithead; and was then directed to cruise off Brest, for the purpose of intercepting the combined fleets of France and Spain which had sailed from Cadiz on the 4th of June. He accomplished the great object of preventing the enemy attacking the West India convoy; but the French and Spaniards successfully evaded a general action; and Howe returned to Portsmouth on the 5th of August.

A few weeks were necessary for Howe to equip his fleet for the important service of the relief of Gibraltar, for which he was now ordered. A calamity which, amidst the dreary catalogue of disasters at sea, will probably never lose its interest, occurred at Portsmouth during the short period of preparation. On the 29th of August, the Royal George, a ship of a hundred and eight guns, suddenly overset in Portsmouth Harbour, filled, and sank; by which catastrophe, according to the inscription upon a monument in the church-yard of Portsea, nine hundred persons perished. The Royal George was the flag-ship of admiral Kempenfeldt. He was in his cabin, unconscious of any danger; whilst sailors were clearing a lighter alongside, and stowing her freight of rum in the hold of the great ship, and the decks were crowded with women and children from the shore, and with Jews and other tradesmen. According to the narrative of one of the seamen who was saved, the ship was heeled on her larboard side, that the water-cock which admitted sea-water to the hold on the starboard side might be replaced by a new cock. To accomplish this, the whole of the guns on the larboard side were run out as far as they would go, and those of the starboard side were drawn in amidship. About nine o'clock in the morning, says this narrative, "the additional quantity of rum on board the ship, and also the quantity of sea-water which had dashed in through the port holes, brought the larboard port-holes of the lower gun-deck nearly level with the

* Barrow's "Life of Earl Howe," p. 124.

sea." The carpenter went on the quarter-deck twice, to tell the lieutenant of the watch that the ship could not bear this, and begged him to give orders to right. The lieutenant's answer was very testy; and the men around became uneasy, for they knew the danger. The drummer was then called, to beat "to right ship." There was no time to beat the drum, for the ship was sinking.*

"It was not in the battle;
No tempest gave the shock;
She sprang no fatal leak;
She ran upon no rock.

"His sword was in its sheath;
His fingers held the pen,
When Kempenfeldt went down
With twice four hundred men."†

It appears from the minutes of the Court-Martial held to inquire into this frightful accident, that "from the short space of time between the alarm being given and the sinking of the ship, the Court was of opinion that some material part of her frame gave way, which can only be accounted for by the general state of decay of her timbers."‡

On the 11th of September lord Howe sailed from Spithead with a fleet of thirty-four sail of the line, six frigates, and three fire-ships, having on board two regiments for the reinforcement of the garrison at Gibraltar, and conveying transports with stores for their relief. On the 12th of September, forty-seven sail of the line, with ten battering-ships, and innumerable small craft, were assembled in the bay of Gibraltar, to co-operate with an army of forty thousand men in one grand attack upon the fortress, which was defended by seven thousand tried veterans. A siege has since been conducted upon a grander scale; but the author of the History of this siege was right when he then said, "Such a naval and military spectacle most certainly is not to be equalled in the annals of war." On the morning of the 13th the ten battering ships moored within ten or twelve hundred yards of the bastions of Gibraltar. The balls were heated in the furnaces of the garrison; and when the first ship dropped her anchors, the firing commenced from the fortress. Before ten o'clock on that eventful morning four hundred pieces of artillery were playing at the same moment. The battering-ships were as formidable as they were represented to be. The heaviest shells rebounded from their tops; the thirty-two pound shot seemed incapable of making any impression upon their hulls. Sometimes

* "Penny Magazine," June, 1834.

† Cowper.

‡ Barrow's "Life of Lord Howe," p. 139.

a battering-ship appeared to be on fire, but the flames were quickly extinguished by mechanical contrivances. An Italian officer on board the combined fleet has given a vivid description of the result of the persevering fire from the British works: "Our hopes of ultimate success became less sanguine when, at two o'clock, the floating battery commanded by the prince of Nassau (on board of which was also the engineer who had invented the machinery) began to smoke on the side exposed to the garrison, and it was apprehended she had taken fire. The firing, however, continued till we could perceive the fortifications had sustained some damage; but at seven o'clock all our hopes vanished. The fire from our floating batteries entirely ceased, and rockets were thrown up as signals of distress. In short, the red-hot balls from the garrison had by this time taken such good effect, that nothing now was thought of but saving the crews, and the boats of the combined fleet were immediately sent on that service. A little after midnight the floating battery which had been the first to show symptoms of conflagration, burst out into flames, upon which the fire from the rock was increased with terrific vengeance; the light produced from the flames was equal to noon-day, and greatly exposed the boats of the fleet in removing the crews. During the night one or other of these batteries was discovered to be on fire; they were so close to the walls that the balls pierced into them full three feet, but being made of solid beds of green timber, the holes closed up after the shot, and for want of air they did not immediately produce the effect. At five A.M., one of them blew up with a very great explosion, and soon after the whole of them, having been abandoned by their crews, were on fire fore and aft, and many of their gallant fellows were indebted to the exertions of the English for their lives. As the English boats were towing one of these batteries into the Mole, not supposing her to be on fire, she also blew up." *

The great operations of the 13th of September were decisive as to the eventual issue of the siege. Lord Howe entered the mouth of the Straits with his fleet on the 11th of October. The combined fleets of France and Spain avoided an engagement, and the stores and reinforcements were landed from the British squadron. "Gibraltar," to use the words of Mr. Pitt, "was relieved by a skill and courage that baffled superior numbers." A storm had driven the enemy's fleet from the immediate neighbourhood of the port, and the object of landing the stores and reinforcements was partially accomplished. The fleets of France and Spain, and the British fleet, entered the Mediterranean, each driven by the storm. Howe

* Barrow's "Life of Lord Howe," p. 133.

drew up in line of battle ; but the enemy declined to engage, and the British admiral returned to Gibraltar, and completed the work for which he was sent. An attempt was made to cut off the rear of Howe's fleet, but it failed ; and the French and Spaniards refusing a general action, Howe returned to England. The siege was languidly continued during the winter. On the 6th of February, 1783, the duc de Crillon informed general Elliott that the preliminaries of peace had been signed at Paris on the 20th of January, and that Gibraltar was to remain in the possession of Great Britain. From the commencement of the blockade to the cessation of arms, the siege had endured three years, seven months, and twelve days. The total loss of the garrison was twelve hundred, of whom only four hundred and seventy were killed, or died of their wounds, or were disabled.

The summer and part of the autumn were employed by the British envoy at Paris, and by Dr. Franklin, in discussions upon points that were essential to be settled before the basis of a treaty of peace with America could be established. Franklin states that Mr. Fitzherbert and Mr. Oswald, on the part of Great Britain, seemed at first studiously to avow their wish not to use any expressions that might imply an acknowledgment of American Independence ; "but our refusing otherwise to treat, at length induced them to get over that difficulty, and then we came to the point of making propositions." * Three other Commissioners were finally associated with Franklin, Mr. Jay, Mr. Adams, and Mr. Laurens. These associates were probably able to set aside the original determination, so strongly expressed by Franklin on the first overtures from lord Shelburne, not to negotiate without the concurrence of the other allied powers. They conceived a distrust of France, which appears to have been unwarranted ; although it was clear that in continuing the contest the allies looked to exclusive advantages alone. Spain could not readily forego her wish to recover Gibraltar ; and even after the failure of the grand attack of September, she persevered in a demand for its cession. At length, on the 30th of November, preliminary articles were signed between the Commissioner of Great Britain and the Commissioners of the United States. Franklin communicated the fact to the count de Vergennes, who was naturally offended at what he considered the infraction of a mutual promise not to sign articles of pacification except with the joint consent of France and the United States. Franklin made rather an awkward apology : "Nothing has been agreed in the preliminaries contrary to the interests of France ;

* Works, vol. ix. p. 439.

and no peace is to take place between us and England, till you have concluded yours. Your observation is, however, apparently just, that in not consulting you before they were signed, we have been guilty of neglecting a point of *bien-séance*.*

The Parliament was opened by the king on the 5th of December, the Houses having met on the previous 26th of November and were then adjourned in the expectation of some definite result from the negotiations. The opening words of the speech are very memorable. His majesty declared he had lost no time in giving the necessary orders to prohibit the further prosecution of offensive war upon the continent of North America. Adopting with decision what he collected to be the sense of his parliament and his people, he had directed all his measures to an entire and cordial reconciliation with those colonies. He had not hesitated to go the full length of the powers vested in him, and had offered to declare them free and independent States, by an article to be inserted in the treaty of peace. Provisional articles had been agreed upon, to take effect whenever terms of peace should be finally settled with the Court of France. The king then said, "In thus admitting their separation from the crown of these kingdoms I have sacrificed every consideration of my own to the wishes and opinions of my people. I make it my humble and earnest prayer to Almighty God, that Great Britain may not feel the evils which might result from so great a dismemberment of the empire; and that America be free from those calamities which have formerly proved in the mother country how essential monarchy is to the enjoyment of constitutional liberty. Religion, language, interest, affections, may, and I hope will, yet prove a bond of permanent union between the two countries." The violent debates on the Address belong to the history of faction rather than to the history of the country. Tories were indignant at the concession of American independence. Whigs complained that the concession had not been the first step in the negotiation. Lord Shelburne in former years had held that when the colonies should become independent, the sun of England would be set; and he was now reproached for his inconsistency in granting their independence.

On the 20th of January, 1783, the Preliminaries of Peace were signed between Great Britain and France and Spain. With Holland there was a suspension of arms; and the Preliminaries of Peace were not signed until the 2nd of September. The articles of pacification with the United States, with the exception of the first article acknowledging their independence, are now of minor

* Letter to Vergennes—Franklin's Works, vol. ix. p. 451.

importance. By the treaty with France, England ceded St. Lucia and Tobago, and gained back Granada, St. Vincent's, Dominica, St. Christopher's, Nevis, and Montserrat. The French recovered some possessions in Africa, and in the East Indies. The old stipulations for the demolition of Dunkirk were given up. To Spain Great Britain ceded Minorca and the Floridas. The principle of the final treaty with Holland was on the basis of mutual restitution.

Thus, then, was finished one of the most calamitous wars that England had ever been driven into, through a mistaken view of the relative positions of a mother country and her colonies, and an obstinate reliance upon her power to enforce obedience. It might have been expected that a pacification which involved no humiliating conditions, beyond the acknowledgment of that independence of the United States which it was no longer possible to withhold, would have been received with unmingled satisfaction. On the contrary, a combination of parties was entered into for the purpose of removing lord Shelburne and his ministry; a coalition which, to our minds, is not a pleasant exhibition of the motives which sometimes unite the most opposite factions in the pursuit of power. On the 17th of February, the two Houses took into consideration the Preliminaries of Peace with France, Spain, and America. In the House of Lords the ministers carried the Address of Thanks to the Crown by a majority of thirteen. In the house of Commons they were defeated by a majority of sixteen. On the 21st of February lord John Cavendish moved Resolutions of Censure on the terms of the Peace, which were carried by a majority of seventeen. Mr. Fox and Mr. Pitt were on this occasion brought into immediate conflict—"the tug of war" which was to last for twenty years was now begun. The particular points of attack or defence in the conditions of the peace have little to interest us. But the principles exhibited by these great rivals on so stirring an occasion have a permanent value. Fox defended the coalition of parties which some had censured; but he emphatically proclaimed his adhesion to his own party: "I am free to boast of being connected with a set of men, whose principles are the basis on which the state has for a long time past been preserved from absolute destruction. It is to the virtues of these men that I have surrendered my private opinions and inclinations. It is thus only that I could prevent myself from falling into those errors which the prejudices, passions, and perplexities of human nature, will, at times, occasion. And thus I have been always answerable to my country for my conduct; for in every public transaction I have thought it most safe to resign

my private opinion, when I found it departing from the general opinion of those with whom I was connected by friendship, confidence, and veneration. Those whose virtues claimed my respect, and whose abilities my admiration, could not but prove the best directors of a conduct which, alone, might fall by its temerity, or be lost by temptation." Pitt was self-reliant in his own confidence in the purity of his intentions: "High situation, and great influence, are desirable objects to most men, and objects which I am not ashamed to pursue, which I am even solicitous to possess, whenever they can be acquired with honour, and retained with dignity. On these respectable conditions, I am not less ambitious to be great and powerful than it is natural for a young man, with such brilliant examples before him, to be. But even these objects I am not beneath relinquishing, the moment my duty to my country, my character, and my friends, renders such a sacrifice indispensable. Then I hope to retire, not disappointed, but triumphant; triumphant in the conviction that my talents, humble as they are, have been earnestly, zealously, and strenuously employed, to the best of my apprehension, in promoting the truest welfare of my country, and that, however I may stand chargeable with weakness of understanding, or error of judgment, nothing can be imputed to my official capacity which bears the most distant connection with an interested, a corrupt, or a dishonest intention." The struggle for office was over. On the 24th of February lord Shelburne resigned. One of his Secretaries of State, lord Grantham, wrote to sir James Harris that the fallen minister trusted too much to his measures, and that the Parliament, spoilt by long habits of interest, gave no credit to them.* The measures of lord Shelburne contemplated a much wider field of action than his opponents, with the exception of Burke, could have admitted into their views. In the king's speech at the opening of the Session, his majesty recommended a revision of our whole trading system, upon the same comprehensive and liberal principles that had been adopted concerning the commerce of Ireland. There is a letter of February, 1783, from Mr. Benjamin Vaughan to Dr. Franklin, in which, speaking of "the boldness of my friend's conduct," evidently alluding to lord Shelburne, he thus describes the views of the minister who had secured peace for his country: "You will take pleasure in hearing that he talked of making England a free port, for which he said we were fitted by nature, capital, love of enterprise, maritime connections, and position between the Old and New World, and the North and South of Europe; and that those who were best circumstanced for trade,

* "Correspondence of the Earl of Malmesbury," vol. i. p. 501.

could not but be gainers by having trade open."* Shelburne's opinions upon a liberal system of commerce were before his time. They were entirely opposed to the existing ignorance of the commercial public, and they would necessarily have failed. If he had remained in power, the great trading communities would have ensured his fall, had he dared to promulgate the principles which could only be accepted when England had received the enlightenment of more than half a century's experience.

Jonathan Shipley, bishop of St. Asaph, was an old and intimate friend of Dr. Franklin. To the Bishop the American philosopher wrote some words, after the conclusion of the peace, which ought not to pass out of remembrance: "Let us now forgive and forget. Let each country seek its advancement in its own internal advantages of arts and agriculture, not in retarding or preventing the prosperity of the other. America will, with God's blessing, become a great and happy country; and England, if she has at length gained wisdom, will have gained something more valuable, and more essential to prosperity, than all she has lost; and will still be a great and respectable nation." † To forgive and forget was perhaps more difficult to the king of England than to any one in his dominions. It has been asserted, and we think with much unfairness, that "the intense hatred with which George III. regarded the Americans was so natural to such a mind as his, that one can hardly blame his constant exhibition of it during the time that the struggle was actually impending. But what is truly disgraceful is, that, after the war was over, he displayed this rancour on an occasion when, of all others, he was bound to suppress it." This assertion is supported by a statement that when Jefferson and Adams made their appearance at Court in 1786, George III. "treated these eminent men with marked incivility, although they were then paying their respects to him in his own palace." ‡ John Adams was the first minister of the United States accredited to Great Britain. He was presented to the king in June, 1785. Jefferson, who succeeded Franklin as minister to France, went to London in 1786, to arrange some treaties in concert with Adams; and he says that when he appeared at Court, he saw, or thought he saw, that "the ulcerations in the king's mind left nothing to be expected from him;" and that, on his presentation to their majesties at their levées, "it was impossible for anything to be more ungracious than their notice of Mr. Adams and myself." § Mr. Buckle, in referring to these

* Franklin's Works, vol. ix. p. 489.

† *Ibid.*, vol. ix. p. 499.

‡ Buckle—"History of Civilization," vol. i. p. 423.

§ Tucker—"Life of Jefferson," vol. i. p. 226.

passages in Jefferson's correspondence, omits to mention the remarkable interview between George III. and Mr. Adams, on the 1st of June, 1785—an interview which the American ambassador described the next day, to the American Secretary, Mr. Jay, in a letter of permanent historical interest. He was left with the king, and lord Carmarthen, the secretary of state, alone. He presented his letter of credence as Minister Plenipotentiary, and expressed the desire of the United States to cultivate the most liberal and friendly intercourse between his majesty's subjects and their citizens. He then said, "The appearance of a Minister from the United States to your majesty's Court will form an epoch in the history of England and America. I think myself more fortunate than all my fellow citizens, in having the distinguished honour to be the first to stand in your majesty's royal presence in a diplomatic character; and I shall esteem myself the happiest of men if I can be instrumental in recommending my country more and more to your majesty's royal benevolence, and of restoring an entire esteem, confidence, and affection, or, in better words, 'the old good nature,' and the good old humour, between people, who, though separated by an ocean, and under different governments, have the same language, a simliar religion, a kindred blood. I beg your majesty's permission to add that although I have sometimes before been entrusted by my country, it was never in my whole life in a manner so agreeable to myself."

Mr. Adams, in continuing his narrative, says that the king listened to every word he said, with an apparent emotion; that he was himself much agitated; but that his majesty "was much affected, and answered me with more tremor than I had spoken with." The king said, "Sir—the circumstances of this audience are so extraordinary, the language you have now held is so extremely proper, and the feelings you have discovered so justly adapted to the occasion, that I must say, that I not only receive with pleasure the assurance of the friendly disposition of the United States, but that I am very glad the choice has fallen upon you to be their Minister. I wish you, sir, to believe, and that it may be understood in America, that I have done nothing in the late contest but what I thought myself indispensably bound to do, by the duty which I owed to my people. I will be very frank with you. I was the last to conform to the separation; but the separation having been made, and having become inevitable, I have always said, as I say now, that I would be the first to meet the friendship of the United States as an Independent Power. The moment I see such sentiments and language as yours prevail, and a disposition to give this

country the preference, that moment I shall say, let the circumstances of language, religion, and blood, have their natural and full effect."*

There is one man who was the chief instrument in the hands of Providence for conducting the war, by his energy, prudence, and constancy, to that triumphant assertion of Independence which has built up the great North American republic. To Washington the historian naturally turns, as to the grandest object of contemplation, when he laid aside his victorious sword,—that sword which, with those he had worn in his earlier career, he bequeathed to his nephews with words characteristic of his nobleness: "These swords are accompanied with an injunction not to unsheathe them for the purpose of shedding blood, except it be for self-defence, or in defence of their country and its rights; and in the latter case, to keep them unsheathed, and prefer falling with them in their hands to the relinquishment thereof."† On the 4th of December, 1782, Washington bade farewell to the principal officers of his army. He filled a glass and said, "With a heart full of love and gratitude, I now take leave of you. I most devoutly wish that your latter days may be as prosperous and happy as your former ones have been glorious and honourable." He asked that each companion in arms should come and take him by the hand. In silence the friendly grasp was given and returned, as each passed before him. On the 20th of December the commander of the American armies resigned his commission to a deputation from Congress, in a modest speech, of which these were the concluding words: "Having now finished the work assigned me, I retire from the great theatre of action; and, bidding farewell to the august body under whose orders I have so long acted, I here offer my commission, and take my leave of all the employments of my public life." Eight days after this act, he wrote to a friend—"I feel myself eased of a load of public care. I hope to spend the remainder of my days in cul-

* Works of John Adams, vol. viii. The remaining passage of the official letter of Mr. Adams is sufficient evidence that the king did not treat the first eminent American who came into his presence with "marked incivility." "The king then asked me whether I came last from France; and upon my answering in the affirmative, he put on an air of familiarity, and smiling, or rather, laughing, said, 'There is an opinion among some people that you are not the most attached of all your countrymen to the manners of France.' I was surprised at this, because I thought it an indiscretion, and a descent from his dignity. I was a little embarrassed, but determined not to deny the truth on the one hand, nor leave him to infer from it any attachment to England on the other. I threw off as much gravity as I could, and assumed an air of gaiety and a tone of decision as far as was decent, and said, 'That opinion, Sir, is not mistaken; I must avow to your majesty I have no attachment but to my own country.' The king replied as quick as lightning, 'An honest man will never have any other.'"

† Will of Washington," 1799.

tivating the affections of good men, and in the practice of the domestic virtues." There was public work for Washington yet to do—the work of “directing the formation of a new government for a great people, the first time that so vast an experiment had ever been tried by man—finally retiring from the supreme power to which his virtue had raised him over the nation he had created, and whose destinies he had guided as long as his aid was required.”*

* Lord Brougham—“Statesmen,” vol. ii. p. 333.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Political despondency at the close of the American War.—Supposed decay of Population.—Its real increase.—Development of the productive power of the country.—Agriculture extended and improved.—Agricultural condition of the Eastern, South Midland, North Midland, and South Eastern, counties.—Norfolk.—Mr. Coke.—Suffolk.—Essex.—Buckinghamshire.—Oxfordshire.—Northamptonshire.—Bedfordshire.—Francis, duke of Bedford.—Improved breeds of sheep and oxen.—Robert Bakewell.—Consumption of animal food in England.—Cambridgeshire.—Lincolnshire.—The Great Level of the Fens.—Lincoln Heath and the Wolds.—Nottinghamshire.—Derbyshire.—Surrey.—Middlesex.—Kent.—Sussex.—Hants.—Berkshire.—Windsor Forest.

THE summer which followed the close of the American war is described as “an amazing and portentous one.”* There were alarming meteors and tremendous thunder storms. For many weeks of June, July, and August, the sun was clouded over with a smoky fog that proceeded from whatever quarter the wind blew. At noon, it cast “a rust-coloured ferruginous light;” at rising and setting, it was “lurid and blood-coloured.”† The phenomenon prevailed over the whole of Europe. The people looked with a superstitious awe on the “disastrous twilight.” The poet asked of contending factions,

“Is it a time to wrangle, when the props
And pillars of our planet seem to fail ;
And Nature with a dim and sickly eye
To wait the close of all?” †

With “fear of change,” monarchs were perplexed. Politicians of every rank, subject as Englishmen are to skiey influences, then especially believed that their country was ruined. Sir John Sinclair, one of the most enlightened men of his time, who, with a few others, had confidence in the resources of British spirit and industry, ventured to hold a different opinion. He says, that in 1783, in the midst of such terror and despondency, he hesitated not to assert that Britain might still preserve its elevated rank amongst the powers of Europe, although his ideas were then considered visionary.§ He rested his confidence upon the principle that debts and taxes were not alone sufficient to effect the ruin of a nation ;

* White’s “Selborne,” Letter lxxv.

† *Ibid.*

‡ Cowper, “Task,” book, ii.

§ “History of the Revenue,” vol. ii., Appendix iv.

and he was supported by the fact, that for a century previous the same gloomy prognostications had always resulted in the undeniable advance of the country in material prosperity. Some of these prognostications were not the mere clamours of popular ignorance, or factious exaggeration, or foreign jealousy. Lord Lyttleton, in 1739; lord Bolingbroke, in 1745; David Hume, in 1761; Adam Smith, in 1776; Dr. Price, in 1777; lord Stair, in 1783,—each honestly believed that England was fast approaching the condition of inevitable bankruptcy. In 1784, marshal Conway, who, as one of the Shelburne administration, had been ejected from power in the previous year, writes to his brother,—“I feel rather obliged than angry at all those who have any how contributed to shuffle me out of the most troublesome and dangerous scene this country was ever engaged in. I don't desire to be an actor in the ruin of my country; and if the vessel must sink, I had rather be a passenger than the pilot. . . . The sums spent in losing America are a blow we shall never recover.”*

The statesmen and economists who predicted absolute ruin from any increase of the Public Debt beyond a certain maximum—twenty-five millions, or a hundred millions—never appear to have adequately contemplated the possibility of the productive power of the country keeping pace with the additional load of taxation. Sir William Blackstone, who in general exhibits a pleasant optimism as to matters of government, speaks out very plainly as to the inconveniences of enormous taxes caused by the magnitude of national incumbrances. He tells the public creditor that money in the funds does really and intrinsically exist only in “the land, the trade, and the personal industry of the subject, from which the money must arise that supplies the several taxes.”† The pledges for the security of these debts being thus defined, the question of the security can only be answered by estimating the capacity of a country to make constant advances in a course of material improvement.

The common notions of the decline of England that prevailed during the first and second decades of the reign of George III. were associated with the vehement assertion that her population was decreasing. Poets and statisticians equally maintained that “wealth accumulates and men decay.”‡ Goldsmith admits that the depopulation which his exquisite poem deplures, is affirmed by several of his wisest and best friends as “no where to be seen.” Yet Goldsmith had supporters in his opinion, who had no pretensions to “the

* MS. Letter in the possession of the author of the “Popular History.”

† Kerr's edit. vol. i. p. 322.

‡ “Deserted Village.”

poet's imagination." Dr. Price maintained, in 1777, that England and Wales contained no more than 4,763,000 souls. Arthur Young, in 1770, says, "it is asserted by those writers who affect to run down our affairs, that, rich as we are, our population has suffered: that we have lost a million and a half of people since the Revolution; and that we are at present declining in numbers."* The estimates of Gregory King, founded upon the Return of the Hearth-money collectors, exhibited a population of five millions and a half at the period of the Revolution.† Either those estimates were utterly fallacious, and ought to have shown a million and a half less of people; or the belief was a delusion that "it is employment that creates population"—that "all industrious countries are populous, and proportionably to the degree of their industry."‡ From the accession of George I. to the war with the North American Colonies,—a period of sixty years,—the country had been steadily progressing in a course of improvement; in partial inclosures of cultivable waste land, in better methods of husbandry, in extension of manufactures, in more complete means of internal communication. The advance was slow, compared with what remained to be done. An elaborate and careful statistical writer of 1774, in setting forth the improving position of the country, puts in the title-page of his work that it is "intended to show that we have not as yet approached near the summit of improvement, but that it will afford employment to many generations before they push to their utmost extent the natural advantages of Great Britain."§ Could this sensible writer have contemplated the possible approaches to "the summit of improvement," made by only two generations, his readers of that period would have regarded him as a madman. Yet at that period the industrial energies of the people were stimulated to turn aside from the beaten track in many new directions. The capability of Britain greatly to multiply her resources began to be dimly perceived. We now know, as a reliable fact, that population had increased, and was increasing.

A comparison of the excess of Baptisms over Burials, corrected by the experience of positive enumerations, shows, that from 1751 to 1781, the population had increased at a rate exceeding 400,000 for each decennial period; the increase in the whole of the previous fifty years having been little above 200,000. Upon that increase of nearly a million and a quarter in thirty years, there was a still larger increase of more than a million and a half in the twenty years

* Young, "Northern Tour," vol. iv. p. 556. † *Ante*, vol. iv. p. 384, and Table, p. 438.

‡ Young, "Northern Tour," vol. iv. p. 551.

§ Dr. Campbell, "Political Survey," 2 vols. 4to.

from 1781 to 1801.* The start in the national industry, supplying new sources of profitable labour, and new means of subsistence, to increasing numbers, appears to have been singularly concurrent with that outburst of public spirit which attended the administration of the first William Pitt. The shutting up of one portion of British commerce by the war with America had no permanent effect upon the development of the general prosperity of the country; although we are in no condition to judge how far that development might have been impeded by the waste of capital in war. The industrial period, from the accession of George III. to the war of the French Revolution, is a very interesting one to be described in detail. We apply ourselves to the task, in something like a continuation of the plan of that general view of National Progress which we have given at the period of the accession of the House of Hanover, and partially through the reign of George I. †

Arthur Young, one of the most exact of those economical inquirers who had no official data upon which to found their calculations, in reckoning the entire population, in 1770, at 8,500,000 souls, appears to have over-estimated the total number by about a million and a quarter. The population of agriculture, exclusive of landlords, clergy, and parochial poor, he reckoned at 2,800,000. The number of farmers he reckoned at 111,498; of men-servants and labourers, at 557,490. In the census of 1851, we have a return for England and Wales of 225,318 occupiers of land, employing 1,445,067 labourers. The farmers would thus appear to have doubled in eighty years; the labourers to have almost trebled. This comparative estimate, imperfect as it is, enables us to form some notion of the agricultural industry of those eighty years, as giving the means of subsistence to all who were employed upon the land. But the improvement appears far more striking when we consider that, in 1770,—taking the population at Young's estimate of 8,500,000, and reckoning the adult males at a fourth of that number,—one-third of the adult male population, as enumerated by him, was employed in providing food for themselves and their families, and for the other two-thirds of the population; in other words, whilst one man was cultivating the land, two men were engaged in other occupations. This proportion indicates a high state of civilization. But a much higher condition was reached in 1851, when only 26 per cent. of the adult males were agricultural; that is, whilst one man was cultivating the land, three men were engaged in some other employment. The ascendancy of scientific theory

* "Report on the Census of 1851," p. lxviii.

† *Ante*, vol. iv. chapters XIX. and XX.

over traditional practice has produced this striking change; and that ascendancy has been called forth more and more by the certainty of the profitable application of capital to agricultural enterprise. This application of capital, in the first twenty years of the reign of George III., may be in some degree indicated by the circumstance that the Inclosure Bills passed from 1760 to 1779 were more than a thousand in number. Improved methods of husbandry were concurrent with this extension of the area of cultivation. The great features of this period of the development of the vast productive powers of the soil are very marked; and without touching upon the technicalities of agricultural science, we may not unprofitably enter upon such a general view of the condition of particular districts, as may show how earnestly many were then labouring to make two blades of grass grow where one grew before and yet how much they left to be done by the labours of other generations. Incidentally we shall notice the condition and manners of the rural population.

We commenced our previous general view of the National Industry with a brief survey of the West of England, the seat of the greatest commercial and manufacturing prosperity at the beginning of the eighteenth century. We now propose to make a similar examination of the agricultural condition of the East of England, continuing our former sketch of the development of the resources of that portion of our island. We use the term "East" as a general phrase, in the same way that Arthur Young used it in his "Farmer's Tour through the East of England." If a line be drawn from the British Channel, keeping to the east of the Avon, on to the Humber, also keeping to the east of the Trent, it will include four of our great Registration Divisions, in which pastoral and agricultural industry is the predominant feature now, as it has been from the earliest times. These divisions,—the Eastern, the South Midland, the North Midland, the South Eastern,—comprise twenty counties out of the forty of England. Their progress in population was not very marked till after the beginning of the present century. According to Gregory King they numbered, at the Revolution, 2,364,735 souls. They had increased, in the census of 1801, to 3,078,591; but in that of 1851, to 5,674,494. They always fully kept pace with the general advance of the population of England and Wales, amounting, as nearly as may be, to one-third of the whole, at the three several periods. *

"All England may be carved out of Norfolk, and represented therein," says the quaint Thomas Fuller. He there saw fens and

* See Table, *ante*, vol. iv. p. 438.

heaths, light and deep soils, sand and clay, meadows and pasture, arable and woodlands. The variety of the shire made its ancient cultivation necessarily as various. Experimental agriculture proceeded very slowly. The fens were undrained; the sands were unmarled. Gradually Norfolk, and its neighbour Suffolk, became the nurseries of what was termed "the new husbandry." Arthur Young states that at a period not beyond sixty years, forty years, and even thirty years, from the time when he travelled through Norfolk, all the northern and western, and a part of the eastern, tracts of the country were sheep-walks, let as low as from 6*d.* to 1*s.* 6*d.*, or 2*s.* an acre.* The great change came with inclosures, long leases, and large farms, by the marling of light lands, and by the introduction of an excellent course of crops, in which the culture of turnips and clover was the distinguishing feature. "Turnips on well-manured land, thoroughly hoed, are the only fallow in the Norfolk course." Farmers in many other districts had attempted the turnip husbandry, but found it unprofitable through their own ignorance and slovenliness. In the East Riding of Yorkshire very few would incur the labour of hoeing their turnips.† Some alleged that small turnips were better than large, because the sheep would eat up the small and leave much of the large. The wisest of the Norfolk farmers sliced their turnips, even without a special machine for saving that labour. The four-course system of crops was that of the Norfolk farmers—turnips, barley, clover, wheat. Many other cultivators attempted to obtain two and even three white crops in succession, and then left the land to recruit itself in a year, or several years of barrenness, in which the rapid growth of weeds made the supposed rest a real exhaustion. Six years after Arthur Young had been eulogizing the husbandry of a portion of Norfolk, Mr. Coke came into possession of his estate at Holkham. In that year of 1776 the whole district was uninclosed. The only wheat consumed in that part of the county was imported. Mr. Coke "converted West Norfolk from a rye-growing to a corn-growing district."‡ But he did something even better. Unable to let his estate even at five shillings an acre, he determined to become a farmer himself. He did not set about his work with the self-conceit that might have been produced by a large fortune and high connections. He gathered about him all the practical agriculturists of his district, who came once a year to partake his hospitality, and to communicate their experience to the spirited young man who wanted to learn.

* "Eastern Tour," vol. ii. p. 150.

† "Northern Tour," vol. i. p. 247.

‡ Earl Spencer in "Journal of Royal Agricultural Society," vol. iii. p. 1.

He very soon was enabled to become an instructor himself. The annual sheep-shearings of Holkham grew famous throughout the civilized world. Men came from every quarter to see a great English gentleman—who had raised his rents from tens to hundreds, and had yet enriched his tenants as much as himself,—mixing, with a far nobler simplicity than that of the feudal times, with guests of every rank; seeking from the humblest yeoman who was earnest in his calling the knowledge of some new fact that would benefit his district and his country. Mr. Coke's agricultural knowledge, was not mere theory. He taught the Norfolk farmers to turn their turnip-husbandry to a better use than that of producing manure, by teaching them how to improve the qualities of their stock, in the judgment of which he was thoroughly skilled. During his long life he had the satisfaction of seeing most of the triumphs of scientific husbandry; and his example pointed the way to that continued course of improvement which has effected such marvels since the British agriculturist became self-reliant, and saw that his prosperity needed no protective laws to maintain a supply of food quite commensurate with the rapid multiplication of the people.

The agriculture of many parts of Suffolk is described by Arthur Young as emphatically "true husbandry." He says, "those who exalt the agriculture of Flanders so high in comparison with that of Britain, have not, I imagine, viewed with attention the country in question." Thomas Tusser, who was a Suffolk farmer in the middle of the sixteenth century, attributes the plenty of Suffolk—the mutton, beef, corn, butter, cheese, and the abundant work for the labouring man—to the system of inclosures, which he contrasts with the common fields of Norfolk. Suffolk, as well as Essex, was very early a country "inclosed into petty quillets," according to Fuller, whence the proverb "Suffolk stiles," and "Essex stiles." Sir John Cullum, in 1784, describes the drainage of the arable lands as the great improvement that had fertilized spots that before produced but little. The farmer was no longer content to let his soil be "water-slain," the old expressive term in Suffolk for undrained wet land. He knew nothing of draining-tiles; but he cut drains two feet deep, and wedge-shaped, filling them with bushes, and with haulm over the bushes. Sir John shows how the cultivators had learned the value of manure, instead of evading the compulsory clause of their leases by which they were bound not to sell the manure made in their own yards. He paints, as "the late race of farmers," those who "lived in the midst of their enlightened neighbours, like beings of another order. In their personal labour they were indefatigable; in their dress, homely; in

their manners, rude." Their "enlightened neighbours," he says, lived in well-furnished houses; actually knew the use of the barometer; and instead of exhibiting at church the cut of a coat half a century old, they had every article of dress spruce and modern. The ancient farmers had, however, a spirit of emulation amongst them, which they displayed in the drawing-matches of their famous Suffolk punches—that wonderful breed of which two would plough an acre of strong wheat land in one day. We have the details of a drawing-match in 1724.* Young says of this breed, that "they are all taught to draw in concert; that teams would fall upon their knees at the word of command, and at a variation of the word would rise and put out all their strength."† Improving as was the general agriculture upon the good lands of Suffolk, the sandy districts on the shores of the Channel were in a miserable condition, before some tincture of geological science had taught the cultivator to look for the elements of fertility in the organic matter below the sand. Crabbe, with his exquisite fidelity, had described the husbandry of his own native district of the river Alde. It is a most impressive picture, not only of the peculiar barrenness of that district, but of other districts where slovenly cultivation had not called forth the resources of art to aid the churlishness of nature :

"Lo! where the heath, with withering brake grown o'er,
Lends the light turf that warms the neighbouring poor,
From thence a length of burning sand appears,
Where the thin harvest waves its wither'd ears;
Rank weeds, that every art and care defy,
Reign o'er the land, and rob the blighted rye:
There thistles stretch their prickly arms afar,
And to the ragged infant threaten war;
There poppies nodding mock the hope of toil;
There the blue bugloss paints the sterile soil;
Hardy and high, above the slender sheaf,
The slimy mallow waves her silky leaf;
O'er the young shoot the charlock throws a shade,
And clasping tares cling round the sickly blade."‡

The Suffolk labourers were fed abundantly, but somewhat coarsely. They ate their country's rye-bread with their country's stony cheese—"too hard to bite," as Bloomfield found it: whilst the farmer luxuriated in his "meslin bread," half wheat and half rye. The plough-boy's breakfast was the brown bread soaked in skimmed milk. When the country was over-run with rabbits, before the improved system of agriculture was introduced, the in-door servants stipulated that they should not be fed with

* "History of Hawsted," chap. iv.

† "Eastern Tour," vol. ii. p. 174.

‡ "The Village," book ii.

“hollow-meat,” as rabbit flesh was termed, more than a certain number of days in the week.* Fuller speaks of the rabbits of Norfolk as “an army of natural pioneers”—the great suppliers of the fur for the gowns of grave citizens, and of “half beavers,” the common hats.† The trencher was not then superseded by pewter and earthenware. The old simplicity was not gone out:—

“Between her swagging panniers’ load
A farmer’s wife to market rode.” ‡

The good matron looked impatiently for the “pack man,” who came to her gate periodically with fineries from Norwich; or Ipswich; and with smuggled tea from the eastern coast, when three-fifths of the tea used was clandestinely imported. She delighted in the housewifery of the “horky,” when the last load had come home with garlands and flags, and the lord of the harvest, the principal reaper, led the procession, to be led home himself when the strong ale had done its work.

Norfolk and Suffolk are now the principal seats of the manufacture of those implements which, in 1851, were held to have saved one-half of the outlay of a period only twelve years previous, in the cultivation of a definite amount of crop. The Suffolk “Farmer’s Boy” describes the rude plough (probably almost wholly made of wood) in which “no wheels support the diving-pointed share.” The boy did not take kindly to the swing-plough, which was more difficult to guide. From ridge to ridge moves “the ponderous harrow;” “midst huge clods he plunges on forlorn.” He breaks the frozen turnip with a heavy beetle. The seed is sown broad-cast. Arthur Young laments that, “if a person, the least skilled in agriculture, looks around for instruments that deserve to be called complete, how few will he meet with.”§ At Lawford, near Manningtree, he rejoices to have found “a most ingenious smith,” who has made a new iron swing-plough, a horse-rake on wheels, and a hand-mill for grinding wheat.|| Out of the persevering ingenuity of such men have proceeded the manifold instruments of modern agriculture—the lighter ploughs; the “cultivators,” that save ploughing; the clod-crushers and scarifiers; the drills; the horse-hoes; the threshing and winnowing machines; the turnip-cutters and chaff-cutters; the draining ploughs and drain-tile machines. The application of machinery and chemical science to the production of food has produced results as important as in any other branch of manufacture, under which term we must now include the modern achievements of the spirited farmer.

* Forby’s “Vocabulary of East Anglia,” vol. ii. p. 423.

† Gay.

§ “Eastern Tour,” vol. ii. p. 498.

† “Worthies.”

|| *Ibid.* p. 212.

The limited economical observation of the author of "The Farmer's Boy," suggested a lament that "London market, London price," influenced the production of his county; that "dairy produce throngs the eastern road;" that along that highway were travelling

"Delicious veal and butter, every hour,
From Essex lowlands and the banks of Stour;
And further far, where numerous herds repose,
From Orwell's brink, from Waveney or Ouse."

Thirty years later, William Cobbett, who from his farm at Botley sent the earliest lambs to the London market, expressed his rabid indignation that the fat oxen of Wilts were "destined to be devoured in the Wen"—his favourite name for the metropolis.* The demagogue knew full well that the demand of the markets of London, and of other great cities, gave the natural impulse to the productiveness of the country; and that the greater part of "the primest of human food" was not there devoured by "tax-eaters and their base and prostituted followers." The profits derived in the olden time from Essex calves furnished the capital whose gradual increase gave Essex land-owners and farmers the means of draining their marshes, and of rescuing land from the sea. "It argueth the goodness of flesh in this country, and that great gain was got formerly by the sale thereof, because that so many stately monuments were erected anciently therein for butchers—inscribed *carnifices* in their epitaphs."† Essex veal preserves its reputation, and so Essex oysters. Essex saffron is a thing of the past, though its former celebrity lingers in the name of Saffron Walden. The use of saffron as a condiment in fool has long been at an end; its value as a medicine is very equivocal. We now import the small quantity of saffron that we consume. The husbandry books of a century ago contain the most elaborate directions for its cultivation upon a large scale. Coriander, and caraway, and canary are extensively grown in the clay district of Essex; ‡ but the good roads, the coast navigation, and the vicinity to London give this county the full power to maintain its old superiority in producing the great staples of human food.

Several of the South-Midland counties have their records and traditional traces of old modes of husbandry, and of their accompanying manners, which strikingly contrast with the course of modern improvement.

Buckinghamshire had an ancient reputation for fertility. "A

* "Rural Rides," 1830, p. 534.

† Fuller's "Worthies."

‡ "Journal of Royal Agricultural Society," vol. v. p. 39.

fruitful country, especially in the Vale of Aylesbury," says Fuller. Arthur Young journeyed through this famous Vale a hundred and ten years after Fuller wrote, and found the husbandry almost as bad as the land is good. The wheat crops only yielded fifteen bushels per acre; the barley crops sixteen bushels. The poverty of the crops is chiefly imputed to the want of draining. Young expresses his surprise that the landlords have made no attempt at inclosing. "All this Vale would make as fine meadows as any in the world." * It was very long before this county discovered that open fields, and large tracts of waste capable of cultivation, presented effectual barriers to improvement. † Nevertheless, many of the wastes of the Chilterns could not be profitably cultivated. But the long ranges of hills covered with beech—such as were the indigenous growth of the chalk in the earliest times—are picturesque to ride beneath, recalling the memory of Hampden and the stout yeomen who chose to fight rather than be taxed out of their liberty. Buckinghamshire is finding uses for the beech, in manufacturing cheap chairs, at the rate of a thousand a day, at High Wycombe and the neighbourhood. She is using up her resources, and getting rid of her nuisances;—administering the relief of the poor so as not to drive land out of cultivation; and extirpating the game, instead of having a fertile country little better than a large preserve, especially as it was once in one ducal domain. ‡ The country has discovered that large dairy-farms are better than wheat crops of fifteen bushels per acre. Butter is now produced here as a great manufacture. It is held that there are 120,000 acres in Buckinghamshire devoted to dairying, on which, with the aid of some arable land, 30,000 cows are kept, producing annually the almost incredible amount of 6,000,000 lbs. of butter, chiefly sent to the London market by railway. It was stated before the Aylesbury Railway Committee that 800,000 ducks reared in the county, for the early supply of the all-devouring metropolis—a possible exaggeration. Butter and ducks will never want a ready market and command a fair price. The old Buckinghamshire trade of pillow-lace making—the "bone-lace" of former times—leaves "the free maids" to the miserable pittance of sixpence for a day's labour.

Oxfordshire cultivation was, a century ago, somewhat below the average of the inland counties. Its progress has not been very remarkable. The chief bar to improvement was the existence of large tracts as common field. There were few wastes. The cul-

* "Eastern Tour," vol. i. p. 23.

† "Journal of Agricultural Society," vol. xvi. p. 406.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 315.

ture of green crops and root crops has gone on, through not very rapidly. The farm buildings are generally old and inconvenient; the implements are of old fashion; the occupation roads are execrable. The large farmers are described as intelligent and industrious; but not so spirited or progressive as the tenantry of some other counties. The lesser yeomen too often "crawl on in the same track their ancestors jogged over a century ago." They have inherited the prejudices of former times, with their sterling qualities of industry and hospitality.*

Fuller exults that his native county of Northampton has "as little waste ground as any county in England—no mosses, meres, fells, heaths." It was a county full of "spires and squires"—a grass country, where fox-hunting was carried to perfection by its resident gentry, and its graziers grew rich without much pains of cultivation. Arthur Young grows almost poetical in his contemplation of the large grazing farms. "The quantity of great oxen and sheep is very noble. It is very common to see from forty to sixty oxen and two hundred sheep in a single field, and the beasts are all of a fine large breed. This effect is owing in no slight degree to the nature of the country, which is wholly composed of gentle hills, so that you look over many hundred acres at one stroke of the eye, and command all the cattle feeding in them, in a manner nobly picturesque."† But in this bright picture there is a dark shade. The fine grass on the excellent soil is over-run with thistles, and is full of ant-hills; none of its wet places are drained; one-eighth of the whole is really waste land. The great improver exhorts the Northamptonshire farmers to get rid of rushes, ant-hills, thistles (which were regularly mown), nettles, "and all the et cæteras of slovenliness."‡ The arable husbandry was little better. The light land was considered only fit to grow rye—soils which now yield abundant crops of wheat. Common fields, with all their evils, were almost universal. Their general inclosure has made some local terms obsolete, such as "balk,—a narrow slip of grass dividing two ploughed or arable lands in open or common fields;" and "meer,—a strip or slip of grass land, which served as a boundary to different properties."§ As late as 1806, some tracts continued in this state of imperfect cultivation. In a Report of that year on the farming of the county, a celebrated locality is thus described: "From Welford, through Naseby, the open field extensive, and in as backward a state as it could be in Charles the

* "Journal of Royal Agricultural Society," vol. xv.

† "Eastern Tour," vol. i. p. 54.

‡ Baker, "Northamptonshire Glossary."

§ *Ibid.*, p. 62.

First's time, when the fatal battle was fought." Naseby field, according to Young, contained six thousand acres. The miserable farm-buildings of the days when "the master" always sat in his "long settle" in the kitchen (which was called "the house"), have survived in many places to our days; small barns and stabling, ill-contrived yards, no capacity for stall-feeding, with the horse-pond ready to receive all the soluble parts of the manure.* In some grazing districts there has been retrogression instead of improvement. The land has been let in large quantities to non-resident occupiers, who have pulled down the cottages and farm premises, and only set up a few cow-houses or shelter hovels. The sheep-shearing festivities, with the beechen bowl filled with furrnety, are at an end; the worsted-spinners are no longer to be found in the villages, drinking tea twice a day, which custom Young much deplores. The farmer still hires his servants at the "stattie" (statute fair), and some of the ancient holidays are kept up. But the old general intercourse between the farmer and his labourers has been too much destroyed by a system which fears to provide sufficient cottage accommodation, through the baneful influence of the Law of Settlement. The repeal, in 1775, of the Act of Elizabeth against building cottages, which Act the legislators of George III. truly said "laid the industrious poor under great difficulties to procure habitations," was insufficient to remove the rate-payers' jealousy of parochial burthens; and that jealousy has produced an amount of misery and demoralization which cannot be too quickly remedied.

The improvements of Bedfordshire are intimately associated with the exertions of Francis, duke of Bedford. He laboured at Woburn to accomplish results similar to those which Mr. Coke produced at Holkham. Burke, in his famous "Letter to a Noble Lord," tells the duke that his landed possessions "are more extensive than the territory of many of the Grecian republics; and they are without comparison more fertile than most of them." These possessions, says the rhetorician, are irresistibly inviting to an agrarian experiment. "Hitherto they have been wholly unproductive to speculation; fitted for nothing but to fatten bullocks, and to produce grain for beer." The sans-culotte carcase-butchers and the philosophers of the shambles are regarding his Grace as they would a prize-ox; "their only question will be that of their Legendre, or some other of their legislative butchers, how he cuts up? how he fattens in the caul or on the kidneys?" These bitter sarcasms upon the duke of Bedford's political opinions cannot be adequately

* "Journal of Agricultural Society," vol. xiii. p. 86.

understood except as having reference to his enthusiastic labours for the improvement of the land, and of the stock that fed upon it. Burke did not despise such pursuits. He was himself an agricultural improver. Young saw him experimenting on carrots at his farm at Beaconsfield, and says, " Buckinghamshire will be much indebted to the attention this manly genius gives to husbandry." What the great commoner was doing upon a small scale, the no less patriotic nobleman was accomplishing on a large scale. In his early time two-thirds of Bedfordshire were in common field; a third of the arable land was under a dead fallow every year; the part under crop was woefully damaged by water; the meagre-looking-sheep were often swept off in entire flocks by the rot; the neat cattle were no distinct breed; the farm-implements were of the rudest kind. " No one that lived in or near the times of the duke of Bedford, can be ignorant of the efforts which that nobleman put forth to arouse the torpor-stricken agriculturists of his day." The duke did not, like his friend and fellow-labourer, Mr. Coke, live to see the triumphs of improved farming; by which, according to the Report from which we quote,* " there are scores of farms now producing 50 per cent. more corn than in 1794, and supplying the metropolitan markets with a stone of meat for every pound supplied at the former period."

The great agricultural reformers who succeeded lord Townshend, the introducer of the turnip-husbandry, came at a period when Robert Bakewell, a yeoman of Leicestershire, held levees in his kitchen at Dishley, of the greatest in rank, and the most eminent in science, who came to learn his new art of producing breeds of sheep and oxen that would fatten the most readily, and be the most valuable when fat. With regard to oxen, " the old notion," says Young " was, that where you had much and large bones, there was plenty of room to lay flesh on; and accordingly the graziers were eager to buy the largest horned cattle." Bakewell maintained that the smaller the bones the truer will be the make of the beast, the fattening quicker, and the weight would give a larger proportion of valuable meat. The proportion of value to the cost of production was the real question. He applied the same principle to sheep,—that of fattening on the most valuable part of the body.† When Paley was told that Bakewell could lay on the flesh of his sheep wherever he chose, the blunt divine said it was " a lie." His art really was to deduce, from a series of observations on many beasts, a

* Mr. Bennett on the Farming of Bedfordshire—" Royal Agricultural Journal," vol. xviii. p. 26.

† Young, " Eastern Tour," vol. i. pp. 110 to 134.

knowledge of the peculiar make in which they all agreed in fattening readily, or the contrary.* Bakewell's mode of management was as peculiar as his wonderful inductive skill in accomplishing the improvement of breeds. He made all his cattle docile. He trained bulls to be as gentle as horses under Rarey. They stood still in the fields to be examined. "A lad, with a stick three feet long, and as big as his finger, will conduct a bull away from other bulls, and his cows from one end of the farm to the other. All this gentleness is merely the effect of management; and the mischief, often done by bulls is undoubtedly owing to practices very contrary or else to a total neglect." † To Robert Bakewell, independently of his merit as the founder of the famous breed of Leicester sheep, is to be ascribed the great impulse which raised the occupation of the grazier into an art. This progress, concurrent with the turnip husbandry, the general improvement in the cultivation of arable land, and the conversion of barren sands and drowned fens into rich corn-bearing districts, has enabled the supply of an improved quality of meat constantly to keep pace with the increase of population. The population has trebled since the days when the Dishley yeoman gave lectures upon stock, to peers who desired to learn, and to farmers who came to sneer, as he smoked his pipe in his great chimney corner, or walked over his fields in his brown coat, red waistcoat, leather breeches, and top-boots. The average weight of the ox and the sheep has been doubled since the beginning of the eighteenth century. The number produced has increased in a greater ratio. In 1732 there were seventy-six thousand cattle, and five hundred thousand sheep sold at Smithfield; in 1770 eighty-six thousand cattle, and six hundred and fifty thousand sheep; in 1859, two hundred and sixty thousand cattle, and a million and a half of sheep.

The consumption of animal food in England has always been a matter of surprise to foreigners. An intelligent Frenchman, M. Grosley, who came to this country in 1765, speaks of the large export of grain, under the bounty-system, as exciting his astonishment, being compared with the extent of cultivation. "In the counties of England through which I travelled, upon my way either to London, Oxford, or Portsmouth, I saw scarce anything but commons, meadows, large parks, wilds, heaths, and very little arable land." He considers the land leased by rich farmers to be well cultivated. "Nevertheless," he continues, "it is not so much the harvests, as the small consumption of corn by the English,

* Whateley—See "Quarterly Review," vol. ciii. p. 396.

† "Eastern Tour," vol. i. p. 113.

which enables them to export a great quantity of corn. In fact, six or seven ounces of bread are sufficient for the daily subsistence of an Englishman; and that even among the lower sort. They, properly speaking, live chiefly upon animal food." * M. Grosley saw the Londoners eating two or three thin slices of bread and butter with their tea at breakfast; and he says of their bread-eating capacity, "what would be scarce enough for a Frenchman of an ordinary appetite would suffice three hungry Englishmen."† He had not seen the labourers of the South eating their rye-bread with their hard cheese, and rarely tasting animal food; nor those of the North, satisfied with their oat-meal feast of crowdie or parritch. It was estimated, upon the most careful inquiry, at the beginning of the reign of George III., that not more than one half of the people were fed on wheaten bread; ‡ and therefore the ordinary consumption of the fine bread of London would supply no criterion of the general use of coarser bread in the country districts. Rye bread, barley bread, and oat-cake, supplied the usual food of the rural population. Notwithstanding this limitation of the consumption of wheat, the increasing numbers of the people could not have been adequately fed without an extension of the area of cultivation. Even after the American war, the quantity of uncultivated land, and the indifferent husbandry, were manifest to the foreigner who could see and compare. Jefferson came here in 1786, and he thus writes from France to a friend in America: "I returned here but three or four days ago, after a two months' trip to England. I traversed that country much; and own, both town and country fell short of my expectations. Comparing it with this, I found a much greater proportion of barrens; a soil in other parts not naturally so good as this; not better cultivated, but better manured, and therefore more productive." §

There can be no more interesting feature in the progress of our country than that of the conversion of its "barrens" into fertile fields. The steady as well as rapid course of this great change is strikingly illustrated in the agricultural county of Cambridge. It contains about 536,000 acres of land. In 1794, 112,500 acres were fens, commons, and sheep-walks. In 1806, 63,000 of these wastes had been inclosed and cultivated. In 1846 only 10,000 of these "barrens" remained uninclosed, and of these, 5000 were mown and fed in the summer. ¶ The Isle of Ely, the fen district, is that

* "Tour to London," translated by Nugent, vol. i. p. 139.

† *Ibid.*, p. 69.

‡ Eden's "State of the Poor," vol. i. p. 562.

§ Tucker, "Life of Jefferson," vol. i. p. 225.

¶ "Journal of Royal Agricultural Society," vol. vii. p. 35.

which offers the most remarkable example of improvement. The subject of the fen cultivation of Cambridgeshire may be treated in common with that of the neighbouring county of Lincoln.

Since Richard de Rulos, eight hundred years ago,—being “a person much devoted to agricultural pursuits, and who took great delight in the multitude of his cattle and sheep”—embanked the river Welland, and “out of sloughs and bogs accursed formed quite a pleasure garden,”* there have been many generations of improvers, labouring in the Great Level of the Fens, with the same laudable objects. They have succeeded, as all persevering work will succeed, in spite of opposing obstacles, whether of the forces of nature or the prejudices of man. This great morass extended from Cambridge to Lincoln; and was inhabited in the time of Elizabeth by men who walked upon stilts, fishing and fowling, and keeping a little stock upon the hay which they secured out of the fat grass when the streams had retired under the summer drought. In the reign of Elizabeth, and in that of James I., several attempts were made to bring a part of this district under cultivation. In 1630 the undertaking was vigorously set about by Francis earl of Bedford; and a company of adventurers was formed who undertook to drain the land, having ninety-five thousand acres for their recompense. The men who walked upon stilts were indignant at these innovations, which threatened to exterminate the wild ducks which they cherished as more profitable than sheep or oxen; and they destroyed the drainage works, in a true conservative spirit. The district upon which these incorporated adventurers worked was called the Bedford Level, in honour of the nobleman who was the great encourager of the undertaking. They engaged Cornelius Vermuyden, a Dutch engineer, as the director of the works. They embanked the Welland-river, the Nene river, and the Ouse. They made deep cuts, of sufficient length to obtain the name of rivers. The Lincolnshire fens were undertaken to be drained by other companies, about the same period. Various local Acts were passed, and the work went on, more or less prosperously. But the waters sometimes broke down the embankments, and scientific engineering, with all the powers of the giant steam, was not applied till very recent times. Mr. Pusey considers that “though the body of stagnant water was greatly reduced, still it was not subdued, so that the fen land was worth little, even when George III. came to the throne.”† In 1800 it was stated that more than 300,000 acres in Lincolnshire suffered, on an average, a loss of 300,000*l.* a year for want of an efficient drainage. Mr. Rennie looked upon the wide

* *Ante*, vol. i. p. 225.

† “Journal of Royal Agricultural Society,” vol. iv. p.

waste with the comprehensive glance of science, and saw that the outfall to the sea was not sufficient to carry off both the waters of the rising slope which surrounded the whole margin of the Fen. He made a separate channel to carry off the upland waters. The great invention of Watt pumped out the water into the artificial rivers, instead of the feeble wind-mills that did the work imperfectly in the eighteenth century, a plan first introduced in the reign of George I. The whole land has been made dry. Districts growing nothing but osiers, three feet deep in water, and reeds filled with water-fowls; watery deserts of sedge and rushes, inhabited by frogs and bitterns—these now bear splendid crops of corn. Sheep are no longer carried to islets of rank pasture in flat-bottomed boats; cows are no longer turned out of their hovels, to forage for a morsel of food, swimming rivers and wading up to their middles. The cattle were as wretched as the wild inhabitants of the isolated huts to whom they belonged.* “Since the drainage of the Fens numerous villages have sprung up where previously was nothing but a watery waste, without house or inhabitant, and several of the bordering towns have doubled their population.” † The effect of these vast changes upon the health of the people of this district, seventy miles in length, and from twenty to forty miles in breadth, is no less important than the additions they have made to the productive power of the country.

The fens of Lincolnshire are not the only portions of that great county which have been reclaimed from barrenness to fertility. On a sunny November morning of 1842, Mr. Pusey, having journeyed through a high level tract from Sleaford towards Lincoln, stood under a tall column by the road side, about four miles from Lincoln, on which it is recorded that it was erected for the public utility in the year 1751. That column, says the great agricultural reformer, “was a land lighthouse,” built “as a nightly guide for travellers over the dreary waste which still retains the name of Lincoln Heath, but is now converted into a pattern of farming.” The district over which he had passed was “a cultivated exuberance” such as he had never seen before. Thousands after thousands of long-woolled sheep were feeding in netted folds upon the most luxuriant turnips. Every neatly built farm-house, with its spacious courts, was surrounded with abundant ricks. And yet the farms were not large; the land showed no marks of natural fertility. Most justly does Mr. Pusey say, “This Dunston pillar, lighted no longer time back for so singular a purpose, did appear to me a striking witness of the spirit and industry which in our own days

* “Journal of Royal Agricultural Society,” vol. xii. p. 306.

† *Ibid.*, p. 259.

have reared the thriving homesteads around it, and spread a mantle of teeming vegetation to its very base." Beyond Dunston pillar, he continued to see the same "beautiful farms" till he reached Lincoln. Passing through the Roman arch, he travelled by the old Ermine street for twenty miles, along North Lincoln Heath, where similar neat inclosures, heavy turnip crops, numerous flocks, spacious farm-buildings, and crowded corn-ricks, met his gaze. Through the whole day he saw to the right a long range of hills running parallel to the Heath, from south to north. These were the Wolds of Lincolnshire, where the same high farming prevailed. "This vast tract of hill land had been redeemed, like the Heath, from nearly equal desolation within living memory." About 1760, Arthur Young saw this great district of the Wolds, and writes, "it was all warren for thirty miles, from Spilsby to Caistor." In 1799 he beholds great improvement. "By means of turnips and seeds there are now at least twenty sheep kept to one there before." But there were then still many miles of waste on the same range of hills; and the farmers said the land was "good for nothing but rabbits." This district, nearly as large as the county of Bedford, has now been added to the corn-land of England.*

In the county of Nottingham, Arthur Young saw little to admire. The quantity of good land which was in an improved state of culture was small, in comparison of the lands which were almost uncultivated. These light soils were called "forest land," being part of the vast tract of the old forest of Sherwood. † In 1794, when a Report of the Agriculture of this county was published, the greater portion was still a sandy waste, divested, for the most part, of its ancient oaks, and no longer affording covert to the stag and the roe—no longer the hunting ground which would suggest memories of Robin Hood and his merry men. In the time of Camden, the woods were much thinner than of old. Few uncleared spots now remain. But half a century ago Sherwood Forest presented nothing but desolation. "As the forest was cleared of its stately trees it was left one wide waste, so naturally sterile, as scarcely to have the power of clothing itself with the scantiest vegetation; even in the present day some districts remain which bear testimony to its former sterility." But art has triumphed over nature. Where only rabbits once browsed, large flocks of sheep are now fed. The gorse and the fern have been driven out by the turnip and the alternate wheat crops. The introduction of the Swede turnip has mainly

* See Mr. Pusey's most interesting paper in "Journal of Royal Agricultural Society," vol. iv. p. 287.

† "Eastern Tour," vol. i. p. 427.



GEORGE FREDERICK, THE PRINCE-REGENT. — Vol. vi. 314.



produced the improved farming of Nottinghamshire. At the extreme northern part of the county, six thousand acres of bog-land, called "The Cars," were attempted to be reclaimed about the beginning of the century. The success of the effort was very imperfect. The difficulty of drainage threatened again to throw the morass out of cultivation. The steam-engine at last effected what drains without its aid could not accomplish.*

The agriculture of Derbyshire has derived its great impulse from the progress of the cotton manufacture. The first cotton-mill was established upon the Derwent, at Cromford, near Matlock, by Arkwright. The streams of this beautiful county were soon employed in driving the spindles of the spinning frame. Large factories were established in rural districts. The new population gave a stimulus to the industry of the cultivator. "Agriculture and manufactures joined hands." †

Our glance at the rural economy of the South-Eastern Counties must be very rapid. Surrey has made no remarkable strides in improvement. Its "barrens" are probably now more extensive than in any other county of southern England. The mutton of Banstead Downs used to be famous; but a great landowner of that district says that this Common, as well as Walton Heath, not now worth 3*d.* or 4*d.* an acre, would be worth 14*s.* an acre if inclosed. ‡ We should, perhaps somewhat selfishly, grudge this gain; for round a metropolis of three millions of people we want the old wide breathing-spaces. Middlesex is described in the Agricultural Survey of 1798, as abounding in Commons, the constant rendezvous of gipsies and strollers, and the resort of footpads and highwaymen. Finchley Common and Hounslow Heath were, at the end of the last century, the terror of all travellers. Gibbets, by the way-side, told their horrible tale of the absence of prevention and the ineffectiveness of punishment. The grass farms to the north of London were the admiration of Arthur Young in 1770. Enfield Chase, a vast useless tract of fine land, he regarded as a nuisance. East Kent, and the Isle of Thanet, have the admiration of this excellent judge: "This tract of country has long been reckoned the best cultivated in England, and it has no slight pretensions to that character. Their drill-husbandry is most peculiar; it must astonish strangers to find such numbers of common farmers, that have more drilled crops than broad-cast ones, and to see them so

* "Journal of Royal Agricultural Society," vol. vi.

† *Ibid.*, vol. xiv.

‡ *Ibid.*, vol. iv. p. 307.

familiar with drill-ploughs and horse-hoes." * Gray, in 1766, was surprised at the beauty of the road to Canterbury. "The whole country is a rich and well cultivated garden; orchards, cherry grounds, hop grounds, intermixed with corn and frequent villages." † Arthur Young enters Sussex in a pleasant mood. The roads from Rye to Hawkhurst were good; the villages numerous, with neat cottages and well-kept gardens. He speaks as if such a sight were rare: "One's humanity is touched with pleasure to see cottages the residence of cheerfulness and content." ‡ The iron furnaces of wooded Sussex were not then superseded by the coal of the midland districts. The Downs then carried that breed of sheep whose value has never been impaired. The Isle of Wight did not disappoint his expectation of finding "much entertainment in excellent husbandry." Of the New Forest, that vast tract which has so long been suffered to run to waste, under the pretence of furnishing a supply of oak for the navy, Arthur Young said, what many have since repeated, "there is not a shadow of a reason for leaving it in its present melancholy state." Much of the picturesqueness which Gilpin described is gone. The hundreds of hogs, under the care of one swineherd, led out to feed on the beech-mast during the "pawmage month" of October, no longer excite the wonder of the pedestrian. Some of the old romance of Hampshire has also vanished. The deer-stealers of the time of George I., known as the Waltham Blacks,—for whose prevention a special statute was made, §—were not quite extinct in the days of Gilbert White. They are gone, with the Wolmer Forest and Waltham Chase that tempted their depredations.

In Berkshire the king was setting a good example to the agricultural portion of his subjects, and earning the honourable name of "Farmer George." In the Great Park of Windsor he had his "Flemish Farm," and his "Norfolk Farm." He was a contributor to Young's "Annals of Agriculture," under the signature of "Ralph Robinson." Meanwhile the Forest of Windsor exhibited one of the many examples of a vast tract wholly neglected or imperfectly cultivated. It comprised a circuit of fifty-six miles, containing twenty-four thousand acres of uninclosed land. It was not till 1813 that an Act of Parliament was passed for its inclosure. Much of this district was that desolate tract of sand, known as Bagshot Heath and Easthampstead Plain; but very large portions, where only fern and thistles grew, were capable of cultivation.

* "Eastern Tour," vol. iii. p. 108.

† "Eastern Tour," vol. iii. p. 125.

‡ Letter to Wharton.

§ 21 Geo. I.

Much has been turned into arable ; more has been devoted to the growth of timber, under the direction of the Office of Woods and Forests. Vast plantations have been formed of oak and fir ; plains, where a large army might have manoeuvred fifty years ago, are covered with hundreds of thousands of vigorous saplings ; heaths, where a few straggling hawthorns used to be the landmarks of the traveller, are now one sea of pine. The farms, scattered about the seventeen parishes of the Forest, were small. The cultivation was of a very unscientific character. The manners of the farmers and their in-door laborers were as primitive as their turf fires. This obsolete homeliness is as rare now as the thymy fragrance of the thin smoke that curled out of the forest chimneys. The large kitchen, where the master and mistress dwelt in simple companionship with their men and their maidens ; the great oaken-table which groaned with the plentiful Sunday dinner—the one dinner of fresh meat during the week : the huge basins of milk and brown bread for the ploughman and the carter and the plough-boy before they went a-field ; the cricket after work in summer, and the song and chorus in the common room as the day grew short—these are pleasant to remember amidst the other changed things of a past generation. “ The scenes which live in my recollection can never come back ; nor is it fitting that they should. With the primitive simplicity there was also a good deal of primitive waste and carelessness. Except in the dairy, dirt and litter were the accompaniments of the rude housekeeping. The fields were imperfectly cultivated ; the headlands were full of weeds. I have no doubt that all is changed, or the farm would be no longer a farm.” *

* “ Once upon a Time,” by Charles Knight.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Agricultural condition of the South Western Counties.—Wiltshire.—Dorsetshire.—Devonshire.—Somersetshire.—Cornwall.—Wales.—The West Midland Counties.—The North Midland.—Yorkshire.—Improvers of the Moors.—James Croft, an agricultural collier.—Northern Counties.—Durham.—Northumberland.—Westmorland.—The Lake District.—Agricultural condition of Scotland.—The Lothians.—Sheep flocks.—Ayrshire.—Burns.—Lanarkshire and Renfrewshire.—North-western parts.—Agricultural condition of Ireland.—The potato cultivation.

CONFINING, for the present, our general view of the remaining moiety of England to its pastoral and agricultural condition before the end of the eighteenth century, we proceed to the South Western, the West Midland, the North Western, and the North counties; also including Wales. Those divisions of the country contained a population of about two millions and a half at the end of the seventeenth century; of four millions and a half at the end of the eighteenth century; and of ten millions and a half at the end of the first half of the nineteenth century. Such quadrupling of the population in the course of a hundred and fifty years is an evidence of the direction of productive labour to manufacturing and commercial industry, in particular districts having an extraordinary command of raw material. We have indicated the partial growth of such employments in the reign of Anne and of George I.* We shall have to show their greater expansion in the first half of the reign of George III. But we desire first to exhibit, during the latter period, how the rapid growth of a trading population was stimulating the employment of capital in the rural districts; and above all, what a vast field existed for its employment in the direction of science and labour to the neglected tracts and imperfect cultivation of a country capable of a wonderful enlargement of its fertility. In this rapid sketch we shall add an equally brief glance at Scotland and Ireland.

William Cobbett, who had an intense enjoyment of rural life, and a power of expressing his pleasure which almost rises into poetry, says he would rather live and farm amongst the Wiltshire Downs, "than on the banks of the Wye in Herefordshire, in the vale of Gloucester, of Worcester, or of Evesham, or even in what

* *Ante*, vol. iv. chap. xix. and xx.

the Kentish men call their garden of Eden." He looks with rapture upon the "smooth and verdant downs in hills and vallies of endless variety as to height and depth and shape;" he rejoices in beholding, as he rides along on a bright October morning, the immense flocks of sheep, going out from their several folds to the downs for the day, each having its shepherd and each shepherd his dog. He saw two hundred thousand South-down sheep at Weyhill-fair, brought from the down-farms of Wiltshire and Hampshire.* But upon these down-farms he was surprised to see very large pieces of Swedish and white turnips. The pastoral district was then, some thirty years ago, becoming agricultural. At the present time "the rapid extension of tillage over these high plains threatens before long to leave but little of their original sheep-walks." † When the mallard was the chief tenant of the fens, and the bittern of the marshes, large flocks of great bustards ranged over the Wiltshire downs, running with exceeding swiftness, and using their ostrich-like wings to accelerate their speed. They usually fled before the sportsman and the traveller; but they have been known to resent intrusion upon their coverts of charlock or thistles, attacking even a horseman. Wesley, in his "Account of John Haine," one of his enthusiastic followers, relates what was supposed to be a supernatural appearance to reprove the poor man for a paroxysm of religious frenzy. "He saw, in the clear sky, a creature like a swan, but much larger, part black, part brown, which flew at him, went just over his head, and lighting on the ground, at about forty yards' distance, stood staring upon him." The apparition is explained by the author of the "Life of Wesley," to have been a bustard; and he quotes a relation by sir Richard Hoare, of two instances, in 1805, of the bustard attacking a man and a horse. The author of "Ancient Wiltshire" says, that a report of these incidents in the Gentleman's Magazine of 1805, "is probably the last record we shall find of the existence of this bird upon our downs." ‡ The bustard has now utterly disappeared. He stalks no longer where the furrow has been drawn.

Wiltshire is said not to be remarkable in our time for a very high standard of farming. Aubrey says, of England generally, before the year 1649, when experimental philosophy was first cultivated by a club at Oxford, that it was thought not to be good manners for a man to be more knowing than his neighbours and forefathers. "Even to attempt an improvement in husbandry,

* "Rural Rides."

† "Quarterly Review," vol. ciii. p. 135.

‡ Southey—"Life of Wesley," vol. ii. p. 124 and p. 192.

though it succeeded with profit, was looked upon with an ill eye." * He applies this character more particularly to Wiltshire. "I will only say of our husbandmen, as sir Thomas Overbury does of the Oxford scholars, that they go *after* the fashion; that is, when the fashion is almost out they take it up: so our countrymen are very late and very unwilling to learn or to be brought to new improvements." The late Mr. Britton, a Wiltshire man, who edited Aubrey's "Natural History," and wrote a memoir of him, says, "In the days of my own boyhood, nearly seventy years ago, I spent some time at a solitary farmhouse in North Wiltshire, with a grandfather and his family, and can remember the various occupations and practices of the persons employed in the dairy, and on the grazing and corn lands. I never saw either a book or newspaper in the house; nor were any accounts of the farming kept. †

Dorsetshire, the great county of quarries and of fossil remains—of the Portland stone of which St. Paul's was built, and of the Purbeck marble whose sculptured columns adorn the Temple Church and Salisbury Cathedral—Dorsetshire was eighty years ago a district where agricultural improvements had made little progress. Arthur Young describes its bleak commons, quite waste, but consisting of excellent land; its downs, where sheep were fed without turnip culture; its three courses of corn-crop, and then long seasons of weeds. The Dorsetshire farmers, he replies, held his lessons in contempt, as the warreners and shepherds of Norfolk would have held them half a century before; and would have "smiled at being told of another race arising who should pay ten times their rent, and at the same time make fortunes by so doing." ‡ The downs were not broken up, to any extent, until our own days. The foxes and rabbits have at last been banished from the wastes where a few sheep used to feed amidst the furze and fern. Where one shepherd's boy was kept, five men are now employed. From 1734 to 1769, there had been about five thousand acres inclosed; from 1772 to 1800, about seven thousand acres. During the first half of the eighteenth century, more than fifty thousand acres had been inclosed. § Cranborne Chase, where twelve thousand deer ranged over the lands, and the labourers were systematically poachers, was not inclosed till 1828. The condition of the Dorsetshire peasantry, which was a public reproach, appears to have been essentially connected with "very large tracts of foul land," and with "downs that occupied a large portion of the county." The "mud-

* "Natural History of Wiltshire," Preface, edit. 1847.

† *Ibid.*, p. 103.

‡ "Eastern Tour," vol. iii. p. 409.

§ "Journal of Royal Agricultural Society," vol. iii. p. 440.

walled cottages, composed of road-scrappings and chalk and straw," made the Dorsetshire gentlemen take shame to themselves in 1843; and many set about remedying the evil, in the conviction that agricultural prosperity and a wretched and demoralized population could not exist together.

Aubrey has an interesting story of the agriculture of the middle of the seventeenth century. "The Devonshire men were the earliest improvers. I heard Oliver Cromwell, Protector, at dinner at Hampton Court, 1657 or 8, tell the lord Arundell of Wardour, and the lord Fitzwilliam, that he had been in all the counties of England, and that the Devonshire husbandry was the best."* In 1848, it is written, "It cannot be denied that the farming of Devon is at the present time inferior to that of most of the counties of England."† And yet a large proportion of the Devonshire population are, as they always have been, agricultural. The quantity of waste land is very great. Dartmoor contains a quarter of a million of acres, about one half of the wastes of Devonshire. The severity of the climate of Dartmoor is attributed as much to the want of drainage as to its great elevation.‡ Any attempts at cultivating these sterile regions would have been commercially useless in the eighteenth century, when so many fertile districts remained uncultivated. The absolute necessity of supplying the great mining and metal-working population of South Wales with the farm produce that cannot be raised in their own boundaries, may eventually clothe even the barrens of North Devon with fertility.§

Somersetshire presented to Arthur Young a signal instance of neglect in its vast ranges of waste. High land and low land were equally unimproved. Leaving Bridgewater on his road to Bath, he passed "within sight of a very remarkable tract of country called King's Sedgmoor." He described this as a flat black peat bog, so rich that its eleven thousand acres wanted nothing but draining to be capable of the highest cultivation. "At present," he says, "it is so encompassed by higher lands that the water has no way to get off but by evaporation. In winter it is a sea, and yields scarce any food, except in very dry summers."|| King's Sedgmoor had probably been little changed from 1685, when Monmouth looked from the top of Bridgewater Church on the royal army encamped in the morass, amidst ditches and causeways, and speculated upon a night march by which he should surprise his enemy.¶ Much of this

* "Natural History of Wiltshire," p. 103, Britton's edit.

† "Journal of Royal Agricultural Society," vol. ix. p. 495.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 486.

§ See an interesting paper in "Journal of Bath and West of England Society," vol. xiii. 1860.

|| "Eastern Tour," vol. iv. p. 13.

¶ *Ante*, vol. iv. p. 312.

moorland is now under arable cultivation, and contains some of the richest grazing-land of the country.* The Quantock Hills are described by Young as wholly waste ; as eighteen thousand acres yielding nothing. This range is now smiling with farms and gentlemen's residences, with woods and plantations. Exmoor, consisting of twenty thousand acres, was crown land, yielding a scanty picking to a few hundred ponies, and summer feed to sheep from neighbouring farms. Even from the time of its inclosure, improvements have been very slowly curtailing the range of the black-cock. The wild stag has not disappeared. A dwindled breed of sheep, kept chiefly for their wool, still occupy the sheep walks. " Sometimes," says Mr. Pusey, " you find a large piece of the best land inclosed with a high fence, and you hope that the owner is about to begin tilling his freehold. On the contrary, the object of this improvement is to keep out the only sign of farming, the sheep, and to preserve the best of the land (because where the land is best the covert is highest) an undisturbed realm of the black-cock." And yet Mr. Pusey saw that Exmoor consisted in great part of sound land ; and a farmer said to him, " here is land enough idle to employ the surplus population of England." Every black-cock, in Mr. Pusey's opinion, had cost more than a full-fed ox.† In Somersetshire the disproportion between the population and the amount of agricultural employment is very great. For every 100 acres in this county there were 41 persons returned in the census of 1841 ; in Norfolk there were 32 persons, and in Lincoln 22, taking the average of the several counties.‡

Of Cornwall, it need only be remarked that its agriculture, at the end of the last century, was a very secondary object. Fishers and miners constituted the great body of the population. At the present time not more than 7 per cent. are agricultural. The farms were small, as they still are, chiefly cultivated by the occupier and his family. Corn crop formerly followed corn crop till the soil would yield no more. The turnip-culture was unknown till 1815. But improvement is making its way against old prejudices ; and the Cornish cultivator may in time be as remarkable for intelligence as the Cornish miner.

South Wales, before the war of the French Revolution, grew little corn, and pasturage was the main occupation. The peasantry lived chiefly upon oatmeal and barley-meal. The war came, and corn was grown for export to England. The iron works and copper works multiplied ; and then South Wales in time became an

* " Journal of Royal Agricultural Society," vol. xi. p. 698.

† *Ibid.*, vol. iv. p. 309.

Ibid., vol. xi. p. 547.

importing district. North Wales was almost exclusively pastoral. The small sheep ran upon the mountains for three or four years till they were sold to drovers. The lean black cattle could not be fattened where they grew, but were drafted off to the border fairs. A little tillage gradually mingled with the pasturage; but all the modern system of economizing manures for cereal crops, and of feeding stock with green crops, was utterly unknown. Like the cultivators of most mountainous districts, remote from towns, the farmers and the labourers were equally prejudiced and obstinate in their adherence to old practices. Much of this conceit still abides, with the hard diet, and the coarse home-made frieze, of former days.

The West Midland counties present few, if any, remarkable agricultural features which it may be proper to notice, with the view to mark the contrast between the past and the present. In Gloucestershire the sheep farms upon the Cotswolds, and the dairies in the valley of the Severn, are not peculiar to recent times. Cider and Perry are produced, as of yore. The Gloucestershire farmer planted his beans, and sometimes his wheat, in drills, before drilling-machines were invented. The Gloucestershire labourer, slowly as he moves, has kept that slow movement with his team, like others of the west, from time immemorial. Herefordshire, Shropshire, and Worcestershire, have not started into good cultivation in the course of half a century, but have gone on steadily improving.

One singular example of the slowness with which novel cultivation was extended, and new products were used, has been recorded, by an octogenarian, of his native county of Worcester. The late Mr. Thomas Wright Hill—a man most deservedly venerated in his own day, and whose sons have done service to their country which will not speedily be forgotten—says in an autobiographical fragment, “My uncle had heard of potatoes”—this was about 1750—“perhaps tasted that root. In any case, however, he procured some seed potatoes from a gentleman’s gardener near Bewdley, and planted them in his garden. The plants came up and gave every promise of an excellent crop; but when the time of potatoe harvest arrived, and the tops were well ripened, my uncle gathered a few of their balls, and to his utter disappointment found them anything but good potatoes.” The stems withered during the winter. The spring came: and when the good man dug up his supposed unproductive patch, he found that the plant which Raleigh gave to Devonshire, and which was the common food of Lancashire, was worth cultivating.*

* “Remains of T. W. Hill,” privately printed, 1859.

In Warwickshire, the system of under-drainage was discovered accidentally by Joseph Elkington, of Princethorpe, in 1764. His fields were so wet as to rot his sheep. He endeavoured in vain to drain them by a deep trench, but could not effect any real remedy. He was meditating by the side of his drain, when a man passing with a crow-bar, the inquiring farmer took the tool, and forced it three or four feet below the bottom of his trench, with a view of discovering the nature of the sub-soil. Water burst up when he removed the crow-bar, and ran plentifully into the drain. He acted upon the hint, by boring; rendered his own land fertile; and received a reward of a thousand pounds from Parliament for the improvements consequent upon his discovery.* Staffordshire, the country of potteries and collieries, was too rapidly advancing at the end of the last century in manufactures to exhibit great changes in cultivation. Its wastes, in some parts, are still uncultivated. Cannock Chase, a low ridge of thirteen thousand acres, with the Potteries and the fires of Dudley within view, is described by Mr. Pusey as a fertile wilderness, feeding only a few starving sheep, but capable of being brought under the plow.†

To speak of Lancashire in connection with agriculture may appear like an attempt to "give to Zembla fruits, to Barca flowers." Yet Lancashire was an agricultural county at the period we profess to describe; and its slowly developing manufactures were intimately blended with the occupations of an agricultural population. We shall have to trace the association of the spinning-wheel in the village and the loom in the town, in our next chapter. Meanwhile, before the cotton æra arrived, Southern Lancashire was very imperfectly cultivating the surface of its great coal-fields. The farms were small; the implements rude; the cultivators poor and prejudiced. Chat-Moss was, of course, left to its primeval state of desolation, man scarcely daring to tread where the railway now bears its thundering burthens. The middle district, with the exception of Preston, is wholly agricultural, as it was in the last century. On the north of the Ribble, the hill-farmers are a primitive race, differing little from their grandfathers and great grandfathers. Pasturing their black-faced sheep upon the moors, they care little for the quality of the land. They have no green crops, and no farm-yards for their cows in the winter. Turf is their only fuel, and their chief food is the oat-cake baked on the hot hearth. What these cultivators are now may show what they were eighty years ago. We descend into the district called the Fylde, to the

* Sinclair's "Code of Agriculture."

† "Journal of Royal Agricultural Society," vol. iv. p. 310.

north of the Wyre, and we look upon operations which are now as much a modern triumph for Lancashire as the wealth of her factories. The mosses of this district amount to twenty thousand acres. "From a state of perfect sterility, producing nothing but moor-fowl and snipes, they are now being gradually converted into the most productive land of the kingdom." *

Cheshire, like Lancashire, was, for a large portion of the county, in the transition state from agriculture to manufactures, in the middle of the reign of George III. Its rich pastures and its dairy-farms have only been improved in degree, but not in kind. Its arable was imperfectly cultivated, without green crops. One mode of raising the productiveness, both of arable and pasture, was forbidden by a barbarous fiscal policy. The foul or dirtied salt, produced in hundreds of tons by the salt-works of Cheshire, was utterly lost; the heavy duty laid upon refuse salt preventing its use as manure. †

To attempt any minute description of the rural condition of Yorkshire, eighty or ninety years ago, divided as that great county is into three ridings, each having many peculiar characteristics of soil and climate, is far beyond the scope of our imperfect sketch of national progress in this department of industry. The great landed proprietors of the time led the way to that course of improvement which has made Yorkshire as remarkable in agriculture as in manufactures. The marquis of Rockingham, the leader of the Whig party, was more successful as a cultivator than as a politician. But, even around Wentworth House, he had to contend with those obstinate prejudices which beset the rich and noble, as well as the poor and lowly, improver. The marquis had to deal with "a set of men of contracted ideas, used to a stated road, with deviations neither to the right nor left." Arthur Young is not describing legislators, but farmers. "His lordship finding that discourse and reasoning could not prevail over the obstinacy of their understandings, determined to convince their eyes." He showed the agriculturists of the West Riding, in the management of two thousand acres of his own lands, what would be the result of draining, of cultivating turnips properly, of using better implements. "Well convinced that argument and persuasion would have little effect with the John Trot geniuses of farming, he determined to set the example of good husbandry as the only probable means of being successful." ‡

* "Journal of Royal Agricultural Society," vol. x. p.

† Aikin's "Manchester," p. 45.

‡ "Northern Tour," vol. i. pp. 307 to 353.

In the East Riding we may trace, in the pages of Arthur Young, the beginnings of that extension of the area of cultivation, which has converted a quarter of a million of acres of almost barren hills—the chalk district of the Wolds—into a country of luxuriant harvests, and of pasture and green crops for innumerable herds and flocks. There was a great improver at work upon these wild moors in 1770. Sir Digby Legard, who resided at Ganton, on the edge of the Wolds, experimented upon five thousand acres of unclosed wold-land near his house. About five hundred acres were in tillage. The land was let at a shilling an acre. The annual value of the corn and wool of the five thousand acres was under 1000*l.*, and they maintained a hundred inhabitants. He was sanguine enough to believe that the same land might, at no great expense, be so cultivated as in a few years to produce a five-fold increase of corn, support twice the number of cattle, and be let at eight times its then rent. Mr. George Legard, in his Prize Essay on the farming of the East Riding, says, “It can be proved that in the very district to which sir Digby Legard refers, the produce of wheat has been doubled, that of oats has been increased five-fold ; of barley six-fold ; and that wherever skill and capital have been applied to these uncultivated hills, rent has been advanced even as much as twenty-fold.” *

Arthur Young rides on, during his Tour, amidst the waste places and the cultivated grounds of Yorkshire, with alternate feelings of regret and of exultation. He passes from Newton by the road “across Hambleton, a tract of country which has not the epithet black given it for nothing; for it is a continued range of black moors, eleven or twelve miles long, and from four to eight broad. It is melancholy to travel through such desolate land, when it is so palpably capable of improvement.” † After traversing a vast range of dreary waste, he looks down “upon an immense plain, comprehending almost all Cleveland, finely cultivated, the verdure beautiful.” ‡ About Newbigill he sees “many improvements of moors, by that spirited cultivator, the earl of Darlington.” On the road from Bowes to Brough, he deplures that, of a line of twelve miles, through a country exhibiting a fine deep red loam not more than nine miles are cultivated. “It is extremely melancholy to view such tracts of land, that are indisputably capable of yielding many beneficial crops, lie totally waste; while in many parts of the kingdom farms are so scarce and difficult to be procured, that one is no sooner vacant than twenty applications are immediately made

* “Journal of Royal Agricultural Society,” vol. ix. p. 95.

† “Northern Tour,” vol. ii. p. 98.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 202.

for it."* At Swinton, near Masham, where Mr. Danby had a colliery, upon the edge of his vast moorlands which did not yield him a farthing an acre, Arthur Young saw an example of improvement which showed him of what the land was capable. The proprietor had allowed some of the more industrious of his colliers each to inclose a field out of the moors. Upon one of these humble improvers the agricultural tourist has conferred a fame as truly deserved as that of the Cokes and Bedfords of that age. James Croft, one of the colliers, thirteen years before Young visited the district, began his husbandry by taking an acre of moor. By indefatigable labour he soon raised oats and barley, and obtained fine grass land. He next took eight acres which he could not cultivate all at once, for the land was full of large stones. But he finally succeeded. When his eulogist saw him he was at work upon eight acres more, attacking the most enormous stones, cutting them in pieces, carrying them away, and then bringing mould to fill the holes up. He had thus brought nine acres into excellent cultivation. He was clearing eight more acres of fresh land, paring and burning, confident of deriving from them an additional support for his family. Had James Croft assistance either of money or labour? He had done everything with his own hands. He had worked in the mine from twelve o'clock at night to the noon of the next day. "From the time of leaving off work in the mine, till that of sleeping, he regularly spent in unremitting labour on his farm." The enthusiasm of Arthur Young on beholding this marvel of industry becomes eloquent: "Such a conduct required a genius of a peculiar cast. Daring in his courage, and spirited in his ideas, the most extensive plans are neither too vast nor too complicated to be embraced with facility by his bold and comprehensive imagination. . . . The greatest, and indeed the only, object of his thoughts is the improvement of the wilds that surround him, over which he casts an anxious but magnanimous eye, wishing for the freedom to attack, with his own hands, an enemy, the conquest of whom would yield laurels to a man of ample fortune."† Out of such stuff as James Croft was made of, has arisen that wondrous race of enterprising men of the North who—some from beginnings as humble as this cultivator of the moors—have largely contributed to build up the material prosperity of their country; have contended with prejudice, with jealousy, with dishonesty; have been ridiculed as projectors under the once popular nickname of "conjurers;"—the daring men who, whether as creators of canals and railways, inventors of machines, organizers of factories, adventu-

* "Northern Tour," vol. ii. p. 206.

† *Ibid.*, p. 298.

rous merchants, or spirited cultivators, have brought to their tasks the same qualities as James Croft brought—"a penetration that sees the remotest difficulty; a prudence and firmness of mind that removes every one, the moment it is foreseen." *

Young says of his agricultural collier, "his ideas are clear and shining; and though his language is totally unrefined and provincial, insomuch that some attention is necessary to comprehend the plainest of his meaning, yet whoever will take the pains to examine him will find him a genius in husbandry." Considerable attention would certainly have been necessary, if the intelligent Yorkshireman had expressed himself, as to the troubles of a Craven cultivator, in what is represented to have been the language of the country at the beginning of the present century. To the question of farmer Giles, "Whear's yawer Tom?" neighbour Bridget thus replies: "He's gaan aboon two howers sin weet fadder to git eldin, nabody knaws how far; an th' gaitte fray th' moor is seea dree, unbane, and parlous; Lang Rig brow is seea brant, at they're foarced to stang th' cart; an th' wham, boon t' gill heead, is seea mortal sumpy an soft, at it taks cart up tot knaff ommost iv'ry yerd. Gangin ower some heealdin grund, they welted cart ower yesterday, and brack th' barkum, haams, and two felks." † The author of "The Craven Dialect" says that the inhabitants of this district, pent up by their native mountains, and principally engaged in agricultural pursuits, "had no opportunity of corrupting the purity of their language by the adoption of foreign idioms." He expresses a regret, with which few will sympathize, that, "since the introduction of commerce, and in consequence of that a greater intercourse, the simplicity of the language has, of late years, been much corrupted." The dialect of Craven has taken its departure with the herds of wild white cattle, whose cows hid their young in the ferns and underwood of the wastes of Craven, and whose bulls were hunted by large assemblages of horsemen and their followers on foot, with something of the grandeur of the chase of the middle ages.‡

The four Northern Counties have many points of interest, especially in the character of their population. Durham was a

* "Northern Tour," vol. ii. p. 299.

† From "The Craven Dialect," 1824, p. 6. The following are from the "Glossary" of this curious volume: *eldin*, fuel; *gaitte*, road; *dree*, tedious; *unbane*; distant; *parlous*, perilous; *brant*, steep; *stang*, to put a lever on the wheel; *wham*, bog; *boon*, or *bane*, near; *gill*, glen; *sumpy*, wet; *tot*, the whole; *knaff*, nave; *heealdin*, sloping; *weltd*, overturned; *barkum*, collar made of bark; *felks*, fellows of a wheel.

‡ Culley, in Bewick's "Quadrupeds."

very neglected agricultural district in the second half of the last century. "Within a comparatively recent period, a large portion of this county was uninclosed and uncultivated, and lay either in wide tracts of desolate moor, or in more sheltered, though equally neglected, 'stinted pastures.'"* The land under cultivation was universally in want of draining. The farm-yard manures were insufficient, for little stock was kept. The county was indeed famous for a breed of cattle known as the Durham short-horns—animals which were fattened into wonderful size, and were sold at fabulous prices. This breed has been improved into the most esteemed stock of England.

Arthur Young is indignant at the wretched breed of sheep that ranged over the Northumberland moors, in flocks as large as forty thousand, which did not pay for their keep more than a shilling or two per head. The millions of acres of improveable moors he holds to be "as waste as when ravaged by the fury of the Scottish borderers."† Northumberland contained "large districts, which even within the last eighty years were in a state of nature covered with broom, furze, or rushes"‡ It was long after the Union that the inhabitants of this border land acquired settled and industrious habits. But the fertile vales of the northern parts of the county attracted settlers, who soon introduced better cultivation than that of the small crofts which surrounded the miserable farm hovels. The famous agriculturists known everywhere by the name of Culley settled in the district of Glendale in 1767. Their example, and that of other cultivators and breeders, "gave a stimulus to the surrounding district; and in a few years the inexpert operations and languid system of husbandry which had previously prevailed, gave place to others of extraordinary expedition and efficacy."§

When Gray entered Westmorland from Yorkshire, in 1769, he saw a pleasing display of a rural population: "A mile and a half from Brough, on a hill, lay a great army encamped." It was the Brough cattle fair, held on the 29th and 30th of September. "On a nearer approach, appeared myriads of horses and cattle on the road itself; and in all the fields round me, a brisk stream hurrying cross the way;—thousands of clean healthy people in their best parti-coloured apparel, farmers and their families, esquires and their daughters, hastening up from the dales and down the fells on every side, glittering in the sun, and pressing forward to join the

* "Journal of Royal Agricultural Society," vol. xvii. p. 93.

† "Northern Tour," vol. iv. p. 337.

‡ "Journal of Royal Agricultural Society," vol. ii. p. 151.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 153.

throng." * The poet travels on into the heart of the beautiful Lake District. At the village of Grange, near Borrodale, he finds a contrast to the bustle of the fair at Brough. He is entertained by a young farmer and his mother with milk and thin oaten cakes, and "butter that Sisera would have jumped at, though not in a lordly dish." The farmer was a noted man of the district. He was "himself the man that last year plundered the eagle's aiery: all the dale are up in arms on such an occasion, for they lose abundance of lambs yearly." The hold dalesman "was let down from the cliff on ropes to the shelf of rock on which the eagle's nest was built, the people above shouting and hollowing to fright the old birds, which flew screaming round, but did not dare to attack him." The eagles are gone, never to return. Every season, says Miss Martineau, there is a rumour of an eagle having visited some point or another; "but, on the whole, we find the preponderance of belief is against there being any eagle's nest amongst the mountains of Westmorland or Cumberland." †

Poetry has made the Lake District her home; and amidst the glorious mountains, the lakes and the tarns, will Poetry every abide. The gifted writer who has added another celebrated name to the illustrious who have delighted here to dwell, has said of a mountainous district, "it is the only kind of territory in which utility must necessarily be subordinated to beauty Man may come and live, if he likes, and if he can; but it must be in some humble corner, by permission, as it were, and not through conflict with the genius of the place. Nature and beauty here rule and occupy: man and his desires are subordinate, and scarcely discernible." ‡ It was thus, on the slopes of the mountains, or in vales inaccessible, that the Dalesmen, deriving their name from the word *deyler*, which means to distribute, occupied their little crofts as tenants of their ecclesiastical or military lord. These were the predecessors of the "statesmen," or "estatesmen," who still survive, though in diminished numbers, struggling with their small skill against the march of agricultural science and the extension of farm holdings. Even nature herself cannot resist this progress. The Kentmere Tarn, by whose shallow waters Bernard Gilpin might have meditated three centuries ago, has been drained in our own day. Wherever corn can be made to spring, the reed and the rush no longer flourish. The social condition of the population is as rapidly changing. The shepherd will still go upon the hills, "into the heart of many thousand mists." His dog will still bring down the flock from heights untrodden by man—that faithful ser-

* "Journal."

† "The Land we Live in," vol. ii. p. 235.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 217.

vant, of whom it has been said, "without the shepherd's dog, the mountainous land in England would not be worth sixpence." The occasional Pedlar will still carry his pack to the cottage door. But the whole district has been brought into communication with the outer world; and its inner life has undergone a very marked change. "Book farming" is no longer held up to ridicule.* Turnips were first grown as a field-crop in the vale of Bassenthwaite, in 1793. Oats are still half the grain crop; but the food of the people is wondrously altered since the time when a wheaten loaf could not be bought in Carlisle, and "it was only a rich family that used a peck of wheat in the course of a year, and that was used at Christmas."† Hemp and flax were grown in small patches for domestic use, the females spinning the flax, and the males plating the hemp into cordage, for leather for harness was not used till the end of the last century. "Wonderful Robert Walker," the good curate of Seathwaite, spun the wool out of which the cloth was woven which his wife made up into apparel for themselves and their eight children. But Yorkshire and Lancashire manufactures have banished such thrift. Wordsworth records how the change from hānd-labour to machinery intruded itself into Seathwaite: "At a small distance from the parsonage has been erected a mill for spinning yarn. It is a mean and disagreeable object, though not unimportant to the spectator, as calling to mind the momentous changes wrought by such inventions in the frame of society." The spinning wheel went out when drills came in. "About the year 1795, the ancestor of the present Mr. Dixon, of Rucroft or Ruckcroft, in the parish of Ainstable, procured a barrow-drill for sowing his patch of turnips with; and so highly was it esteemed as a saving of labour by himself and his neighbours, that it was lent all round the country, and worked day and night during the season." ‡ The one-horse cart gradually drove out the pack-horse, which the farmer employed to carry his grain to the mill or to the market. Looking from Little Langdale, "a horse road is discerned sloping up the brown side of Wrynose, opposite. This track was once the only traffic-road from Kendal to Whitehaven; and it was traversed by pack-horses." § Not only are the usages of the Lake District changed, but the inhabitants are, in the more beautiful regions, changed from poor cultivators into luxurious gentry; the miserable farm steadings have given place to splendid villas. Gray shows

* "Journal of Royal Agricultural Society," vol. xiii. p. 225.

† Eden. "History of the Poor," vol. i. p. 564.

‡ "Journal of Royal Agricultural Society," vol. xiii. p. 241.

§ "Land we Live in," vol. ii. p. 254.

us what Grasmere was, ninety years ago: "A white village, with the parish church rising in the midst of it; hanging inclosures, corn fields, and meadows green as an emerald, with their trees, hedges, and cattle; fill up the whole space from the edge of the water Not a single red tile, no flaring gentleman's house or garden walls, break in upon the repose of this little unsuspected paradise; but all is peace, rusticity, and happy poverty, in its neatest and most becoming attire."

"We entered Scotland," says Smollett, "by a frightful muir of sixteen miles, which promises very little for the interior parts of the kingdom. . . . That part of Scotland contiguous to Berwick, nature seems to have intended as a barrier between two hostile nations." In a few hours he sees a plain "covered with as fine wheat as ever I saw in the most fertile parts of South Britain."* This fertility was exceptional. The agriculture of Scotland—even in the Lothians, now models of farming excellence—was in the rudest and almost barbarous state, when George III. came to the throne. East Lothian claims the honour of having led the march of improvement. But in the middle of the last century there was not a single mile of continuous hard road in the district. Grain was carried to market on horseback. The whole county of Haddington, long after the middle of that century, was open field. The tenantry frequently resided together in a cluster of mean houses called a town. Green crops were unknown, and the thistles among the corn were carefully gathered to feed the husbandry horses. The implements were of the rudest kind—"better fitted to raise laughter than to raise mould," according to lord Kaimes, an agricultural improver. The married ploughman was paid, as now, in the produce of the farm; but he received a far less proportion of oats than at the present time, and he had no potatoes in his patch of garden. The only occupation that flourished was that of smuggling.† Such was the agricultural state of the southern shores of the Frith of Forth. The pastoral district of the Lammermuir hills had no improved breeds of sheep till the beginning of the present century.

The beautiful country watered by the Tweed and the Teviot was for the greater part uninclosed seventy years ago. Roxburghshire exhibited the dominion of the plough in irregular and detached patches; the intermediate portions being devoted to grazing cattle, which were put under the charge of a herd, to prevent them trespassing upon the scanty divisions set apart for corn.‡ The

* "Humphrey Clinker."

† "New Statistical Account of Scotland," Haddington, p. 375.

‡ "Journal of Royal Agricultural Society," vol. i. p. 105.

produce of wheat was only in the proportion of one-twelfth to that of oats and barley. The great novelist has described Liddesdale as exhibiting "no inclosures, no roads, almost no tillage—a land which a patriarch would have chosen to feed his flocks and herds." He has perhaps somewhat exaggerated the abundance of "Charlie's Hope"—the noble cowhouse and its milch-cows, the feeding-house with ten bullocks of the most approved breeds, the stable with two good teams of horses—the appropriate wealth of so worthy a yeoman as "Dandie Dinmont."* Selkirkshire has been rendered familiar to us by "The Ettrick Shepherd," as regards some aspects of its pastoral life. We see his flock, as he was driving them home, suddenly frightened, scampering over the hills, following by his dog "Sirrah." A dark night is passed in fruitless search, Hogg and his man wandering over the steeps and dells from midnight till the rising sun. At length, at the bottom of a deep ravine, the faithful colley and his charge are found, not a lamb missing. This is the life which knows little change from one century to another; but time yet brings changes. Hogg laments that the black-faced "ewie wi' the crooked horn" had been banished from her native hills. Soberer records inform us that the sheep which once covered the Ettrick wastes produced a crop of wool of the coarsest kind, little adapted for manufacture.† The introduction of the Cheviot breed was one of the marks of progress. The management of sheep flocks in Eskdalemuir, the mountain region of Dumfriesshire, attests the innovations of a century. Smollett observes of the sheep which he saw upon the hills, that "their fleeces are much damaged by the tar with which they are smeared, to preserve them from the rot in winter, during which they run wild night and day, and thousands are lost under huge wreaths of snow. 'Tis a pity the farmers cannot contrive some means to shelter this useful animal from the inclemencies of a rigorous climate."‡ When snow storms of any long continuance came, it was the practice of the farmers of Eskdalemuir to fly with their sheep to Annandale. It was the same in the neighbouring mountain district, when every part of Nithsdale, Annandale, and the lower part of Eskdale, were filled with them. The pastures of the valleys to which the sheep fled are now subdivided and inclosed. Better provision is made upon the hills for food and for shelter, and the sheep continue around their own farms.§

The agriculture of Ayrshire, at the accession of George III.,

* "Guy Mannering."

† "New Statistical Account," Selkirkshire, p. 76.

‡ "Humphrey Clinker."

§ "New Statistical Account," vol. iv. Dumfriesshire, p. 410.

was in a rude condition ; the arable farms very small, the tenants without capital, the tenure encumbered with services to the landlord. In the parish of Mauchline was the farm of Mosgiel, upon which Burns spent nine years of a life of rural industry. In the neighbouring parish of Tarbolton his father dwelt, on the farm of Lochlee. "The Cotter's Saturday Night" is descriptive of the simple household of the humble cultivator. The Cotter, says Gilbert Burns, was "an exact copy of my father in his manners, his family devotion, and exhortations. He lived with the most rigid economy, that he might be able to keep his children at home, thereby having an opportunity of watching the progress of our young minds, and forming in them early habits of piety and virtue, and from this motive alone did he engage in farming, the source of all his difficulties and distresses." The supper that "crowns their simple board" is

"The halesome parritch, chief o' Scotia's food."

The mother, "wi' her needle and her sheers,"

"Gars auld claes look amaist as weel's the new."

Burns prays that Scotia's "hardy sons of rustic toil" may long be preserved "from luxury's contagion." Smollett describes the peasantry as "on a poor footing all over the kingdom;" and there was then no great distinction between the occupier of a small farm and his "elder bairns, at service out among the farmers roun'." But Smollett says of this peasantry, "they look better, and are better clothed, than those of the same rank in Burgundy, and many other places of France and Italy; nay, I will venture to say they are better fed, notwithstanding the boasted wine of these foreign countries." They seldom or never taste flesh meat, he adds, nor any kind of strong liquor, except twopenny, at times of uncommon festivity. He describes the breakfast of oat-meal, or peas-meal, eaten with milk; the pottage for dinner composed of kale, leeks and barley; the supper of sowens or flummery of oat-meal. "Some of them have potatoes; and you find parsnips in every peasant's garden. They are clothed with a coarse kind of russet of their own making, which is both decent and warm. They dwell in poor huts, built of loose stones and turf, without any mortar, having a fireplace or hearth in the middle, generally made of an old mill-stone, and a hole at top to let out the smoke. These people, however, are content, and wonderfully sagacious. All of them read the Bible." Out of this poor but acute stock came the poet

“ who walked in glory and in joy,
Following his plough along the mountain-side.”

To judge from his own verse, he must have been as energetic in his labour as “ his auld mare, Maggie ” :

“ Aft thee and I, in aught hours gaun,
In guid March weather,
Hae turn'd sax rood beside our han',
For days thegither.”

Sax rood ! This is one-half more than was ploughed by the Suffolk “ punches.” We fear that the unprofitable land of Mosgiel had merely surface ploughing with the rude implement of poor Burns's time, as different from the Suffolk plough as the soil was different upon which the punches worked. The fields about Mauchline “ are of a light sandy, or mixed kind.” *

The changes of Lanarkshire and Renfrewshire during eighty years are more remarkable in manufactures than in agriculture. Great have been the alterations in the industry of towns such as Glasgow and Paisley. But here, as throughout all Scotland, morasses have been drained, lochs have been made to bear corn, the domain of unproductive nature has been compelled to supply the necessities of man. There is a charming paper by John Wilson, entitled “ Our Parish,” in which the eloquent writer exhibits, in no placid mood, the ruthless invader of poetical wastes. A great part of our Parish, the Moor, was “ ever so many miles long, and ever so many miles broad, and nobody thought of guessing how many miles round. But some twenty years ago it was absolutely measured to a rood by a land-louper of a land-surveyor,—distributed, drained, inclosed, utterly ruined for ever. No, not for ever. Nature laughs to scorn Acts of Parliament, and we predict that in a quarter of a century she will resume her management of that moor. We rejoice to hear that she is already beginning to take lots of it into her own hands. Wheat has no business there, and should keep to the carses.” The prophecy has no doubt failed. The dogma upon which it is built is obsolete—“ Agriculture, like education, has its bounds.” †

The North Western parts of Scotland are noticed by Smollett as “ by no means fertile in corn. The ground is naturally barren and moorish. The peasants are poorly lodged, meagre in their looks, mean in their apparel, and remarkably dirty.” The soil in the district around Stirling is described by him as “ poorly cultivated, and almost altogether uninclosed.” But on the margin of the

* “ New Statistical Account.”

† “ Recreations of Christopher North,” vol. ii. p. 233.

Clyde, from Glasgow to Dunbarton, "groves and meadows and corn fields interspersed," delight his eye. The banks of Loch Lomond "display a sweet variety of woodland, corn field, and pasture." His own "Leven Water" was "pastoral and delightful" then, as it still remains. He goes to Inverary. In Argyleshire he sees "hardly any signs of cultivation, or even of population;" but "a margin of plain ground, spread along the sea-side, is well inhabited, and improved by the arts of husbandry." Of this vast Highland district it is now computed that more than three hundred thousand acres are cultivated. But eighty years ago, to speak of the cultivation of the Highlands would be to describe a region in which agriculture was despised; where the mountaineers chiefly confided in the spontaneous bounty of nature, which gave them fish in the streams, and fowl in the heather, and rare patches of pasture for a few black cattle. Smollett says that "the granaries of Scotland are the banks of the Tweed, the counties of East and Mid Lothian, the Carse of Gowrie, and some tracts in Aberdeenshire and Moray." The Carse of Gowrie maintains its ancient reputation as "the garden of Scotland." But other parts of Perthshire have witnessed great changes. The graziers of the lowland districts no longer quit their little farms to drive their cattle to shealings on the hills to graze during the summer, the men fishing and hunting whilst the women tend the cows and spin.* The Highlanders no longer come down to the cattle markets at Crieff, and take unceremonious possession of the fire-sides and beds of the country people.† The tenantry of certain districts are no longer compelled, as one of the modes of feudal slavery, to grind their corn at the lord's mill, and shoe their horses at the lord's forge. The whole system of cultivation in parts of Perthshire may be taken as a fair sample of the mode in which the cultivation of a large portion of Scotland was proceeding long after the middle of the last century. The farms lay in what was termed "runrig," consisting of "infield," upon which all the manure was laid, and "outfield," occasionally cropped, and then consigned to common pasture, if any feed could be got off it. There was no wheat, or artificial grass, or potatoes, or winter turnips. There were no separate farms; the cultivators lived in hamlets, upon the ancient principle of mutual protection. Tully Veolan exhibits a lively picture of such a hamlet:—the garden where the gigantic kale was encircled by groves of nettles; the common field where the joint labour of the villagers cultivated alternate ridges and patches of rye, oats, barley, and peas; the miserable wigwam behind some

* "New Statistical Account," vol. x. Perth, p. 556.

† *Ibid.*, p. 270.

favoured cottage, where the wealthy might perhaps shelter a starved cow or sorely-galled horse; the stack of turf on one side the door, and the family dunghill on the other.* In such a village, hand-labour did more than the plough; but when that cumbrous instrument was used, it barely scratched the soil, without turning it over. Sledges were employed instead of carts. It is unnecessary to point out the contrast of a period half a century later; especially in the more remote districts of the North of Scotland, in which the country has been made accessible by roads, water communication, and railways, and its cultivation has no longer to struggle with other impediments than those of soil and climate. The climate itself has been ameliorated by judicious planting. Johnson was abused for dwelling on the bareness of the country, Fife in particular, through which he passed in his "Journey." Boswell, in defending him, says, "let any traveller observe how many trees, which deserve the name, he can see from Berwick to Aberdeen." There is now scarcely a parish in Fifeshire, described in the "New Statistical Account," in which there is not mention of extensive plantations which, "instead of presenting to the eye a naked and barren landscape, enliven with verdure our higher grounds." At Inverary there are noble trees, planted in 1746 by Archibald, duke of Argyle; the plantations were extended in 1771; but within the last quarter of a century plantation has gone on at the rate of half a million of oak and fir trees in five years.† In an interesting paper upon Moray it is truly said, with reference to cultivation, "The change which a single century has wrought in Northern Scotland can hardly be exaggerated." ‡

The remarkable powers of observation possessed by Arthur Young are signally displayed in his "Tour in Ireland," made in the years 1776 to 1779. In 1779 lord North saw the necessity of yielding to the national spirit which Grattan had evoked, and he carried three Bills for the relief of the commerce of Ireland.§ The tillage and grazing of that country had been long impeded by prohibitory laws, which prevented the importation of black cattle to England, and which discountenanced the woollen manufacture. and consequently discouraged the breeding of sheep. The monopolizing spirit of jobbery went so far in 1759, that a Bill of the Irish Parliament for restricting the importation into Ireland of damaged flour was thrown out in England, at the instigation of a miller of Chichester. The natural fertility of Ireland, and her consequent

* "Waverley." † "New Statistical Account," vol. vii. Argyleshire, p. 14.

‡ "Westminster Review," vol. xiii. p. 91.

§ *Ante*, vol. vi. p. 273.

advantages in carrying her agriculture to perfection, are shown by Arthur Young to be very great—a fertility superior to that of England, taking acre for acre. But the capital and skill that had made England what it was, even eighty years ago, were wanting in Ireland. Amongst the greatest evils were the “middlemen.” “The very idea,” says Young, “as well as the practice, of permitting a tenant to relet at a profit rent, seems confined to the distant and unimproved parts of every empire.”* It had entirely gone out in the highly cultivated counties of England; in Scotland it had continued to be very common. The class of Irish middlemen has been familiarized to us by the admirable pictures of Maria Edgeworth. Young describes them as screwing up the rent to the uttermost farthing, and relentless in the collection of it—the hardest drinkers in Ireland—masters of packs of wretched hounds, with which they wasted their time and their money. But whether the tenantry of Ireland were miserable cottars, or “the largest graziers and cow-keepers in the world,” all were “the most errant slovens.” In the arable counties the capital employed upon a given amount of land would not be a third of that of an English farmer; hence “their manuring is trivial, their tackle and implements wretched, their teams weak, their profits small.” Wonderful as it may appear, the “barbarous custom” denounced by the statute of the 10th and 11th of Charles II., of ploughing, harrowing, drawing, and working with horses, by the tail, was not exploded at Castlebar and other places. In the mountainous tracts Arthur Young saw instances of greater industry than in any other part of Ireland; for the little occupiers, who could obtain leases of a mountain side, made exertions in improvement. The cottar system of labour resembled what had then recently prevailed in Scotland, and which was probably the same all over Europe before arts and commerce changed the face of it. “The recompense for labour is the means of living. In England these are dispensed in money, but in Ireland in land or commodities.” The shrewd agricultural observer weighs the comparative advantages for the poor family, of payment in land, to produce potatoes and milk, or of a money payment. He seems to decide for the plentiful supply of food, although the mud hovel of one room may blind the family with its smoke, and the clothing be so ragged that a stranger is impressed with the idea of universal poverty. “The sparingness with which our English labourer eats his bread and cheese is well known. Mark the Irishman’s potatoe-bowl placed on the floor, the whole family on their hams around it, devouring a quantity almost incredible; the beggar

* Young—“Tour in Ireland,” vol. ii. p. 329.

seating himself to it with a hearty welcome, the pig taking his share as readily as the wife, the cocks, hens, turkeys, geese, the cur, the cat,—and all partaking of the same dish.”* We now know what was the terrible end of this rude abundance of one species of food, produced upon small holdings, of which, in 1847, 500,000 acres maintained 300,000 families; whilst in England one labourer was employed to about fifteen acres of arable land. The abuse of the right of property in land, which went on for more than half a century, in allowing the landlords to consume the whole produce of the soil *minus* the potatoes,† resulted in that visitation which was regarded by the Society of Friends in Ireland as “a means permitted by an all-wise Providence to exhibit more strikingly the unsound state of our social condition.” Arthur Young did not anticipate the frightful climax of the almost exclusive potato cultivation. He saw a population under three millions. He could not anticipate what would be the result, when that population was more than doubled, without an adequate improvement in the cultivation of the land, and a more equal distribution of its produce amongst the great body of the miserable cultivators.

* “Tour in Ireland,” vol. ii. p. 118.

† John Mill—“Political Economy,” vol. ii.

CHAPTER XIX.

Revolution in the peaceful Arts.—Great captains of Industry raised up in Britain.—The duke of Bridgewater and Brindley.—Canals first constructed in England.—The Cotton manufacture.—The fly-shuttle of Kay.—Cotton-spinning machines.—The spinning-jenny of Hargreaves.—Cotton spinning ceasing to be a domestic employment.—Richard Arkwright.—His water-frame spinning machine.—The first water spinning mill.—Samuel Crompton.—His Hall-in-the-Wood wheel, known as the mule.—General rush to engage in spinning cotton.—Rapid increase of Lancashire towns.—Dr. Cartwright.—His power-loom.—Dr. Roebuck.—First furnace at Carron for smelting iron by pit-coal.—Wedgwood.—Potteries of Staffordshire.—Commercial treaty with France.—Watt.—Progress of his improved steam-engine.—Its final success.

IN the last year of the reign of George the Second, and in a few years after the accession of George the Third, there was begun in this country an enormous revolution in the Arts, for accomplishing which Providence raised up very special instruments. The great designs of Superior Beneficence may be as readily traced in the formation of minds which are destined to effect mighty changes in social organization by what may seem humble labours, as in the permission given to lawgivers and warriors to operate upon the destinies of nations by more direct exercises of power. The revolution in the peaceful Arts in the middle of the eighteenth century in Britain, which was commenced and carried forward in various directions by a knot of men not greater in number than the mythical Seven Champions of Christendom, exhibited an unequalled series of bloodless triumphs over physical and moral obstacles, and produced immediate and still developing results, which have raised this little band to the unquestioned honour of being the great Captains and Champions of Modern Industry. During less than half a century, the labours of these men had increased the resources of their country to an extent which chiefly enabled it to sustain the pressure of the most tremendous war in which it ever was engaged; had bestowed upon a population increasing beyond all previous example abundant opportunities of profitable labour; and had opened new and unlimited fields of production, for the multiplication and diffusion of the necessaries of life and of the comforts and refinements of civilization. Whilst tracing the individual course of these remarkable contemporaries, we cannot fail to perceive what an intimate con-

nection of apparently diverging purposes existed between each and all,—how, whilst Brindley, Arkwright, Crompton, Cartwright, Roebuck, Wedgwood, and, greatest of all, Watt, each pursued his one absorbing object, there was a natural harmony in their labours,—how no one attempt could have been carried to perfection without the aid of another effort, differing in degree but the same in kind.

In the old timbered manor-house of Worsley, about six or seven miles from Manchester, there were three men, in 1758, daily occupied in discussing one of the boldest schemes of public improvement that had ever been devised by associated or private enterprise. One of these men was Francis Egerton, third duke of Bridgewater. He was in his twenty-second year. Of weak health as a boy, his education had been neglected; but he had travelled, and had seen much of the unsatisfactory pleasures of the life of London, at a period somewhat notorious for the dissolute manners of the great. He had endured a matrimonial disappointment, and had retired to this one of his family estates, to pursue a course of the strictest economy, and to devise plans for the improvement of his fortune, by making his encumbered property more productive. The estate of Worsley contained a rich bed of coal, but it was comparatively valueless. Within an easy distance was the great town of Manchester, and its suburbs, with a population of about 40,000, ready to welcome an additional supply of fuel for domestic and manufacturing uses. But Worsley and its neighbourhood could not supply coal so cheaply by land carriage as the pits on the other side of the town. Liverpool, also, offered a vast market, if coal could be cheaply conveyed thither from Manchester; but the water carriage was twelve shillings per ton, and the land carriage was two pounds per ton. Could these difficulties be surmounted? Could a canal be constructed from Worsley to Manchester? Might the line not be extended to the Mersey? Such were the ideas that pressed upon the inquiring mind of the young nobleman in his self-enforced solitude. There was a neighbouring canal in course of construction, which arose out of an Act passed in 1755 for making the Sankey-Brook navigable, and finally a canal was opened in 1760, following the course of the stream. It was a work in which the country through which it passed presented few difficulties. But the duke of Bridgewater had grander views. He would adopt a line which should render locks unnecessary—which should cross rivers and cut through hills, like the railway-works of our own time. The duke had made two energetic men the confidential participators in his schemes. One was John

Gilbert, a land agent, who had been engaged in mining speculations; and who was especially useful in raising money to carry on the projected operations. The other was James Brindley, a millwright, —almost without the rudiments of education, and totally deficient in scientific training. This extraordinary man, the greatest civil engineer that had appeared in England before the present century —one whose constructive genius enabled him to overcome difficulties which appeared insuperable to other engineers of more technical pretensions—was twenty years older than his adventurous employer. He had effected some improvements in machinery, and had obtained a small provincial reputation. But when the professional men and the general public looked upon stupendous mounds of earth raised in deep valleys, and heard of an aqueduct to be carried over the Irwell, high enough for masted vessels to sail under it—when they inquired whence the supply of water was to be drawn to fill a canal of nine miles in length—they came to the conclusion that the duke and his engineer were equally mad, and that the project would end in total ruin. We have now become familiar with engineering difficulties far more vast; and can therefore scarcely forbear to smile at such forebodings. The aqueduct at Barton was opened in 1761. It has been said that when the moment arrived for admitting the water into this aqueduct, “Brindley’s nerve was unequal to the interest of the crisis, that he ran away and hid himself, while Gilbert remained cool and collected to superintend the operation which was to confirm or confute the clamour with which the project had been assailed.”*

The subterranean canals in the coal-works at Worsley were as remarkable as the canal itself and its branches. The open works, all of one level, extended thirty-eight miles; the tunnels were originally about a mile and a half in length, although they now extend forty-two miles, of which two-thirds have gone out of use. When the works, above ground and under ground, were finished in 1762, they were described as “the greatest artificial curiosity in the world.”† The immediate effect of the duke of Bridgewater’s first great undertaking was sufficiently demonstrative of the public value of canals. The price of coals in Manchester was reduced one half after its completion. The duke and his brother-in-law, the first marquis of Stafford, were the chief promoters of the Grand Trunk Navigation, generally known as the Staffordshire Canal; and Brindley was the engineer. This work brought the iron and

* “Quarterly Review,” vol. lxxiii. p. 311—a delightful paper by the late earl of Ellesmere.

† Kippis; “Biographia Britannica,” art. Brindley.

pottery districts into easy communication with the Mersey and the Trent. A letter dated from Burslem, in 1767, contains an interesting notice of the engineer: "Gentlemen come to view our eighth wonder of the world, the subterraneous navigation, which is cutting by the great Mr. Brindley, who handles rocks as easily as you would plum-pies, and makes the four elements subservient to his will. He is as plain a looking man as one of the boors of the Peak, or one of his own carters; but when he speaks, all ears listen, and every mind is filled with wonder at the things he pronounces to be practicable."* Brindley did not live to complete the Grand Trunk. But this, and concurrent undertakings which he designed or superintended, connected the Thames, the Humber, the Severn, and the Mersey, and united London, Liverpool, Bristol, and Hull, by water communication, passing through a district unsurpassed in natural resources and productive industry.

Fourteen years after the duke of Bridgewater had established his claim to be called "the father of British inland navigation," the eventual success of these undertakings was regarded somewhat doubtfully: "Canals for carrying on inland navigation are new, and lately introduced, so as not to warrant great commendations; but the prospect is fair." Again: "What the actual advantages that will be derived from these canals, when finished, may be, time and experience only can determine."† In 1794, the extent of canal speculation produced the inevitable protest against "bold and precarious adventure." There were the same rivalries of competing lines as we have seen in railways, and the same losses and disappointments. Yet the grandeur of these works excited the admiration even of those who doubted their eventual profit. "At the beginning of this century, it was thought a most arduous task to make a high road for carriages over the hills and moors which separate Yorkshire from Lancashire, and now they are pierced through by three navigable canals."‡

The local historian of Manchester, who thus looks with a mixture of apprehension and of wonder at canal enterprise, says, "Nothing but highly flourishing manufactures can repay the vast expense of these designs." He adds, as if to enforce his doubt, that when the plans under execution are finished, Manchester "will probably enjoy more various water communications than the most commercial town of the Low Countries has ever done."§ The principal cause of this sudden increase to the power of cheap car-

* Kippis; "Biographia Britannica," art. Brindley, p. 601.

† Campbell's "Political Survey," vol. ii. p. 261 & p. 265.

‡ Aikin's "Manchester," 1795, p. 137.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 137.

riage possessed by Manchester,—a power greater than that which made the prosperity of Ghent and Bruges,—was, that within a quarter of a century it had become the Metropolis of Cotton,—the centre of that manufacture which, from very small beginnings, had grown into proportions then deemed gigantic, however dwarf-like they may appear in comparison with its present development. The population, busy in the middle of the eighteenth century with “small things called Manchester ware,” had passed away.* Waggon had driven out pack-horses for the conveyance of goods. Canals had come, in great part, to supersede waggons. But the Manchester merchant still sent out his “riders” with patterns in their saddle-bags; and the manufacturer did not disdain to mix with the humbler tradesman in a common public-house, to take his glass of punch, and hear the news of the town. There was such a house of great resort in the market-place, which had been kept by the same landlord for half a century: “It is not unworthy of remark, and to a stranger is very extraordinary, that merchants of the first fortunes quit the elegant drawing-room, to sit in a small dark dungeon, for this house cannot with propriety be called by a better name; but such is the force of long-established custom.”†

It is asserted in a pamphlet published in 1788, that “not above twenty years before that time, the whole cotton trade of Great Britain did not return £200,000 to the country for the raw materials, combined with the labour of the people.”‡ This calculation takes us back to the period at which was invented the hand-machine for spinning cotton, termed “a jenny.” A previous invention in the process of weaving stimulated the mechanical attempts for increasing the quantity of yarn to be woven. About 1760, the cotton weavers began to use a simple but efficacious plan of throwing the shuttle, introduced by John Kay, of Bury, “which enabled the weaver to make twice as much cloth as he made before.” This was called “the fly-shuttle.” The greater speed attained in the weaving process, “destroyed the arrangement which up to that time existed between the quantity of yarn spun and the weavers’ demand for it.”§ John Kay was subsequently “mobbed out of the country, and died in obscurity in a foreign land.” This was probably in consequence of some further invention to supply the place of hand-labour in spinning wool, to which the fly-shuttle was originally applied. Dyer, in his poem of “The Fleece,” published in 1757, having noticed the spinning-wheel, the distaff, and wheels, “double spoiled, which yield to either hand a several line,” says that “patient art,

* *Ante*, vol. iv. p. 410.

† Aikin, p. 189.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 178.

§ “Life of Samuel Crompton,” 2d edition, 1860, p. 20

“Sagacious, has a spiral engine formed,
Which, on an hundred spoles, an hundred threads,
With one huge wheel, by lapse of water, twines.”*

The writer of a very able article on “Cotton-spinning machines” implies that this was supposed to be a spinning machine, introduced into Yorkshire by John Kay.† Robert Anderson, the editor of the valuable edition of “British Poets” published in 1795, appends this note to the passage in “The Fleece:”—“Paul’s engine for cotton and fine wool.” Lewis Paul, in 1738, took out a patent for a machine “for the spinning of wool and cotton in a manner entirely new.” Several attempts were made to work this machine, persons of some note being concerned in the speculation, amongst others, Edward Cave, the proprietor of “The Gentleman’s Magazine.” But Paul’s machine, however ingenious, brought losses upon all concerned in it, and was finally abandoned. The demand for fine yarn still went on unsupplied; and it was increased by a growing market for fabrics in which it was endeavoured to compete with Indian muslins. An extensive manufacture of fabrics composed wholly of cotton does not appear to have been contemplated a few years before this period. “Bombaya’s wharfs,” writes Dyer, “pile up

“Wool-resembling cotton, shorn from trees,
Not to the fleece unfriendly; whether mixed
In warp or woof, or with the line of flax,
Or softer silk’s material.”‡

The demand increased more and more, and it pressed on invention to find modes of supply. In 1764 the Society of Arts voted fifty pounds to Mr. Harrison “for a masterly improvement in the spinning-wheel, by which a child may do double the business that even a grown person can with the common wheel.”§ At length a great practical change was achieved.

In 1767, James Hargreaves completed his “Spinning-jenny.” He was a weaver near Blackburn, and his wife and children were employed in spinning weft for him to work upon at his loom, the warp being supplied by the wholesale manufacturers who gave him employment. The spinster’s machine in Hargreaves’ cottage being accidentally overturned, it was observed that the wheel and the spindle continued to revolve. In the position of the wheel on its side, the spindle became perpendicular. The ingenious man caught the idea, and forthwith constructed a multiplying wheel, with eight rovings and eight upright spindles. He knew what would be the fate of a labour-

* Book iii.

† Book iv.

‡ “Quarterly Review,” vol. cvii. p. 53.

§ “Annual Register,” vol. vii. p. 66.

saving inventor if he made his discovery public. He long worked in secret at his "jenny;" but such mysteries cannot be preserved. His jealous neighbours broke into his house, destroyed his invention, and compelled him to fly for his life to Nottingham. He there received assistance to enable him to take out a patent; but he had sold several of his machines before the date of his patent; the invention became common property; and the instrument, surreptitiously imitated, was soon found in every weaver's cottage in Lancashire. Thomas Highs, about the same period, invented a somewhat similar hand-machine. Samuel Crompton, the inventor of the "mule," which changed the whole course of cotton spinning, when sixteen years of age, in 1769, was spinning upon one of Hargreaves' machines of eight spindles.*

The time was fast approaching when the spinning of cotton would cease to be a domestic manufacture. The weaving would long continue under humble roofs; but machines, driven at first by water-power, would gradually banish the wheel and the jenny. The double occupation of weaver and small farmer was very common in Lancashire. This united business was conducted with small profit to the yeoman, who occupied a few acres, and worked at intervals at one loom. It was far from advantageous to the general interests of the country. Arthur Young described the North of Ireland as "a whole province peopled by weavers: it is they who cultivate, or rather beggar, the soil, as well as work the looms; agriculture is there in ruins. . . . The lands are infinitely subdivided; no weaver thinks of supporting himself by his loom; he has always a piece of potatoes, a piece of oats, a patch of flax, and grass or weeds for a cow." Young held the two occupations to be incompatible. "A weaver who works at a fine cloth can never take the plough or the spade in hand without injury to the web." † The Lancashire weavers had not driven out the farmers proper, as in the North of Ireland, but the same system was in partial operation in the whole cotton-working district. The father of Samuel Crompton was the occupier of a farm near Bolton; he and his family, "as was the custom at that time, employing their leisure hours in carding, spinning, and weaving." In 1758 he became the tenant of a portion of an old mansion, also near Bolton, called Hall-in-the-Wood. The father died soon after this removal. The widow continued the labours of the little farm, and devoted all her leisure, as before, to the spindle and the loom. ‡

* Ure's "Cotton Manufacture," vol. i. book iii. chap. i.

† "Tour in Ireland," vol. ii. p. 305.

‡ French; "Life of Crompton," chap. ii.

Bolton was then a place of very inconsiderable population. Their wants were so small that not more than one cow used to be killed in the town for a week's supply. To the weekly market London and Manchester traders resorted, to purchase the heavy fabrics for which Bolton was the chief mart. "The fustians, herring-bones, cross-overs, quiltings, dimities, and other goods, were carried to market by the small manufacturers (who were for the most part equally small farmers) in wallets balanced over one shoulder, while on the other arm there was often hung a basket of fresh butter."* There was one bustling man in Bolton who must have been among the most active on the market-day—Richard Arkwright, the barber, who had come from Preston, his native place, and hung out his attractive invitation to the townsman and the visitor, of "a clean shave for a penny." But he had higher aspirations. He was a peruke maker, and travelled about the country as a merchant in a peculiar line. An adroit man he must have been, and a pleasant; for at the statute fair he marked down the lass with the most attractive locks; and although he might not have played "with the tangles of Neæra's hair," he contrived to possess himself of the treasure for a pecuniary consideration, and bear it off to his wig-making shop in whatever new locality he chose to plant himself for a year or two. He saw many men, and acquired many valuable notions. He had a mechanical genius, and thoughts of "perpetual motion" sometimes engrossed his mind. At Warrington he became acquainted with John Kay, a clock-maker, the son of the fly-shuttle inventor; and the two set their ingenuity to work upon something likely to be more practicable and more profitable than "perpetual motion." Kay had been thinking of schemes for superseding the spinning-wheel, incited probably by having been employed by Thomas Highs in making the wheels and springs of his "jenny." Out of this communication of the ideas of Highs, who is alleged to have conceived the notion of spinning by rollers, was matured, by the ingenuity and perseverance of Arkwright, the invention which was very speedily to convert the region which Gray called "the deserts of Lancashire" into the busiest district of the world. Arkwright went to Preston, and having expended his last shilling in completing, however imperfectly, a machine of a new construction, it was exhibited, in 1768, in that town. In a lucky hour for Arkwright, murmurs and threats reached his ear. He hastily packed up his apparatus in the dread of mob-law; went to Nottingham; obtained two moneyed partners, of whom Jedediah Strutt was one; and took out his first patent in 1769.

* Life of Crompton, chap. ii.

Those who look upon the operations of a cotton-factory of the present day may feel surprise that such complete machinery as now exists, with its wonderful results, should have grown out of so apparently simple and rude a machine as that claimed by Arkwright as his design. But the principle existed in that machine, out of which all the more elaborate contrivances of ninety years have proceeded. "The principle remains the same, namely, to enable rollers to do the work of human fingers, with much greater precision, and incomparably cheaper."* The machines of the small factory at Nottingham, which Arkwright was enabled to establish with his partners, were worked by horse-power. In 1771 a site was selected by them where water-power might be applied. In the beautiful valley of the Derwent, at Cromford, was erected the first water-spinning mill. Henceforward the machine was called the water-frame, and the yarn which it produced was called water-twist. But the great merit of Arkwright, however disputable his claim as an inventor, was as an organizer of the labour required in a cotton-factory. The mechanics who made his machines had to be formed; the workmen had to be trained to accommodate their irregular habits to automatic precision. All the difficulties that interpose between the completion of an invention and its commercial value had to be overcome; and but for the wondrous energy of Arkwright, his career might have been as unsuccessful as that of Lewis Paul. "We find that so late as the year 1779, ten years after the date of his first patent, his enterprise was regarded by many as a doubtful novelty."† It was five years before any profit was realised at Cromford. But in the meantime Arkwright had, in 1775, taken out a second patent. His right to the inventions therein claimed was contested. His monopoly was invaded on every side. Actions at law were decided at one time in his favour; at another time the decisions of the courts were adverse. In October, 1779, a mill which he had erected in the neighbourhood of Chorley was burned by a mob; who in a similar manner destroyed the cotton-spinning machines at Manchester, Wigan, Blackburn, Bolton, and Preston. The Lancashire weavers had been reasoned out of their opposition to the jenny, and it was generally adopted. They abstained from destroying the water-frame only through the terror of the sword and the halter. The combinations of rivals and the violence of mobs had no power to turn the courageous Arkwright from pursuing the career which had opened to his sanguine view. To the fullest measure of success

* "Knowledge is Power," by Charles Knight, p. 219.

Ure, vol. i. p. 237.

which could be reached by indomitable industry and perseverance, he devoted himself without relaxation, even when enormous wealth was accumulating around him. As he rose into rank and importance, he felt the necessity of correcting the defects of his early education; and after his fiftieth year, he applied two hours of each day, snatched from sleep, to improve himself in grammar, orthography and writing.

The career of Samuel Crompton presents as striking a contrast to that of Richard Arkwright, as the difference in the characters of the two men. The orphan boy of Hall-in-the-Wood was shy, sensitive, studious, a mathematician, a musician, an inventive artisan. Arkwright was pushing, callous, ignorant, unrefined, without originality in his ideas, but a most skilful appropriator. The bold man died worth half a million sterling, for he had self-confidence, tact, and knowledge of human character. The timid man was easily disheartened, shrinking from speculation, and easily deceived. He would have lived a poor weaver to the end of his days, unable, as he said of himself, "to contend with the men of the world," had not Parliament, in 1812, granted him a paltry compensation of 5000*l.* for the great invention which he "gave up to the country," as he said, but which he was really cheated into giving up by a host of selfish manufacturers, who made fortunes out of his simple trust Crompton was spinning with Hargreaves' jenny four or five years after Arkwright had produced harder and finer yarn by his water-frame than the jenny could produce, whatever amount it had added to the quantity spun. Crompton saw what was wanting. With a few common tools, and a claspknife, he worked for five years before he perfected what was originally called the Hall-in-the-Wood wheel. "The great and important invention of Crompton was his spindle-carriage, and the principle of the thread having no strain upon it until it was completed. The carriage with the spindles could, by the movement of the hand and knee, recede just as the rollers delivered out the elongated thread in a soft state, so that it would allow of a considerable stretch before the thread had to encounter the stress of winding on the spindle." * This was "the cornerstone of the merits of his invention," which Crompton connected with the system of rollers, and thus added the second great and permanent principle of the machinery for cotton-spinning.

In 1779, when this machine was completed by the young weaver, the riots broke out by which Arkwright's mill at Chorley was destroyed. From the solitary room where Crompton had been so long working in secret, he heard the shouts of a mob who were breaking

* "Memoir of Crompton," by John Kennedy; quoted in Mr. French's "Life."

to pieces a carding-engine in the adjoining hamlet of Folds. He was prepared for such an emergency. He had cut an opening in the ceiling of his room to the loft above, which aperture he had fitted with a trap-door. He hastily took his machine to pieces, and hoisted the parts into the dark hole where they were concealed for many week. The riots were put down, and tranquillity was restored; but not till after the jennies had been destroyed for miles round Bolton. Whilst working upon his invention Crompton had married. He took to wife a young woman of good family and education, but who, being left an orphan in reduced circumstances, maintained herself by spinning. The home of the young people was in a cottage attached to the Hall-in-the-Wood; and in a room of the old mansion they secretly worked on the now-perfected mule. No yarn comparable for fineness and firmness had ever been produced as that which Crompton carried to the Bolton market, obtaining a proportional price. People began to think that there was some mystery. Fingers could not produce such yarn; nor could the jenny. Manufacturers gathered round, some to buy, others to endeavour to penetrate the secret. They in vain tried to obtain admission to the old house. They climbed up to the windows to look in. The bewildered man soon saw that it would be impossible to keep his secret. In a manuscript which he left behind him, he says, of this anxious period, "during this time I married, and commenced spinner altogether. But a few months reduced me to the cruel necessity either of destroying my machine altogether, or giving it up to the public. To destroy it I could not think of; to give up that for which I had laboured so long was cruel. I had no patent, nor the means of purchasing one. In preference to destroying it, I gave it to the public." Manufacturers had come about him with tempting promises, and had persuaded him to give up his secret, upon the condition, recited in a formal document, of subscribing sums to be affixed to the name of each "as a reward for his improvement in spinning." The whole sum they subscribed was *67l. 6s. 6d.* The subscription paper is in existence. "The list is curiously interesting as containing among the half-guinea subscribers the names of many Bolton firms now of great wealth and eminence as mule spinners, whose colossal fortunes may be said to have been based upon this singularly small investment." * In five years Crompton's "mule" was the machine chiefly employed for fine spinning, not only round Bolton, but in the manufacturing districts of England, Scotland, and Ireland.

* French. "Life of Samuel Crompton," p. 72, from which interesting volume we derive the facts thus briefly related by us.

The common piracies of Arkwright's water-frame, its more extensive use when the patent expired in 1784, and the general appropriation of Crompton's mule, very soon changed the neighbourhood of which Manchester was the centre, from a country of small farmers into a country of small manufacturers. Houses on the banks of streams whose currents would drive a wheel and shaft were greedily seized upon. Sheds were run up in similar situations. The clank of wheels and the buzz of spindles were heard in once solitary places upon the branches of the Irwell. The smaller streams that flowed from the barren hills into secluded valleys, might be apostrophized in the lines of Ebenezer Elliott :

"Beautiful rivers of the desert! ye
Bring food for labour from the foodless waste."

Crompton's mules, worked by hand, "were erected in garrets or lofts; and many a dilapidated barn or cow-house was patched up in the walls, repaired in the roof, and provided with windows, to serve as lodging room for the new muslin wheels."* Amidst this hurried system of expedients to obtain the gains of cotton-spinning, these small factories were supplied with the labour of children by a mode which excited the indignation of all right-thinking persons. Children of very tender age, collected from the London workhouses, and other abodes of the friendless, were transported to Manchester and the neighbourhood as apprentices. These were often worked through the whole night; had no regard paid to their cleanliness; and received no instruction. Aikin, who records these grievances, adds that in many factories, remedies had been adopted. It was forty years before the Legislature effectually interfered to protect factory children.

A greater change than that produced by the water-frame and the mule was impending. The period was quickly approaching when the tall stalk would start up in the bye-streets of quiet towns, and gather around its clouds of smoke a new population. Of Bolton, whose inhabitants had more than doubled from 1783 to 1789, it is recorded that "the want of water in this district is made up by the ingenious invention of the machines called mules."† The want of water would in a few years be made up by a far more manageable power. Bury had its "cotton manufacture, originally brought from Bolton," with "factories erected upon the rivers and many brooks within the parish."‡ Its population had increased in a larger proportion than that of Bolton; but the increase would be far more rapid when the rivers and brooks were no longer es-

* French, p. 76.

† Aikin, p. 262.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 267.

sential for the movement of rollers and spindles. In 1794 some small steam-engines, made by Mr. Sherrard, a very ingenious and able engineer, had begun in Manchester to be "used in cotton-mills, and for every purpose of the water-wheel, where a stream is not to be got." This local manufacture of steam-engines was beginning to encounter a formidable rivalry: "Some few were also erected in this neighborhood by Messrs. Bolton and Watts, of Birmingham, who have far excelled all others in their improvement of the steam-engine."* In this stage of his career, the name of the Glasgow mechanic whose statue is in Westminster Abbey, appears not to have been sufficiently known to be spelt correctly by a writer of note. Dr. Aikin probably knew little of the achievements of the man who, "directing the force of an original genius, early exercised in philosophic research, to the improvement of the steam-engine, enlarged the resources of his country, increased the power of man, and rose to an eminent place amongst the illustrious followers of science and the real benefactors of the world."† The rotatory steam-engine of Watt was first applied to the textile manufactures of Lancashire in 1787, when one was erected at Warrington. It had been applied in Nottinghamshire in 1785.

In 1856, according to the Report of the Factory Commissioners, the steam-engines employed in 5000 factories represented 161,000 horse-power, giving motion to the astounding number of 33,000,000 spindles. It is calculated in the Statistical Account of the Population of 1851, that in Great Britain "more than a million young women are *spinsters*"—the still recognized name for unmarried women. To produce the same amount of yarn spun in the old domestic way, would probably require not only all the spinsters of our own country, and all the spinsters of our great Indian empire, where the Hindoo girl still produces the finest yarn from her primitive wheel, but all the spinsters of the habitable globe. The rate at which the spindles of a cotton-mill move so far exceeds the rate of the spinning-wheel, that no smaller number, we may presume, could convert a thousand million pounds of raw cotton into yarn in one year, as is now done in Great Britain. But if the rate of speed were equal, and the object could be effected by the daily movement for ten hours of thirty-three millions of spindles, it would be necessary that every British spinster should have the power of giving activity to thirty-three wheels with one spindle each; or that, having the advantage of the spinning-jenny with eight spindles, she should have the power of working four jennies at one and the same time. The contrast between the old spinning-

* Aikin, p. 177.

† Lord Brougham's Epitaph on Watt.

wheel and the spinning-mill cannot be put in a stronger point of view.

Inventions connected with the more rapid processes of spinning were not long behind the jenny and the water-frame. Such was the cylindrical carding-engine. The natural progression of machinery in spinning, from the simplest domestic wheel to the complex mule, would, we may presume, have suggested that the same advance would be applicable to weaving; that as the flyshuttle had doubled the rate at which a hand-weaver could work, so some invention might double, or even supersede, the still tardy process of the hand-weaver. Such an invention did come, though in a very rude and imperfect state. Edmund Cartwright, a clergyman, bred at University College, Oxford—a poet and critic—was at Matlock in 1784, when, in a mixed company in which were some persons from Manchester, the talk was about cotton—how the want of hands to weave would operate against the spinning-mills. Cartwright knew nothing of machines or manufactures; he had never even seen a weaver at work; but he said that if it came to a want of hands, Arkwright must invent a weaving-mill. The Manchester men maintained that such a notion was impracticable. Cartwright went home, and, turning his thoughts from weaving articles for the “Monthly Review,” laboured assiduously to produce a loom that would weave cloth without hands to throw the shuttle. His children remember him as walking about as if in deep meditation, occasionally throwing his arms from side to side and they were told that their father was thinking of the action of the shuttle.* He completed his machine, which, he says, required the strength of two powerful men to work at a slow rate, and whose springs were strong enough to have thrown a Congreve rocket. He took out a patent. Cartwright’s power-loom, improved by the inventor by incessant exercises of ingenuity, came very slowly into use. A mill, the first erected for their employment on a large scale, was wilfully set on fire, and five hundred of the power-looms were destroyed. The patent expired, having been to the inventor a constant source of loss and anxiety. The invention, great as its results have been, was scarcely recognized in the last century. The power-loom was first brought into profitable use at Glasgow, in 1801. But the ultimate advantage of the principle of automatic weaving was fully acknowledged; and in 1807, upon a memorial of the principal cotton-spinners, Parliament granted Dr. Cartwright 10,000*l.*, for “the good service he had rendered the

* The late Mrs. Penrose, whose “History” is known as that of “Mrs. Markham,” was a daughter of Dr. Cartwright.

public by his invention of weaving." There were only 2300 power-looms at work in Great Britain in 1813. In 1833 there were 100,000. At the present time, they are as universal as spinning machines,—very different in their beautiful construction from Cartwright's invention, but the same in principle. The Returns of the Factory Inspectors for 1856 show the employment of 369,205 power-looms, of which 298,847 were for weaving cotton. Such has been the progress of an idea casually impressed upon the active mind of a scholar, who was previously conscious of no aptitude for mechanical pursuits. His parliamentary reward did not repay his expenses in working out his scheme.

The history of the cotton-manufacture, as of most other arts, abounds with examples of the struggles of inventors, if not against neglect and fraud, against the almost insuperable difficulties of carrying forward an invention to commercial success. Bentham has expressed a great truth in forcible words ; "As the world advances, the snares, the traps, the pitfalls, which inexperience has found in the path of inventive industry, will be filled up by the fortunes and the minds of those who have fallen into them and been ruined. In this, as in every other career, the ages gone by have been the forlorn hope, which has received for those who followed them the blow of fortune."* Dr. John Roebuck, "who may be said to have originated the modern iron manufacture of Britain, though his merits as a great public benefactor have as yet received but slight recognition,"† was one of those who encountered the snares and pitfalls in the path of inexperience. We have shown what the iron manufacture was in 1740.‡ In 1774, we find it alleged that "there is no room to doubt, that in every one of the three kingdoms there may be enough iron found to supply all the British dominions, and yet we import very large quantities from the North, from Spain and from America. The reason of this is, because the inhabitants of these countries can make it cheaper." They had a great command of fuel for charcoal. "It is earnestly to be wished," says the writer, "that, as it hath been often proposed and promised, the use of pit-coal could be generally introduced, so as to answer in all respects as well as charcoal." He adds, "at this time, as I have been well informed, iron is wrought with pit-coal at the Carron Works in North Britain."§ The founder of these Carron Works, and the inventor of the economical processes which first gave cheap iron to our country, in many forms of utility, was Dr. John Roebuck.

The man who succeeded in proving, by the commercial results of his processes, that iron could be smelted by pit-coal, everywhere

* "Manual of Political Economy."

† "Quarterly Review," vol. civ. p. 73.

‡ *Ante*, vol. iv. p. 396.

§ Campbell, "Political Survey," vol. ii. p. 43.

in abundance, instead of by charcoal from woods that were disappearing through the advance of agriculture, was a physician at Birmingham. He was a scientific chemist, as far as the science of chemistry was understood in the middle of the eighteenth century; and he was connected with a chemical manufactory, to which he devoted himself with the ardour of an experimentalist. By his improvements in the production of sulphuric acid (then called vitriolic acid), the use of which was even then extensive in manufactures, he reduced the price of that article to a fourth of its previous cost. He was one of those who led the way in those great chemical discoveries which have produced as wonderful changes in the productive power of the country as machinery has produced. Sulphuric acid, after Roebuck's time, partially did the work of bleaching that the sun and air were necessary to complete. But his attempts to connect bleaching processes with the vitriol works that he established at Preston Pans were not successful. Having abandoned his practice as a physician, and settled in Scotland, he turned his thoughts to smelting and manufacturing iron. At Carron, in the parish of Tarbert, in Stirlingshire, there were the great requisites for this manufacture. There was abundant coal, and ample command of water-power. Some iron-stone and lime were to be found within a mile; some was to be procured from places ten miles distant.* Workmen were brought from Birmingham and Sheffield; and on the banks of a river, renowned in Scottish history, was the famous foundry established in 1759, which sent cheap grates into the homes of England, and cast the guns for Wellington's battery-train. To Dr. Roebuck has been assigned the honour of inventing the process of converting cast iron into malleable iron. But it is enough to give him an enduring name in the history of manufacturing industry, that he first brought about that marriage between the neighbours coal and iron which time can never dissolve—that union which made iron "the soul of every other manufacture;" which, when the iron railing round St. Paul's was still pointed out as a great feat of charcoal-smelting, enabled a daring engineer, within fifteen years of the time when the first furnace was lighted at Carron, to throw a cast-iron bridge over the Severn of a hundred feet span; and which, during the lapse of a century, has covered our country with works that are amongst the noblest triumphs of a great era of the Sciences and Arts; compared with which structures the once famous Coalbrook Dale bridge appears a toy. Dr. Roebuck called Smeaton to his aid as an engineer, and he invited Watt to experiment upon the employment of his steam-engine in

* "New Statistical Account of Scotland—Stirlingshire," vol. viii. p. 373.

blowing the furnaces. He was at one time associated as a partner in the great career that was opening to Watt. But he became involved in other undertakings beyond his capital; and had the common fate of those who undertake mighty enterprises without an adequate command of the sinews of all enterprise, whether of war or of peace.

The historian who has brought so large a fund of good sense and liberality to his narrative of English affairs from the peace of Utrecht to the close of the American war, says that the year 1763 "was distinguished by an event of more real importance than the rise or the resignation of lord Bute."* That year is considered memorable for the production of a new kind of earthenware, remarkable for fineness and durability. This ware was soon to remove the pewter dishes from their dingy rows in the tradesman's kitchen, and to supersede the wooden platter and the brown dish of the poor man's cottage. The artisan of Burslem, in Staffordshire, who brought about this change, was Josiah Wedgwood. We have already briefly indicated the condition of the Staffordshire Potteries at the beginning of the eighteenth century.† Dr. Campbell, in 1774, makes this statement: "In the space of about sixty years, as I have been well informed, the produce of this ware hath risen from 5000*l.* to 100,000*l.* per annum. These are entered by the thousand pieces for exportation, which is annually about forty thousand."‡ In 1857 there were a hundred million pieces of British earthenware and porcelain exported to every European country (with the exception of France), and to America, the United States being by far the largest importers. It is to Josiah Wedgwood that the creation of this great manufacture and commerce is to be principally attributed. England had produced its Bow china, its Worcester china, and its Chelsea china, which was held to equal that of Dresden. But these elaborate tea-services and ornaments were for the luxurious. Palissy gave France the lead amongst industrious nations in her manufacture of expensive porcelain. But Wedgwood in his ware combined the imitation of the most beautiful forms of ancient art with unequalled cheapness. In his workshops we may trace the commencement of a system of improved design, which made his ware so superior to any other that had been produced in Europe for common uses. England, by the discovery of a contemporary of Wedgwood, Mr. Cookworthy, of Plymouth, was found to possess, in the Cornish clay, a material equal to that of the Sèvres and Dresden manufactories, His patent was transferred to the Staffordshire Potteries in 1777,

* Lord Mahon—"History of England," vol. v. p. 2.

† *Ante*, vol. iv. p. 400.

‡ "Political Survey," vol. ii. p. 18.

and from that time we went steadily forward to the attainment of our present excellence in the production of porcelain, upon a scale commensurate with the general spread of the comforts and refinements of society.

The transference of power to Mr. Pitt, in 1784, and the firmness with which he was enabled to hold its possession, presented opportunities for wise endeavours to place the commerce of the kingdom upon a broader foundation. The first object attained was the removal, in 1785, of an odious system of restrictions and disabilities in the trade between Great Britain and Ireland. In the preliminary inquiries by a committee of the House of Commons, some interesting details of manufactures were elicited. Mr. Wedgwood pointed out how greatly the industry of the Potteries multiplied the industry of others besides that of the twenty thousand persons directly employed; the quantity of inland carriage it created; the labour it called forth in collieries, and in raising the raw material of earthenware; the employment of coasting vessels in the transport of this material from the Land's-End to different parts of the coast: and the re-conveyance of the finished goods to those ports "where they are shipped for every foreign market that is open to the earthenware of England." In 1787 the government carried through a bold measure of commercial freedom in a treaty of commerce and navigation with France, which opened new ports, not only to the earthenware of England, but to her woollens, her cottons, her hardware and cutlery, her manufactures of brass and copper. Previous to this treaty, most of the staple productions of Britain had been prohibited for so long a period in France that the notion of exchange, under a system of moderate duties, had ceased to be contemplated by the merchants of either country. The political arguments by which this great measure was supported, and those by which it was opposed, will be noticed in a subsequent chapter. We introduce the subject here, because the debates in both Houses of Parliament supply some general views of the commercial policy of a period, when, as we have seen, the industry of this country had received an extraordinary impulse from new inventions, and from increased energy in the long-established modes of production. The general argument for the treaty was put with great force by Mr. Pitt: "France was, by the peculiar dispensation of Providence, gifted, perhaps more than any other country, with what made life desirable, in point of soil, climate, and natural productions. It had the most fertile vineyards and the richest harvests; the greatest luxuries of man were produced in it with little cost, and with moderate labour. Britain was not thus

blest by nature ; but on the contrary, it possessed, through the happy freedom of its constitution, and the equal security of its laws, an energy in its enterprises and a stability in its exertions, which had gradually raised it to a state of commercial grandeur. Not being so bountifully gifted by Heaven, it had recourse to labour and art by which it had acquired the ability of supplying its neighbour with all the necessary embellishments of life in exchange for her natural luxuries. Thus standing with regard to each other, a friendly connection seemed to be pointed out between them, instead of the state of unalterable enmity which was falsely said to be their true political feeling towards each other.* The principle laid down by Pitt has a permanent importance. The national and commercial jealousies by which the principle was assailed are simply curious, as an exhibition of plausible fallacies. Bishop Watson,—one who had rendered good service to the arts of his country, by making chemistry popular in his amusing “Essays,”—maintained that, as in the time of Charles II., the trade with France was held to be detrimental to our interests because it showed a balance against us “by which we lost a million a year,” such a trade would not be lucrative and safe in the time of George III. : that is, because the British consumer of the seventeenth century had paid in money to the French producer a million a year above what the British producer received, “we lost a million a year,” the satisfaction of the wants of the consumer being nothing in the account. All this dust, which, from time immemorial, had been thrown into the eyes of the nation, is now scattered to the winds. But the anxious prelate thought that if our home market, the richest market in Europe, was opened to France, her own industry and ingenuity would be dangerously stimulated. France, he said, was ambitious to rival us in its rising manufactures of cotton, cutlery, hardware, and pottery. If she were to cultivate manufactures in the same degree as we had done, our ruin would be inevitable. France, Dr. Watson maintained, had abundant pit-coal ; was casting pig-iron ; was making cutlery at Moulins cheaper and neater than that of Sheffield ; and, notwithstanding a recent law of England, prohibiting the exportation of tools and machines, France had got models of them, and would soon copy our tools, and not take our manufactures. The bishop proclaims, in his despair, that “every tool used at Sheffield, Birmingham, and Manchester, might be seen in a public building at Paris, where they were deposited for the inspection of their workmen.” † Great manufactures are not created

* “Parliamentary History,” vol. xxvi. col. 395.

† *Ibid.*, vol. xxvi. col. 523, and

simply by possessing copies of another country's machinery. The French government obtained, in 1788, models of the cotton-spinning machines used in England; but whilst a peaceful intercourse enabled us to send France cotton fabrics, she did not attempt to manufacture for herself. Cotton-mills were established in Normandy and at Orleans when the continent was shut out by the war of the Revolution from commercial exchange with England.* But there was a power possessed by our country that France and other continental nations did not possess, and had not capital and trained workmen to acquire by imitation; a power, of which it was said in 1819 that it had "fought the battles of Europe, and exalted and sustained, through the late tremendous contest, the political greatness of our land;"—a power which upon the return of peace, "enabled us to pay the interest of our debt, and to maintain the arduous struggle in which we were engaged with the skill and capital of countries less oppressed with taxation." † That great power was "our improved steam-engine."

In the year 1757, over the door of a staircase opening from the quadrangle of the college of Glasgow, was exhibited a board, inscribed "James Watt, Mathematical-Instrument Maker to the University." In a room of small dimensions sat a young man in his twenty-first year, filing and polishing quadrants and sectors, to sell for his livelihood. He had come in his eighteenth year from his paternal home, at Greenock, where his father carried on the business of a ship-chandler, to endeavour to learn the art of a mathematical-instrument maker; but he could find no one in Glasgow capable of instructing him. By the advice of a kinsman of his mother, who was a Professor in the Glasgow University, he went to London with the same object. For a year he worked with intense application in a shop in Finch Lane, Cornhill; but his health failing, he returned to Glasgow, having become a skilful mechanic, and possessing the far greater advantage of a sound mathematical education. He endeavoured to establish a shop in that city. The worshipful Company of Hammermen,—in that spirit of exclusiveness which the lapse of a century has scarcely eradicated, where Guilds and Corporations have any remnant of antiquated privileges,—resolved to prevent James Watt exercising his art. He was, however, employed within the precincts of the University to repair some astronomical instruments; and several of the Professors took the ingenious young man under their protection, and gave him a workshop within their walls. Here he soon attracted the notice

* Say—"Cours d'Economie Politique," tome i. chap. xix.

† Jeffrey—"Character of James Watt," 1819.

and received the kind attentions of men whose names will be held ever in veneration—Adam Smith, Robert Simson, and Joseph Black. To these eminent philosophers even the members of the Company of Hammermen would lowly bow; as they bowed to the magnates of Glasgow, the tobacco-lords who walked in scarlet cloaks and bushy wigs apart at the Cross, and to any one of whom no tradesman dared speak till he caught the great man's eye, and was invited by him to come across the street and impart his humble request.* Watt had an ardent friend in a college student, John Robison, about the same age with himself, who had also a genius for scientific pursuits. He has recounted that when he first went into Watt's little shop, and expected to see only a workman, he was surprised to find the quadrant-maker his superior in philosophy. But Robison left the University; went to sea as a midshipman; and was in the boat on the St. Lawrence with Wolfe, on the morning on which the Heights of Abraham were scaled. The friends had conversed about steam-engines before Robison's departure. When the young man returned in 1763,—having been employed by the Admiralty to take charge of Harrison's chronometer on a voyage to Jamaica, to test its sufficiency for determining the longitude of a ship at sea,—he found that his old companion in the College workshop had been making more rapid advances in scientific attainments than himself; and had been long engaged in trying experiments in the construction of a steam engine, upon principles different from that in common use. He had lighted upon the same principle as that now employed in a high-pressure engine. In that year of 1763 a small model of Newcomen's engine was put into the charge of Watt to repair. The imperfections of that invention, known as "the atmospheric engine," were evident to him; and he long laboured unsuccessfully to discover how its defects could be remedied. The radical defect was, that three times as much heat as was necessary for the action of the machine was lost. If one-fourth of the heat could generate an equal amount of available steam, the saving of fuel alone would ensure the adoption of an engine constructed to produce such an important economy. Newcomen's machine was used in draining mines, in raising water to turn water-wheels, and in blowing furnaces for iron-smelting. But its expense of working was enormous. Its construction was clumsy and imperfect. We may imagine Adam Smith telling Watt the story which he has so well told in the "Wealth of Nations," of the first fire-engine; in which "a boy was constantly employed to open and shut alternately the communication between the boiler

* "New Statistical Account—Lanarkshire," p. 232.

and the cylinder, according as the piston either ascended or descended ;” and how the boy, wanting to play, found out that “by tying a string from the handle of the valve which opened this communication to another part of the machine, the valve would open and shut without his assistance.”* Improvements such as this had been accomplished by accidental observation. What improvements might not be effected by careful examination, grounded upon scientific knowledge. The experimental philosopher was still working in the dark, when he discovered that water converted into steam would heat about six times its own weight of water at 47° or 48° to 212° . He mentioned this fact to Dr. Black, who then explained to him his doctrine of latent heat, with which Watt had been previously unacquainted. He says of himself that “he stumbled upon one of the material facts by which that beautiful theory is supported.” Amongst the principal features of scientific progress at this period, sir John Herschel includes “the development of the doctrine of latent heat by Black, with its train of important consequences, including the scientific theory of the steam-engine.”† The ceaseless preparatory labour of thought was now to produce its results. In a solitary walk, Watt solved the great problem upon which he had been so long intent. The necessity of working for his bread, whilst he eagerly desired to bring his ideas into a practical shape, was still forced upon him. But he saw his way. The invention was complete in his mind. To have a model constructed was a work of great difficulty. He had no capital to employ in engaging better workmen than the blacksmiths and tinmen of Glasgow. He struggled against these difficulties till he found a zealous and powerful ally in Dr. Roebuck. At length, in May, 1768, Watt had the happiness of congratulating his friend on the achievements of their mutual hopes: “I sincerely wish you joy of this successful result, and hope it will make you some return for the obligations I ever will remain under to you.”

It was agreed that a patent should be taken out; and Watt repaired to London to accomplish this business. On his way thither he had an interview, at Birmingham, with Matthew Boulton, who desired to join in the speculation. This eminent manufacturer, in every quality of sterling integrity, of generous feelings, of skill in organization, of prudent enterprise, was worthy of being the associate of a man of genius like Watt, who was timid, and sometimes desponding. Their partnership was unfortunately deferred till 1773, for Roebuck would not admit Boulton to a share of the patent, except upon terms to which the prosperous and ingenious

* “Wealth of Nations,” book i. chap. i.

† “Discourse on the Study of Natural Philosophy.”

proprietor of the works at Soho could not agree. Watt, meanwhile, had to maintain himself by the superintendence of several canals then in course of construction. The employment was disagreeable to him. He had no advantage from working his patent, for his partner, Roebuck, was engaged in too many losing undertakings to advance more capital. At length that partner, in whose misfortune Watt deeply sympathized, agreed to sell his property in the patent to Boulton. In 1774 Watt went to Birmingham to superintend the construction of his machines; and he wrote to his father, "the fire-engine I have invented is now going, and answers much better than any other that has yet been made." There was very soon a change in the character of Boulton's manufactory. Dr. Johnson kept a Diary of a tour in Wales in 1774. On the 20th of September is this entry: "We went to Boulton's, who, with great civility, led us through his shops. I could not distinctly see his enginery—Twelve dozen of buttons for three shillings—Spoons struck at once." In 1776, Johnson and Boswell made an excursion to Oxford, and also saw Birmingham, of which Boswell has this record: "Mr. Hector was so good as to accompany me to see the great works of Mr. Boulton, at a place which he has called Soho, about two miles from Birmingham, which the very ingenious proprietor showed me himself to the best advantage. I wished Johnson had been with us; for it was a scene which I should have been glad to contemplate by his light. The vastness and the contrivance of some of the machinery would have matched his mighty mind. I shall never forget Mr. Boulton's expression to me,—'I sell here, sir, what all the world desires to have—Power!'"*

It is unnecessary, for our purpose, that we should pursue the history of the final establishment of the steam-engine of Watt to be the great operative power of the larger industries of Britain. It quickly superseded Newcomen's machines in draining the Cornish tin and copper mines. It multiplied cotton-mills in the towns of Lancashire and of Scotland, without reference to the previous necessity of choosing localities on the banks of the Irwell or the Derwent, the Tweed or the Clyde. It was blowing the iron furnaces of Dudley, and hammering steel at Sheffield. It was forging anchors and impelling block-machinery at Portsmouth. Yet it was ten years before Boulton and Watt derived any profit from the discovery. They had to struggle, in the first instance, against the common prejudice which attaches to every new invention. All the business sagacity of Boulton was necessary to encourage its use by the most mod-

* It has been said that Boulton, upon being asked by George III. what he dealt in, replied, "What kings delight in,—Power!" Boswell's story is more probable.

erate price ; or by stipulating only for a royalty upon the amount of fuel which it saved, charging nothing for the engine. The partners had to contend, in actions at law, against unscrupulous pirates. But Parliament, in 1775, had granted an extension of the patent, and the reward to the inventor and his admirable associate would come in time. They would be repaid, however tardily, by the pecuniary fruits of their skill and perseverance, before the invention was thrown open to the world. But even before that period what mighty effects had been produced upon British industry by this crowning triumph of an enterprising age ! Without its aid the energy of the people had more than counterbalanced the waste of the national resources by an obstinate government in a foolish and unjust war. The steam-engine of the " Mathematical-Instrument Maker to the University of Glasgow " gave a new impulse to the same energy in another war against a gigantic military despotism, wielded by a man originally as humble as himself—a student of the Military School of Brienne. Captain Sword and Captain Steam were to engage in a struggle not less arduous than that of " Captain Sword and Captain Pen." The one was to lay prosperous cities in ashes ; the other was to build up new cities in desolate places. The one was to close the havens of ancient commerce ; the other was to freight ships with products of such surpassing excellence and cheapness, that no tyrannous edicts could exclude them from oppressed nations. The one was to derange every effort of continental industry ; the other was to harmonize every form of British labour and invention, by lending to each an intensity and a concentration previously unknown. The one was to attempt the subjugation of the intellect of brute force ; the other was to complete " the dominion of mind over the most refractory qualities of matter :"

" Engine of Watt ! unrivall'd is thy sway.
 Compared with thine, what is the tryant's power :
 His might destroys, while thine creates and saves,
 Thy triumphs live and grow, like fruit and flower,
 But his are writ in blood, and read on graves." *

* Elliott.—" Steam at Sheffield."

CHAPTER XX.

State of Art in the reign of George II.—Inferiority of native artists.—Formation of an English School of Painting.—Academies.—First Exhibition of Works of English Artists.—Exhibition of Sign-paintings.—Foundation of the Royal Academy.—Early Exhibitions.—Reynolds, Gainsborough, Wilson, and West.—Engraving.—Strange and Woollett.—Mezzotint.—MacArdell, &c.—Boydell and commerce in English engravings.—Sculpture.—Banks, Bacon, and Flaxman.—Architecture.—Sir William Chambers.—Bridge-building.

A TRANSITION to the Fine Arts from Agriculture and Manufactures, from Spinning Machines and Cotton Mills, from Ironworks and Potteries, from Canals and Steam Engines, is not so abrupt as it may at first appear. In our immediate times, the intimate connexion between the Arts of Design and those exercises of industry which have too exclusively been designated as the Useful Arts, has been distinctly recognised. It has been found after a long experience, that Taste is an essential element in the excellence of manufactures, and of their consequent commercial value. But this connexion was perceived a century ago, when a society, now more flourishing than ever, founded by a drawing-master, proposed “to promote the arts, manufactures, and commerce of this kingdom, by giving honorary or pecuniary rewards as may be best adapted to the case, for the communication to the Society, and through the Society to the public, of all such useful inventions, discoveries and improvements, as tend to that purpose.” The Society of Arts gave medals to Mr. Curwen for agricultural improvements, and he stated that but for this stimulus he should never have been a farmer. The Society of Arts awarded premiums for improvements in dyeing and tanning, in spinning and weaving, in paper-making and lace-making, and may thus have somewhat excited the inventive powers which superseded many of the old modes of hand-labour. The Society of Arts gave its modest grants of ten guineas to Banks and Flaxman, for their earliest efforts in sculpture; and probably without this encouragement these eminent artists might never have been sculptors. The mutual dependence existing between the Polite Arts, as the Arts of Painting and Sculpture were then termed, and the humbler industrial arts which form the foundations of the industrial fabric, was never more distinctly asserted than in

the proceedings of this comprehensive Association, for the encouragement of seemingly diverging pursuits, but all of which tended to the same development of public prosperity.

In a former chapter we traced the history of Art in England from the Restoration to the reign of George II. At that time English Art was in a very low state. Architecture had greatly declined from the position to which Wren had raised it. Painters and sculptors were numerous and well paid, but the high places of the professions were chiefly filled by Italians, Germans, Flemings and Frenchmen. Even in portrait painting, the branch in which employment was most abundant, the English practitioners were content if they could produce a satisfactory likeness; whilst for everything but the head they trusted to the skill of "drapery painters," whose highest ambition it was so to complete the work, that it might be recognised as in the style of Sir Godfrey Kneller. As a lively French writer said, "Englishmen make their portraits as they make their pins, each passes through several hands, one shapes the head, another the point; it takes as many painters to finish a full-length portrait as it does tradesmen to equip *a petit maître*." Whenever foreigners referred to the state of art in England it was with a sort of contemptuous pity. There is ample reward, it was said, for the foreign artist who shows even moderate skill, but nothing seems to evoke native talent; surely there must be something in the soil and climate inimical to artistic genius.* Even Englishmen shared the prejudice, or were too diffident of their own judgment to oppose in a matter of taste the acknowledged leaders of European opinion. Yet if there were no living English sculptor or historical painter of unquestioned eminence, the name of Hogarth might seem sufficient to have turned the edge of so dull a sarcasm. But Hogarth, however great he was admitted to be as a humourist, was scarcely recognised even by his countrymen as a painter. His

* Abbé du Bos.—"Reflexions Critiques sur la Poësie et sur la Peinture," Par. 1755, vol. ii. 145-7. Le Blanc.—"Letters d'un Français," Par. 1745; and see the "Discours Preliminaire" to a 5th ed. of these Letters. Lyon, 1758; Roquet.—"L'Etat des Arts en Angleterre," Par. 1755. To the same effect were some remarks of Montesquieu, in his "Esprit des Loix," and of the Abbé Winckelmann. From the frequent references made to them by English writers on art for more than half a century, it is clear that these sarcasms were keenly felt by artists, and not without influence on patrons. Barry thought it necessary to write a formal answer to them in his "Inquiry into the Real and Imaginary Obstructions to the Acquisition of the Arts in England," 8vo. 1775; and it was in order to refute them practically that he painted his series of pictures in the Great Room of the Society of Arts. (See the Introduction to his "Account of a Series of Pictures," &c.) As late as 1791, the intelligent German, Wendeborn, notes that "it is rather singular that most of those who have excelled in the polite arts in Eng'and have been foreigners," and he adds, that though it is no longer exclusively so, among the artists are still many foreigners. Wendeborn.—"View of England towards the close of the 18th century," vol. ii. p. 185.

fellow-painters regarded him as an interloper, and the fashionable critic pronounced him "rather a writer of comedy with the pencil than a painter," says Walpole complacently, "he has but slender merit." * Indeed, though Hogarth was the true founder of the English school of painting, his example had but little apparent influence upon his contemporaries or immediate successors, and it was no doubt in perfect good faith that Burke, in his eloquent eulogy on Reynolds—written seven-and-twenty years after Hogarth's death—affirmed, and affirmed without contradiction, that "Sir Joshua Reynolds was the first Englishman who added the praise of the elegant arts to the other glories of his country."

But, however it might be in the days of George II., when his successor ascended the throne it must have been evident to all but the most prejudiced, that an English school of painting was in process of formation. Reynolds was already the acknowledged leader in portraiture, and Reynolds was an Englishman, and in no sense a disciple of Kneller; Wilson was strenuously asserting English superiority in landscape painting; and Gainsborough, though practising in a provincial town, was becoming known in the metropolis as a painter both of landscape and portrait, in a style at once thoroughly English and thoroughly original.

But what served most to give consistency to the labours of the artists, and to stimulate their efforts by bringing them distinctly before the public eye, was the foundation of the Royal Academy, with its great annual exhibition of works of art. The establishment of an academy of art had long been a cherished purpose with English artists. As early as 1711 a private academy for the study of art was instituted, with Sir Godfrey Kneller for its president; but after a time, differences arose, and the members separated into two or three adverse parties. At the head of one of these (the English section) was Sir James Thornhill, who, in 1724, opened a new academy at his own house in the Piazza, Covent Garden, which continued till his death in 1734. Hogarth, his son-in-law, having inherited "the apparatus of the academy," proposed to the other society, which held its meetings in Greyhound Court, by the Strand, and was presided over by Moser, the enamel painter, to unite into a single body, and to take a suitable room where thirty or forty persons might draw from the living model. † "Attributing the failures of the previous academies," writes Hogarth, "to the leading members having assumed a superiority which their fellow-students could not brook, I proposed that every member should contribute an equal sum towards the support of the establishment,

* "Anecdotes of Painting," iv. 146, 160, ed. 1786.

and have an equal right to vote on every question relative to its affairs. By these regulations the Academy has now existed nearly thirty years, and is, for every useful purpose, equal to that in France, or any other." * This was the famous "Academy in St. Martin's Lane," so often referred to in the lives of English painters, and to which many of the best artists of this period were indebted for no small portion of their skill in drawing. But these academies, as well as others, like Shipley's, and the Duke of Richmond's, were rather schools for drawing from the living model, or casts from the antique, than institutions such as we are accustomed to associate with the title of academies of art. Several efforts had been made, however, to establish societies of this more ambitious order. Before starting his own private school, Sir James Thornhill had submitted to lord Halifax for the royal consideration, the scheme of a Royal Academy, with apartments for professors, which he proposed to erect "at the upper end of the Mews"—and pretty nearly therefore on the site of the present Royal Academy—and which he estimated would only cost 3139*l*.†

A quarter of a century later the project was formally renewed "with the consent, and indeed at the desire, both of artists and lovers of art," by Mr. Gwyn, an architect of reputation, and one of the original members of the Royal Academy. The French Academy was pointed out as the model, though it was added, if an "English Academy of painting, sculpture, and architecture" were to be erected, it would be desirable to consult the laws of all similar institutions in Europe.‡ In 1753 the members of the St. Martin's Lane Academy made an effort to raise their institution to the rank of a "Public Academy for the Improvement of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture." It was in opposition to this proposition that Hogarth addressed to lord Bute the paper already quoted. Whether from internal opposition, or the apathy of the artists generally, the scheme fell to the ground; as did also a still more pretentious one for an Academy to be incorporated by royal charter, put forth a couple of years later. § Meantime the public interest in art was steadily gaining strength. The foundation, in 1734, of the Dilettanti Society, though its attention was directed chiefly to the arts of ancient Greece, had done something to foster

* Paper by Hogarth in Nicholls's *Hogarth*, i. 293, and in supplement to Ireland's *Hogarth*; Walpole—"Anecdotes of Painting," v. 253; Edwards—"Anecdotes of Painting," Introduction, &c.

† Walpole, iv. 46.

‡ "An Essay on Design: including Proposals for erecting a Public Academy,"

8vo. 1749.

§ Edwards; Nicholls; Sir Robert Strange—"On the Rise of the Royal Academy," 8vo. 1775; Plan of an Academy," &c., 4to. 1

the spirit of inquiry among the upper circles of society ; and the Society of Arts had done still more to diffuse an interest in art among the middle classes. Failing in establishing an academy, it seems to have occurred to the artists that they might at least copy so much of the French plan as to set up a public exhibition of their works. Accordingly a committee was formed ; the great body of artists were appealed to ; the Society of Arts proffered the use of their room, and there on the 21st of April, 1760, exactly a hundred years ago, was opened the first public exhibition in London of the works of living artists. The works exhibited were few in number, and the greater part of little worth ; but the names of Reynolds and Wilson were among the painters ; Roubiliac and Wilton among the sculptors ; Woollett and Strange among the engravers, who contributed examples of their skill ; and the public crowded in such numbers to the novel spectacle that it was resolved to repeat the experiment next year on a larger scale. The "great room," Spring Gardens, was accordingly hired, and there, in May, 1761, was held the exhibition which was really the progenitor of that which still, every returning May, attracts to itself alike the rank, the beauty, and the intelligence of the land. The admission was by catalogues, which, besides serving as guides to the exhibition, were adorned with a vignette by Wale, and a frontispiece and a tailpiece designed by Hogarth and engraved by Grignon—the one symbolising the growth of the arts under the fostering care of Britannia and the benignant influence of the sovereign ; the other ridiculing the miserable fate of the decayed "exoticks" which a connoisseur (typified by a monkey in court-suit and ruffles) magnifying glass in hand, is vainly watering. Thirteen thousand of these catalogues were sold at a shilling each,—what would one be worth now ?

"This exhibition," wrote Johnson to his friend, Baretto,* "has filled the heads of the artists and the lovers of art. Surely life, if it be not long, is tedious, since we are forced to call in so many trifles to rid us of our time—that time which can never return." Next year, however, the sage we may presume took a less austere view of the matter, for the preface to the catalogue was clothed in his sonorous sentences.

But the great moralist was not alone in thinking that the artists were over exuberant in their enthusiasm. Where the philosopher sighed, however, the wits laughed outright. London was startled by the announcement of a rival exhibition to be held "at the large room, at the upper end of Bow Street, Covent-garden," and which

* Boswell, under June, 1761.

was to consist of "Original Paintings, Busts, Carved Figures, &c., by the Sign-Painters," together with "such original designs as might be transmitted to them," the whole being "specimens of the native genius of the nation." The Society was, of course, a myth. The burlesque originated with the famous Nonsense Club, its prime contriver being Bonnell Thornton, under whose superintendence it was really carried out in all its parts. The whim took. It was seen to be a harmless jest, and Hogarth himself, who had contributed some works to the Spring Gardens exhibition, readily lent assistance to the Bow Street parody, by giving a touch with his pencil where effect could be added by it: thus in the companion portraits of the empress Maria Theresa, and the king of Prussia, we are told that he changed the cast of their eyes so as to make them leer significantly at each other. Indeed the fun was altogether of this order. The apothecaries' sign of "The Three Gallipots" had for its companion "The Three Coffins." No. 16 in the catalogue was entitled "A Man:" while the picture was nine tailors at work. In No. 37, "A Man loaded with Mischief," a fellow was painted carrying on his shoulders a woman, a magpie, and a monkey: a sign still occasionally to be seen on some of the low public-houses around London, and on one in Oxford Street. Some of the jokes were rather broader than would be tolerated now, and some of the journals were disposed to treat the matters seriously; but the laughers carried the day: the jest was enjoyed, and it was not spoiled by repetition.*

Only in London, and at such a time, could an exhibition of this kind have been possible. Although an act had been passed for the removal of such sign-boards as obstructed the public ways, almost every shop still had its sign, and every tradesman strove to render his board more attractive than his neighbour's, if not by beauty of design, by oddity of conception, or some sort of extravagance. A market for ready-made signs was kept in Harp Alley, Shoe Lane. But sometimes commissions for signs were given to painters of established reputation. Wale, for example, who was selected by his brother artists to draw the frontispiece for their exhibition catalogue, who was one of the first members, and subsequently professor of perspective and librarian of the Royal Academy, was not above painting signs; Penny and Catton, both among the first academicians, and the former the first professor of painting, with others of equal standing, at least occasionally employed their pencils in a similar manner. One of Wale's most famous signs was a portrait of Shakspeare, which hung across the road at

* Chalmers's "Preface to the Connoisseur."

the north-east corner of Little Russell Street, Drury Lane, and which, with its elaborate frame, is said to have cost five hundred pounds. This branch of Art, however, outlived the exhibition but a very few years. A more stringent act was passed for their removal (11th Geo. III.), and sign-boards ceased to swing except over taverns.*

The members of the Spring Gardens society obtained a charter of incorporation and the exhibitions went on with increasing success. But the directors began to assume more authority than the other members were ready to allow. Differences ensued. The directors claimed the right of filling up all vacancies in their number. This the members refused to admit, and at a special meeting sixteen of the directors were ejected. The other eight shortly after resigned. They were all men of position and influence. West, one of their number, was the especial favourite of the king; Chambers was the royal architect; and they felt that if they could obtain the royal patronage they were strong enough to establish a new academy more comprehensive in purpose, but more exclusive in membership than that they had just left. A draft of a constitution and laws was drawn up by Mr. (afterwards sir William) Chambers, with the assistance of West, Moser, and Cotes, and submitted to the king, who, entering with great zeal into the project, directed that the new institution should be called the Royal Academy, and placed under his immediate protection and patronage. By the "Instrument of Institution" the society was to consist of "40 academicians chosen from among the most able and respectable artists resident in Great Britain;" 20 associates from whom future academicians were to be selected; and six associate engravers. There is to be an annual exhibition of works of art, which is to be open to all artists to contribute works, subject to the approval of a committee of selection. Schools of painting and of drawing from the life and from casts are provided, which are to be open without charge to all students who have acquired proper rudimentary instruction, and who conform to the rules of the institution: and professors are annually to read courses of lectures on the principles of the arts of painting, sculpture, and architecture, and also on anatomy and perspective. Hogarth was dead; but had he been living he would not have joined the infant academy, "considering," as he wrote to lord Bute, "the electing presidents, professors, &c., as a ridiculous imitation of the foolish parade of the French Academy." Reynolds held aloof from all the preliminary proceedings, and it was not until he was apprised

* Edwards—Introduction, and notice of Wale; Smith's "Anecdotes of Nollekens," &c.

that it was the wish of the king that he should be its first president, and that it was his majesty's intention on his installation into that office to confer upon him the honour of knighthood, that he consented to join the new society. The foundation of the Royal Academy dates from the 10th of December, 1768; its first exhibition was held at the auction room in Pall Mall, in 1769. The list of the original members is a curious index to the state of art in England at that time. Of the thirty-three whose names are inserted in the first catalogue, eight or nine are foreigners; two are ladies; some are only known as designers and engravers; some were coach and sign-painters—most are mere names now: probably not more than half-a-dozen would be recognised except by the student of the literature of art.

Equally curious is it to compare the first thin, loosely printed catalogue of 16 pages with one of the present day. Besides the thirty-three Academicians, only seventeen non-members contribute. There are in all but 136 entries, and among these some are of engravings, and others of drawings in crayons and "stained drawings." No quotations enliven the dreary lists of 'portraits,' 'flower-pieces,' and 'landskips'; but occasionally the descriptions are as curiously precise as though the painter supposed his picture would be carried for comparison to the very spot it was intended to represent. The fashionable landscape-painter George Barret,—one who was rich whilst Wilson starved—described his performances with the precision of a topographer. On the other hand Wilson has nothing appended to either of his three pictures but the single word a "Landskip." Reynolds sent four pictures, all portraits, and all in classic guise, and Gainsborough had also four pictures. West contributed two compositions. Angelica Kauffman, R.A., had four classical subjects, and Mary Moser, R.A., two "flower pieces."

As soon as Somerset House, erected on the site of one of the royal palaces, was completed, the Royal Academy removed to a suite of rooms which the king had caused to be constructed in the new building expressly for their use, and there the annual exhibitions continued to be held till the Academy was removed to the National Gallery. The first exhibition in Somerset House was held in 1780, and the progress from the opening exhibition eleven years earlier is very marked. While the Academicians who exhibit remain in number the same, the non-academicians have increased to 183; the number of entries in the catalogue is 489, and the character of the works exhibited is evidently higher. Besides the names enumerated above, we now meet with some who are destined to sustain the reputation of the school in the succeeding generation: J. S. Copley,

R. A. elect (the father of lord Lyndhurst); Fuseli; de Louthembourg; Zoffany; Stothard; Wyatt the architect; and the sculptors Banks, Bacon and Flaxman. At this time there was no limit to the number of works sent in, and we find Gainsborough on this occasion contributing six large landscapes and ten portraits, whilst in the next year Reynolds sent no fewer than one-and-twenty pictures, including his *Dido*, and the famous portraits of the ladies Waldegrave for which Walpole (though not without grumbling) paid the artist a thousand guineas—being the largest sum up to that time ever paid to an English portrait painter.

When the Royal Academy took possession of its apartments in Somerset House it stood alone as the visible exponent of British art. The Incorporated Society had persisted for some years in a vain struggle, but from the opening of the Royal Academy no new member joined its ranks; its exhibitions dwindled rapidly into insignificance; and it eventually succumbed before its too powerful rival. The humble Free Society which had clung like a parasite to the Society of Arts had also perished of inanition. The Academy, though often assailed from without, and not always at peace within, has continued in an unbroken career of prosperity down to the present hour—unchanged in its constitution, and without increase in its members, though everything around it has changed, and the number of professional artists has increased fifty-fold since its foundation.*

Among the founders of the Royal Academy were indeed men of no common order; and the glory which they shed around it must have done much to ensure its firm establishment. Reynolds, with whom the early years of the Academy are most intimately associated, was a painter who at once raised English portraiture from sheer mindless mimicry to a level with that of the noblest days of art. Without attempting to rival the great masters in the higher walks of painting, he strove to compete with the worthiest in his own peculiar line. He has been condemned for not attempting loftier themes,

* The Academy has had no historian; its origin and progress must be traced too often by the light of unfriendly pilots, amid all sorts of muddy banks and quicksands. The following are a few of the sources from which we have derived assistance: "Abstract of the Instrument of the Institution and Laws of the Royal Academy of Arts," 8vo. Lond. 1797; "Catalogues of the Royal Academy;" "The conduct of the Royal Academicians while members of the Incorporated Society of Artists of Great Britain, viz., from 1760 to their expulsion in 1769. With some part of their transactions since," 8vo. 1771, and Abstracts of Papers of Incorporated Society published in the "Literary Panorama," 1808; Galt's "Life of Benjamin West," vol. ii. chap. iv., where full particulars respecting the foundation of the Academy are given on the authority of West himself, who conducted the negotiations with the king; the Lives of Sir Joshua Reynolds, by Malone, Northcote, and Cotton; Barry's Works; Pye on "Patronage of British Art;" "Reports (with evidence) of Committees of House of Commons," 1834 and 1836; Hogarth, Sir Robert Strange, Nicholls, Edwards, Cunningham, &c.

but we may in these days be well content that he employed his pencil in handing down the portraits of the statesmen, soldiers, and writers, and of the matrons, maids, and children among whom he lived and moved, rather than in fabricating from the recipes and models of the painting-room eighteenth-century Phrynes, Venuses, and Epaminondases, or even Apostles and Madonnas. For not only was Reynolds the greatest colourist that England had ever seen, but her most intellectual portrait-painter, and she had men, women, and children well worthy the best pencil that could be found to hand down their features to posterity. But whilst Reynolds could do this, he wanted, for what are called the higher branches of art, alike sufficient technical training, power of studious application, historical insight, and poetic imagination. All that he aimed to do he did perfectly. His mastery over his materials is the more surprising the more his works are studied. His touch is always sure and firm, yet light as a zephyr. His clearness of perception is almost perfect. To every part is given just the tone and touch and surface which most befits it. Where his colours have not lost their original hue, they glow with a sombre splendour, which, though borrowed neither from Flanders nor Venice, reminds the spectator of the greatest masters of both those countries. Then what fascination in his female forms and features, how charming his children, how manly his men ! Reynolds lived always in easy intercourse with the most distinguished of his time, and something of the genial grace of such companionship is visible in his works. He did not copy a face with camera-like particularity, but he always gave what was most essential : his likenesses are not perhaps always the most faithful rendering of the man in his ordinary daily life, but they bring out his most intellectual and characteristic aspect. Burke was mistaken when he said that Reynolds was the first Englishman who added the praise of the elegant arts to the other glories of his country. But if he was not that, we cannot but regard him, when we reflect on the influence which he exerted alike by his pencil, his writings, and his character, as the true founder of the English school of painting.

Gainsborough had far less technical power than Reynolds, and in portraiture far less variety. But if he could not attain the elevation of Reynolds's Mrs. Siddons, or Cornelia, he could more than equal Reynolds in depicting the lighter phases of female beauty. Those who saw Gainsborough's portraits in the wonderful collection brought together last year in the British Institution, or the exquisite specimens of his pencil in the great Manchester Exhibition, will be little likely to gainsay his powers as a painter of female portraits. But it is after all as a landscape painter, and the painter

of those delightful "Cottage Doors," and similar homely rustic subjects which he painted with such unrivalled skill, that he ranks supreme. He was the first painter of the poetry of homely English scenery—the first who showed how the shallow ford, the village green, the leafy woodside, or shady river's bank might on canvas delight the eye and stir the memory and stimulate the fancy—and in his own way he has found no compeer and no successor.

By those whose tastes lead them to prefer what is called classic landscape, Wilson has always been placed above Gainsborough as a painter. But Wilson was less original and less native in style. Italian scene with Phaëtons or Apollos in the clouds, and Niobes on the earth, will never come home to the common understanding. Wilson was neglected whilst alive; he has been perhaps over-praised since his death. Like Gainsborough, he was altogether a painter. But there was less spontaneousness in his constitution. Even his English scenes are painted on an Italian model. If he looked abroad on nature it was to consider how the scenery would "compose" into a picture. The men and women who walked about were to him but "figures." He was a great painter, but his greatness was conventional. Yet few landscape-painters of any country have had a finer eye for grandeur of form and largeness of effect, and if it be to Gainsborough that we can trace the love of simple unsophisticated English scenery, truth and freshness of colour, and directness of imitation, which have ever since characterised English landscape-painting—the truest and noblest school of landscape that has yet been seen—it is to Wilson that we are indebted for its preservation in its early stages from vulgarity and commonplace.

Reynolds, Wilson, and Gainsborough were born within a few years of each other. The other painter, whose name is most closely associated with them in these early days of English art, who succeeded Reynolds as president of the Royal Academy, and who must, we fear, be regarded as the founder of English historical painting, Benjamin West, was some years their junior. A native of Pennsylvania, then an English colony, he came to London at the age of five-and-twenty, and was introduced by Drummond, archbishop of York, to George III., who, pleased with the simplicity of his quaker manners, and the grave religious character of his pictures and sketches, at once took the young American into his favour. West had spent three years in Italy in the study of the old masters, and he had acquired a fatal facility of composition and execution. His pictures, when scriptural, were always illustrative of passages which stirred the sympathies of every person of religious feelings,

and they were so painted that all could at once understand them; and his historical and classical subjects were hardly more recondite and were equally clear. The king saw in them pictures he could feel and comprehend. West received an unlimited commission, and as long as the king retained his faculties, West was duly paid his salary of 1000*l.* a year. The royal patronage would alone have insured the painter success, but the same qualities which delighted the king delighted a large section of his subjects also; and it was the popular belief that England possessed in West another Raffaele. That belief has long passed away, and the reaction has been severe. West never rose above mediocrity, and mediocrity is as fatal to the painter as the poet. But worse painters have had a more enduring celebrity, and some pictures of West's ought to save him from oblivion. One of these is his celebrated "Death of General Wolfe," in which, in spite of the warnings of his friends, and it is said the united and semi-official protest of the president of the Royal Academy and the archbishop of York,* West, instead of clothing the hero and his associates in the costumes of Greece or Rome, or that conventional "drapery" which painters were accustomed to substitute for the dress of any particular age or country, ventured on the daring innovation of making the actors wear the actual coats and cocked hats in which they fought. The picture was painted with unusual care, referred to an event which stirred every heart, and was treated in a manner which men of all conditions could appreciate. It had an immense success. The king was delighted; Reynolds was converted; but the painter's brother artists—hardest of all to satisfy—were not convinced. Barry undertook to show how the event should have been treated in the classic style. He painted the scene, and people were amazed at beholding Wolfe and his grenadiers braving the climate of Canada as well as the bayonets of Montcalm in a state of nudity. But if Barry outraged all "the proprieties," West, some thought, had not wholly resisted temptation. He had painted the dying general in the midst of his officers, who were grouped about him, not as they must have been under such circumstances, but plainly with a view to scenic effect, and he had brought into the foreground a naked Indian, though no such person was actually there. Penny, then professor of painting at the academy, undertook to depict the hero's death as it really occurred—almost alone and in the rear of the fight. But he too got entangled in conventionalisms, and was, moreover, incompetent to grapple with the theme, and West's triumph was complete, "The Death of Wolfe," we may say now, went but a little way

* See Galt's "Life of West."

towards settling the still unsettled question of the extent of licence allowable to the painter of a familiar historical scene; but it at least put an end to the more outrageous anomalies previously tolerated, and the historical painter was thenceforth in this country understood to be to some extent amenable to the laws which govern the historical writer.

It had now become a favourite project to adorn our churches and public buildings with paintings, after the fashion of those of the continent. It was decided to make the experiment on St. Paul's. The leading painters, with West and Reynolds at their head, offered at their own cost to cover the bare walls of the metropolitan cathedral with paintings of the leading events of Old and New Testament history, and the king and the archbishop of Canterbury gave their cordial adhesion to the proposal. But the bishop of London, whose veto was decisive, sternly refused his sanction, and the whole scheme fell to the ground,—thereby, said the enthusiastic professors, throwing back historical painting in England for a century. That such willing service might not be lost, however, the Society of Arts (taking into account the profits derived by the exhibition of the pictures painted for the Foundling Hospital) invited the six painters, designated by the Royal Academy to execute the paintings in St. Paul's, with four others, to paint around their great room ten large pictures from English History; for which they were to be remunerated by the proceeds of an exhibition of them when finished. The painters declined; but Barry, who had been burning to remove from English art the reproach cast upon it by Winckelmann and Du Bos, proffered to cover the entire room himself with a series of large allegorical paintings illustrative of Human Culture. The Society accepted his offer, and though he had but sixteen shillings in his pocket, he commenced his mighty task, working at odd jobs for the booksellers by night to procure the sustenance necessary to carry on the work of the day. After labouring almost without intermission for nearly seven years, he brought his undertaking to a close. A work like this was almost heroic: and out of respect for the man who thus braved neglect and poverty that he might carry out worthily his patriotic enterprise, we would fain persuade ourselves that the work was not a failure. Happily for his own peace of mind, Barry himself never suspected that he missed his aim. In his celebrated letter to the Dilettanti Society, he speaks without stint of its "public interest, and ethical utility of subject; castigated purity of Grecian design, beauty, grace, vigorous effect, and execution." We read those words and turn with amazement from the pictures. But we look

again and see ample evidence of genius, though of the genius that is near allied to madness. Few more efforts were made to achieve success in mural painting. It was reserved for our own day, and with another material, to show what English artists could effect in that branch of art. The frescoes of the New Houses of Parliament, and perhaps even more that in the great hall of Lincoln's Inn, have proved that if fitting opportunity offers, the skill will not be wanting to produce works worthy of the nation. But seeing what was in the 18th century regarded as the ideal of historical painting—looking at the cold mediocrity of West and his followers on the one hand, and the unchecked extravagance of Barry and Fuseli on the other,—it is a matter rather for rejoicing than regret that our churches and public places were not adorned with such illustrations of sacred and secular history as the painters of that day must have produced.

If we were attempting more than a few illustrations of the state of art, there are many other painters who would call for record. Romney, whose life is a romance, and who for a while divided the town with Reynolds, when Thurlow, like his sovereign, declared himself "of the Romney faction;" Fuseli, who imported into England the wildest extravagances of Germany; Paul Sandby, by many regarded as the father of that essential English art, water-colour painting; Wright of Derby, and many another might afford matter for remark: to say nothing of those who succeeded them, and reflected for the most part more or less strongly their genius or their manner—Northcote, Opie, Copley, Stothard, and those others of equal fame who handed down the practice and the traditions of their elders to the painters of our own day.

Nor should those who by means of the art of Engraving assisted in diffusing still more widely the works of the great artists who adorned this period, be left unmentioned. Sir Robert Strange and William Woollett did for English line engraving all that Reynolds and his associates accomplished for painting. More they could not do in their own country; but beyond its limits they perhaps did more. English pictures, except in special instances, never found their way across the channel; but the engravings of Strange and Woollett were eagerly purchased all over the continent. Both were men of rare genius. Strange confined his attention to historical engraving, and delighted in translating the works of the great masters of old. Woollett chiefly engraved landscapes, and especially those of British painters. Strange learnt the art from Le Bas, one of the most distinguished French engravers of the day, and he cultivated his powers by diligent study in the great

centres of Italian art. But whilst no engraver ever entered more into the spirit of the painters whose works he copied, his style was decidedly his own. Nearly all his plates were executed from drawings made by himself from the original pictures; and much as we may admire them when seen apart, it is only on examining such a collection of his engravings as that in the Print Room of the British Museum, where they fill three folio volumes, that his remarkable industry and fertility of resource, as well as his artistic feeling and the brilliancy of his technical skill, can be fairly appreciated. Woollett owed little to any instructor. His teacher was an obscure English engraver, and he never studied out of his native country. But he lived at a time when England was putting forth her strength in art, and he fully participated in the movement. Like our landscape painters, he refused to be bound by established practices. The effect he desired to produce he took what seemed the surest means of producing, without regard to its being the most regular. Etching, the graver, and the needle he freely used, as each seemed the most efficient for the purpose in view. The best of his plates consequently exhibit a union of force and delicacy scarcely to be found elsewhere in landscape engravings. His characterization of surface is nearly perfect. The landscapes of Woollett indeed gave a decided impulse to landscape engraving abroad as well as at home. He engraved the figure also with great ability. and his plate from West's "Death of Wolfe" is generally regarded as a masterpiece. But it is in his landscapes that his great originality and genius are shown, and Woollett is as justly considered the founder of the English school of landscape engraving as Strange is of that of historical engraving. Several other English line engravers, of very considerable skill, flourished during the same period, of whom it will be enough to name Major, who wrote himself engraver to the king; Basire, Byrne, Rooker, the able but unhappy Ryland, and the best of all our portrait engravers William Sharp, who together created a school of line engravers which though not always adequately patronized, has continued with unabated power to the present day.

In mezzotint engraving—a branch of engraving in which England has always maintained the lead—the first practitioner was James MacArdell, who did for the portraits of Reynolds, at least all that his predecessor, John Smith, performed for those of Kneller. With MacArdell, or immediately succeeding him, practised Fisher, Valentine Green, Raphael Smith, W. Dickinson, Earlom, and the Watsons, James, Thomas, and Caroline; whilst Paul Sandby showed the capabilities of the infant art of aquatinta en-

graving. Along with the admirable native engravers, several distinguished foreigners found ample employment. Of these the chief were Bartolozzi, best known by the "chalk" engravings after his own designs, and the drawings of the great masters; Vivares, unrivalled for the freedom of his foliage, and the graceful ease with which he rendered the landscapes of Lorraine, Poussin, and Gainsborough; Grignon, who seems to have been equally expert in every class of subjects and in every style; and Gravelot, now recollected only by his bookplates.

English engravings had indeed become an important branch of commerce. If we may credit the statement made in the House of Lords by lord Suffolk in his speech on Boydell's 'Lottery Bill,' "the revenue coming into this country from this source at one time exceeded 260,000*l.* per annum." Boydell was the principal agent in promoting this traffic. Himself an engraver, though of but small talent, he was led by observing the success of Hogarth's plates to speculate on the possibility of establishing a print-selling business on an extended scale. He tried and succeeded, and with every fresh success his boldness increased, until he was able to assert that he had laid out "above 350,000*l.* in promoting the fine arts in this country."* On the plates issued by him he employed engravers of the highest standing; and he set the example of publishing illustrated books of a more splendid character than had previously been issued by any English publisher. By his fellow citizens he was elected alderman, and then lord-mayor, but his highest ambition was to produce an edition of Shakspeare which should in its illustrations be the most perfect which the arts of the country could produce. To effect this he invited the principal painters of the day to paint finished oil pictures of incidents selected from the various plays; and to contain the pictures so produced he built a spacious suite of rooms in Pall Mall, which he designated the Shakspeare Gallery, but which is now the Gallery of the British Institution. The engravings as published formed a magnificent work in nine folio volumes. The pictures, with the gallery which contain them, Boydell intended to have bequeathed to the nation; but commercial losses arising out of the French revolution compelled him to sell them, and he obtained the sanction of parliament for disposing of them by lottery. Boydell was of course not alone in his enterprise. His success stimulated other publishers, and some of them produced works scarcely less important than his own.

In the early years of the reign of George III. there was only one English sculptor of any reputation, and his celebrity arose

* Petitions to House of Commons—"Annual Register," vol. xlvii.

rather from the paucity of competition than from his own ability. Into what strange defiances of common sense the lack of imagination will lead artists who are poetic by rule, the monuments of Joseph Wilton which disfigure our metropolitan cathedrals will be sufficient to convince any one who will take the trouble to examine them. Banks (1735–1805) some thirteen years the junior of Wilton, was our first great English sculptor. He loved to work on classic themes, and Reynolds said that he had the mind of an ancient Greek. But his poetic subjects brought him only the poet's fare, and like most of his craft who find portraiture irksome he had to turn for profit to the sculpture of monuments. His real strength however, lay in his poetic conception; his monumental groups are for the most part of inferior value—the exceptions being when there was something to call for simple poetic treatment, as in the exquisite monument to a child, Penelope Boothby, in Ashborne Church, a work which when in the exhibition room at Somerset House, by its gentle pathos moved to tears the crowd that daily surrounded it. John Bacon (1740–1799) was a more popular, and in a pecuniary point of view, far more successful sculptor than Banks; but in all the higher qualities of his art greatly his inferior. To his chisel we owe a very large proportion of the public monuments erected in the latter part of the last century.

Later in date than the sculptors just noticed, came one greater than either. Had his powers of execution been equal to his conception, John Flaxman would have been one of the very greatest sculptors of modern times. As it is, in chastened affluence of imagination, purity and grace, he has hardly a superior. His was a fancy which could soar into the highest heaven of invention, yet stoop without discredit to the humblest task-work. Some of his grander productions like the Archangel Michael and Satan (at Petworth) are the glory of the English school of sculpture; his designs from Homer (and there are others scarcely less noble or beautiful) have won the admiration of the best critics throughout Europe; yet he was ready to model a porcelain cup or plate for Wedgwood, and in doing so never failed to produce one that an ancient Greek would have beheld with delight. Along with our three famous countrymen lived and laboured a Dutchman, if not more famous than they, far more the favourite of fortune. This was Joseph Nollekens, a carver of Grecian deities, the best of which is renowned as the 'long-sided Venus.' But if he missed the ideal, he never missed sober every-day reality. He was in portrait-sculpture what Reynolds was in portrait-painting, and he prospered accordingly. He died at a ripe old age worth 200,000*l.*—which is a fair measure of his ability.

We have traced * the progress of Architecture from Wren down to Kent and Burlington. From the era of churches and mansions, we have arrived at that of public and commercial buildings. Sir Robert Taylor was the leading architect when George III. ascended the throne. He was a man of taste and industry, but not of much original power: the wings he added to the Bank, an adaptation of a design by Bramante, were much admired at the time, but were ruthlessly swept away by his successor as bank architect, sir John Soane. Contemporary with Taylor was Dance, the architect of the Mansion House and of Newgate—the latter a work of most prison like character. The Woods (father and son), of Bath, and the brothers Adam, of Edinburgh and London, call for honourable notice for their efforts to raise the character of our street architecture. Bath, “that beautiful city which charms even eyes familiar with the masterpieces of Bramante and Palladio,” † may be said to have been created by the Woods: the taste of Robert and James Adam is fairly shown in the Adelphi—though they erected a large number of other buildings. But the greatest architect of the time was sir William Chambers, whose fame—his Chinese fantasies being forgotten—now rests secure, on his one grand work, Somerset House—by far the noblest English building of its time, and, with all its faults, still one of the noblest buildings in the capital. Unfortunately, it was never completed on its original plan; and the erection of King’s College in an anomalous style—itself about to be rendered still more anomalous by the perversion of the semi-Greek chapel into semi-Gothic—will for ever prevent the completion of its eastern side, a misfortune rendered the more obvious by Mr. Pennethorne’s recent admirable completion of the western portion. Somerset House was the last crowning triumph of the Italian style, introduced by Inigo Jones and carried on with very unequal success by succeeding architects. The investigations of two painters, James Stuart and Nicholas Revett, as made known in their “Antiquities of Athens,” (1762–94), by calling the attention of professional men and the public to the architecture of ancient Greece, effected an entire change in the received notions of architectural beauty. It was of course some time before the change became apparent in our public edifices, but, from the publication of the “Antiquities,” there was a constantly growing approximation to Greek forms however much the Greek spirit might be absent, until in our own day it culminated in the works of sir Robert Smirke, and was followed by the inevitable reaction. Stuart himself, after the publication of the first volume of his great

* Vol v. chap. xviii.

† Macaulay.

work, adopted the profession of an architect, and found considerable employment: his best known building is the Chapel of Greenwich Hospital—an elegant structure, but alone sufficient to show that he was by no means a purist in the application of Greek principles. Revett also practised as an architect, but without any marked success. It remains only to notice James Wyatt, who suddenly became famous by the erection of the Pantheon, Oxford-street (1772), and during the rest of the century secured a large share of public favour. His ambition in the first instance was to produce an Italianised Greek style; but later he unhappily turned his attention to Gothic, and to him is due the destruction of much, and the disfigurement of more, of the most precious of our mediæval remains. His tasteless additions are now for the most part removed, or in process of removal, but the injury to the originals is irreparable.

We ought not, however, to quit this part of our subject without mentioning the names of two or three architects to whom we owe some bridges of great value and beauty, though unfortunately in the chief instances deficient in the essential quality of stability. Of these architects—for bridge-building was not then considered a branch of engineering—the earliest was Labelye, a Swiss, builder of Westminster bridge, opened in 1750, and now in process of replacement by a less picturesque but far more convenient and, we may hope, more lasting structure. Blackfriars bridge (opened in 1760), a more elegant but not more stable edifice than Labelye's, was the work of Richard Mylne. A competitor with Mylne for the erection of this bridge was John Gwyn, whose proposals for a Royal Academy we have mentioned. Gwyn had studied the subject of bridges and public ways closely, and was a man of remarkably clear insight. In his "London and Westminster Improved," (1766, to which Johnson wrote the "Noble Dedication," as Boswell terms it), Gwyn not only urged the necessity of replacing old London bridge by a new one, carrying another bridge across the Thames near the site where Waterloo bridge now stands, and removing Smithfield and Fleet markets, but in maps, as well as in the text, clearly pointed out most of the new lines of thoroughfare and principal improvements which have been since effected in the metropolis, and others which yet remain unaccomplished. Gwyn was the builder of the well-known Magdalen bridge, Oxford, and of the handsome but inconveniently steep English bridge at Shrewsbury.

CHAPTER XXI.

Manners as depicted in the Literature of the period.—Changes in the commerce of Literature.—Samuel Johnson the link between two periods.—Literature of George the Second's time.—The Novelists.—Richardson.—Fielding.—Smollett.—Sterne.—Goldsmith.—Literature of the first quarter of a century of the reign of George the Third.—Manners.—Stage Coaches.—Highwaymen.—The Post.—Inns.—Public refreshment places of London.—Ranelagh.—Vauxhall.—The Pantheon.—The Theatre.—Garrick.—Bath.—Gaming Tables.

ON a rainy day, somewhere about the year 1780, a man of advanced age stood bareheaded in the market of Uttoxeter, making strange contortions of visage whilst he remained for an hour in front of a particular stall. It was Dr. Samuel Johnson, who had gone from Lichfield to this small market town, to subject himself to the penance of rough weather and mocking by-standers, for expiation of an act of filial disobedience which he had committed fifty years before. His father was a bookseller at Lichfield, who died in 1731,—a man who knew something more of books than their titles; a proud man struggling to conceal his poverty. He had a shop with a good stock of the solid folios and quartos of the age of Anne and George I. "He propagates learning all over this diocese," said a chaplain in 1716. His manner of trade was nevertheless somewhat different from that of the bookseller of a cathedral town in the next century. He carried some of his most vendible stock to markets around Lichfield. "At that time booksellers' shops in the provincial towns of England were very rare, so that there was not one even in Birmingham, in which town old Mr. Johnson used to open a shop every market-day."* The old man, being on a sick-bed, had requested his son Samuel to attend the book-stall at Uttoxeter. The young student had come home from Oxford too poor to complete his academical career. "My pride prevented me from doing my duty, and I gave my father a refusal," said the literary veteran, whose pride, during the fifty years that had elapsed between the committal of the fault and its singular atonement, had sustained many a grievous trial and sore indignity. As Johnson was enduring his hour of penance, we may well believe that thoughts of the great changes that he had witnessed in the com-

* Boswell's "Life of Johnson," chap. i.

merce of literature would come into his mind. He had seen his father's book-stall at Birmingham succeeded by the Circulating Library which William Hutton established there in 1751. When he was a lad of sixteen, idling, as some thought, in the desultory reading offered to him in his father's shop, he might have learnt from a pamphlet of that time, that there were only twenty-eight "Printing-houses in all the Corporation towns of England," seven towns having two printers each, and fourteen towns only one each.* Half a century later the desire for News had called forth a Printing House in every considerable town, to provide its own "Postman," or "Mercury," or "Gazette," or Courant," or "Chronicle," or "Times," or "Advertiser." In 1782 there were in England fifty Provincial Journals.† In the year that Johnson's father died, 1731, Cave issued his "Gentleman's Magazine." The "London Magazine" immediately followed. The rapid extension of a class of readers somewhat distinct from "the learned" produced "the Golden Age of Magazines, when their pages were filled with voluntary contributions from men who never aimed at dazzling the public, but came each with his scrap of information or his humble question, or his hard problem, or his attempt at verse."‡ Johnson was to nurse the infant into manhood, with food more substantial than this spoon-meat. If the Printer of St. John's Gate had no other claim to the respect of coming generations, it would have been praise enough that he was the first who gave the hard-earned bread of literature to Samuel Johnson, as a regular coadjutor in his Magazine, "by which," says Boswell, "he probably obtained a tolerable livelihood." That form of popular literature which Cave originated was followed up, some twenty years later, by the more ambitious "Review." The "Monthly Review" was the parent of "The Critical," "The London," and other Reviews, that addressed a great mixed class of readers. "The History of the Works of the Learned" might have higher aims, but it was not calculated for a large and enduring success. The Monthly Magazine and Reviews called into existence a new race of authors. The division of large books into weekly or monthly numbers, so as to suit a more extended market, was another of the many indications of the growth of a different race of book buyers than the purchasers of costly works,

Johnson came to London, a literary adventurer, in 1737. He was long destined to bear the poverty, and to encounter the sup-

* See Nicholl's "Literary Anecdotes," vol. 1. p. 288.

† Andrews's "History of Journalism," p. 274.

‡ Southey—"The Doctor," chap. cxii.

posed degradation, that surrounded the author who wrote for subsistence—the successor of the author who wrote for preferment. Coming at a period when the circle of readers was rapidly and steadily enlarging, he was rescued from the slavery of waiting in a lord's antechamber for five guineas for a dedication, to pass through the scarcely less painful dependence upon the capricious or mercenary publisher for a guinea for an article. But from this second stage of the author's misery relief was sure to come in time. Johnson swallowing the scraps from Cave's table, hidden behind a screen to conceal his ragged clothes,—Johnson wandering about the streets, hungry and houseless, with Savage; or collecting a few shillings, when his acquaintances were few and as poor as himself, to redeem the clothes of Boyse from the pawnbroker,—and Johnson the acknowledged head of the Literary Club of which Burke and Reynolds were members,—are indications of social changes that were of more importance than the vicissitudes in the life of the individual. In many respects Johnson may be regarded as the Representative Man of the Literature of half a century—the Magazine-writer, the Essayist, the Critic, the Poet, the Philologist—the chapman, with many articles of use or ornament in a crowded market. But, in a point of view not altogether fanciful, Johnson was something higher than a Representative—he was a King. Of his death, in 1784, it has been said, “it was not only the end of a reign, but the end of kingship altogether, in our literary system. For king Samuel has had no successor; nobody since his day, and that of his contemporary Voltaire, has sat on a throne of Literature, either in England or in France.”* More fortunate than most sovereigns, king Samuel from the time when he began really to reign instead of fighting his way to the royal chair, had an annalist who has not damaged the character of the potentate by a minute record of the frailties and prejudices of the man. Johnson has indeed an interest apart from that of being the hero of the most amusing book in any language, from his position as the chief connecting link between the Literature of two periods which appear, at the first glance to be very widely separated. In 1738, Johnson published anonymously his poem of “London”; and Pope is reported to have said, “the author, whoever he is, will not be long concealed.” In 1783, Johnson “read with great delight” Crabbe's poem of “The Village,” and suggested alterations in some of the lines. The association with Pope carries us back to the time of Anne. The association with Crabbe leads us onward to the time of William IV. But Johnson, isolated from the literature that preceded

* G. L. Craik—“Literature and Learning in England.”

him and the literature that followed him, is the faithful mirror of the literature of his own age. In social intercourse with him, we see a large number of the most distinguished of his brethren. In his estimates of their value, and of others his contemporaries—estimates often prejudiced to the extent of absurdity, but even in their prejudices reflecting the opinions of his day—we obtain a broader general view of the literature of a very remarkable period of transition than from any other source. Johnson, as preserved to us by Boswell, is the universal commentator. In his admiration or in his contempt, we collect who were the writers filling the largest space in the estimation of the public they addressed. We may trace them, like himself obtaining almost an absolute command over the national thought, by lighting up the obscure places of knowledge, and by bringing the remote places into easy communication.

The precise period at which Johnson launched his little bark upon the wide ocean of literature, would appear, in many respects, as one offering small encouragement to a man possessing high genius, even if combined with the rarer faculty of turning his learning and abilities to account. The government of sir Robert Walpole would bestow wages upon needy hacks, without much regard to the quality of the work that was to be done for the hire. To shower lucrative places upon Walpole's scribbling eulogists and defenders, would have been to take the bread out of the mouths of the other hungry tribe who required sinecures as the payment for their votes. When Johnson came to London he found the authors up in arms against that partial interference with "the precarious dependence" of the wits which Walpole had accomplished by placing the stage under the control of a licenser.* Yet if, by the effect of this law, the Lord Chamberlain was to be the chief supervisor, who would not suffer one species of wit to be retailed without a permit, the restrictions upon the theatre had no influence upon the speedy and luxuriant growth of many other forms of intellectual production, adapted, like that of the stage, for a general diffusion amongst all classes of society.

It is not uncommon to hear the reign of George II. spoken of as an age of dullness. Except by looking accurately at bibliographical dates, we can scarcely form a notion of the literary vigour that was displayed in the last twenty years of that reign. The greatest of the productions of Pope was the fourth book of "The Dunciad," published in 1742. He died in 1744. The mighty intellect of Swift had been long shut up in hopeless imbecility, when he died in 1745. Young, who had made his reputation and his fortune by

* *Ante*, vol. v. p. 467.

his Satires in the latter years of George I., achieved what the world was inclined to consider a far higher distinction by the publication of his "Night Thoughts" in 1741. Thomson, who, in 1726, had established his enduring claim to the honours of a true poet, published his "Castle of Indolence" in 1748, the year of his death. Another generation of poets was at hand, to fill up the choir when the elder race were silent. Johnson made a poetical name by his "London" in 1738, and by his "Vanity of Human Wishes" in 1749. Akenside's "Pleasures of Imagination," and Armstrong's "Art of Preserving Health," appeared in 1774. The "Oriental Eclogues" of Collins in 1742, and his "Odes" in 1746, marked the day-spring of a genius that was too soon clouded in a dark night. Gray's "Elegy" "first made him known to the public," according to Johnson, in 1751; and soon commanded that popularity which it never lost. His "Bard" and "Progress of Poesy" found few admirers upon their appearance in 1757, amply compensated by subsequent over-praise. The English poetical succession was thus honourably continued through the reigns of the foreigners who had succeeded to the throne of the Stuarts; and was handed on to that of their successor, "born and bred a Briton."

A new species of literature, that may almost be considered indigenous, is the marked characteristic of the period we are now regarding. In 1740 Samuel Richardson published the first part of his novel of "Pamela;" of which the second part, issued in 1741, was regarded as the natural falling-off of most "continuations." To understand the extraordinary popularity of "Pamela," we must take Richardson's own account of the object which he proposed to himself in its composition: "I thought the story, if written in an easy and natural manner suitable to the simplicity of it, might possibly turn young people into a course of reading different from the pomp and parade of romance-writing; and, dismissing the improbable and marvellous, with which novels generally abound, might tend to promote the cause of religion and virtue." The novels to which Richardson alludes were not of English growth; for, with the exception of Defoe, we had no novelist who attempted to invest the ordinary concerns of the life of unheroic men and women with the charm of reality. We had translations from French romances, and imitations of French romances, from the time of Scudery to the time of Crébillon. It was reserved for Richardson to carry on a story with such an implicit reliance upon his power of exciting sympathy without "the improbable and marvellous," that the educated and uneducated have confided in his fictions as absolute truths. That confidence has subsisted even to recent times, when

these creations, too tedious for a more busy age, were not quite forgotten. Sir John Herschel has preserved a tribute to the genius of Richardson which is worth a wilderness of criticism: "I recollect an anecdote told me by a late highly-respected inhabitant of Windsor, as a fact which he could personally testify, having occurred in a village where he resided several years, and where he actually was at the time it took place. The blacksmith of the village had got hold of Richardson's novel of 'Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded,' and used to read it aloud in the long summer evenings, seated on his anvil, and never failed to have a large and attentive audience. It is a pretty long-winded book, but their patience was fully a match for the author's prolixity, and they fairly listened to it all. At length, when the happy turn of fortune arrived which brings the hero and heroine together, and sets them living long and happily according to the most approved rules, the congregation were so delighted as to raise a great shout, and, procuring the church keys, actually set the parish bells ringing." * "Clarissa" was not published till 1748; "Sir Charles Grandison" followed in 1751. There is a singular passage in a letter of Johnson to Richardson, which is suggestive, as it appears to us, of one of the peculiar merits of the novelist. He writes, speaking of "Clarissa," "I wish you would add an *Index rerum*, that when the reader recollects any incident he may easily find it." Johnson makes a similar suggestion when "Grandison" was published. "'Clarissa,'" he says, "is not a performance to be read with eagerness, and laid aside for ever; but will be occasionally consulted by the busy, the aged, and the studious." It is one of the most characteristic excellences of Richardson, that there is not the minutest incident in his narratives which has not some distinct bearing upon the development of the complete story. To trace the connexion of these circumstances, would have been facilitated by an index; and it is not impossible that this was in Johnson's mind, although Mr. Croker regards the suggestion as an adroit piece of flattery to a vain man. † We remember to have heard an eminent lawyer declare that he studied Richardson's plots as he would study a mass of evidence in a complicated case; and that the extreme art by which the chain was kept entire, in links not always apparent, could be readily traced by one who brought the legal mind to discover something beyond meaningless prolixity in the endless details of these novels.

In 1742 Henry Fielding published "The Adventures of Joseph

* "Address to the Subscribers to the Windsor and Eton Public Library;" 1833.

† Boswell, ed. 1848, p. 78.

Andrews," the hero of which history "was esteemed to be the only son of Gaffer and Gammer Andrews, and brother to the illustrious Pamela, whose virtue is at present so famous." No one now reads Fielding's first novel as a burlesque of Richardson, for which it was really intended. It would appear from a letter of Gray to West, that he had been amused by "Joseph Andrews," without a suspicion that any ridicule was intended of another novelist; and, indeed, Fielding, having discovered his own real power, appears very soon to have resigned himself to delineations of character and manners without much regard to his purpose of satirizing the over-wrought sentiment of Richardson. Gray says: "The incidents are ill-laid and without invention; but the characters have a great deal of nature, which always pleases, even in her lowest shapes. . . . Throughout he shows himself well read in stage-coaches, country squires, inns, and inns of court." Johnson, who always professed contempt for Fielding in proportion as he admired Richardson, maintained that Fielding's characters were characters of manners, whilst Richardson's were characters of nature.* "Richardson used to say, that had he not known who Fielding was, he should have believed he was an ostler. Sir, there is more knowledge of the heart in one letter of Richardson's than in all 'Tom Jones.' I, indeed, never read 'Joseph Andrews.'" This dispraise of Fielding indicates his great value to those who would understand the manners of his age; in what Boswell properly termed "very natural pictures of human life," but which Johnson despised as "of very low life," Fielding, "well read in stage-coaches, country squires, inns, and inns of court," is a faithful historian, in his own line, of a condition of society that was worth the closest observation of one capable of exhibiting its characteristics. His "Jonathan Wild," published in 1743, can scarcely be regarded as a novel. Before the appearance of his greatest work, "Tom Jones," in 1749, another novelist, came upon the field, with equal readiness of observation, but with a coarser power of delineating what he saw. Smollett's "Roderick Random" appeared in 1748. In 1751 were published both Fielding's "Amelia" and Smollett's "Peregrine Pickle." In 1753, Smollett's "Ferdinand Count Fathom" appeared. Fielding died in 1754. Another of equal genius with these two great novelists—at his outset equally popular—came in the last year of George II. The first two volumes of Sterne's "Tristram Shandy" were published in 1759, the other seven volumes at intervals extending to 1767. In 1776 Johnson said, with some truth, of this remarkable book, "Nothing

* Boswell, ed. 1848, p. 190.

odd will do long. 'Tristram Shandy' did not last." One whose hold upon readers of every class has never been loosened, from the hour when he appeared as a novelist in 1766, Oliver Goldsmith, produced, in his "Vicar of Wakefield," a picture of English life which puts us in far better humour with his time than the freer delineations of either of the great masters of fiction who had preceded him. The people had either become more lovable or they are presented to us by a more kindly observer.

In the decade immediately preceding the accession of George III., there was something like a revival of that species of literature which Addison and Steele had naturalized amongst us. In 1750 appeared the "Rambler," by Johnson, published twice a week. In 1758, "the great moralist," as he was called, commenced his "Idler." The "Adventurer," in which Johnson was also concerned, was issued in 1752. The "World," issued in 1753, and the "Connoisseur," in 1754, had more of the spirit of the earlier Essayists than the measured periods in which Johnson descanted upon human follies. Edward Moore and Owen Cambridge, in the "World," George Colman and Bonnell Thornton, in the "Connoisseur," looked upon life in the spirit of the sage invoked by Johnson:—

"Once more, Democritus, arise on earth,
With cheerful wisdom and instructive mirth."

The period had also its exponent in one whom the admirers of satire, made doubly attractive by personality, called "Aristophanes." Samuel Foote was not a vulgar libeller. In his caricatures of vice and folly, during thirty years from 1747 to 1776, we may see not the mere humours of individuals, but the marked characteristics of prevailing manners.

The literature of the first quarter of a century of the reign of George III. presents us much indifferent Poetry, but some that has survived. The vigour of Churchill may yet be admired, in spite of his coarseness. If, with the exception of Goldsmith and Beattie, there was little verse that was unaffected and natural until the time of Cowper, a taste for simplicity and freshness, in preference to the artificial and elaborate, was produced by the publication of Percy's "Reliques of Ancient Poetry." Johnson did far less for a right direction of the national taste in his "Lives of the Poets," than Thomas Warton in his "History of English Poetry." Garrick made Shakspeare in fashion, and occasionally ventured, in his desire to give him a more fashionable dress, to patch the poet's golden mantle with the tinsel of the player's wardrobe. For graver

literature, this portion of the reign of George III. acquired a lasting distinction. It gave us Burke as the greatest of political philosophers; Adam Smith as an economist; and Hume, Robertson, and Gibbon as historians. More important as a painter of manners even than the Novelists, the Dramatists, or the Essayists, that age bequeathed us Horace Walpole. The public of his own time knew little of his surpassing power of presenting the peculiarities of his own exclusive class; and, in common with other letter-writers of the same period, of introducing us to the saloons, where, hidden from profane eyes, the noble and the great were playing "Low Life above Stairs."*

Let us endeavour to note a few of the more prominent features of the national character and habits, as delineated in the light literature of half a century. It was the transition period from an age in which the decencies of life were very imperfectly observed, to an age in which decorum was beginning to assert an authority which has steadily gone on, to preserve a greater semblance of morality, and therefore, in no inconsiderable degree, to hold fast its substance. The grossness of society was reflected in the novelists and dramatists of the middle of the century; but, as we advance towards its end we find the grossness veiled in double meanings, and the profaneness smothered in stars and dashes. Amidst much deep-seated depravity in all classes, there was a larger amount of indecorum. When the indecorum vanished, much of the vice, no doubt, remained behind; but in its hiding-places it unquestionably became less dangerous. We shall glance, in the first instance, at the public resorts of society;—the places where all ranks meet, and to a certain extent associate.†

Stage Coaches; Inns; Public Conveyance; Public Accommodation. This is a large subject; a subject that, at the first view, might appear to touch only the surface of society. But it really involves many features of a nation's social life. In the days of our early novelists the stage coach was an institution, and on some roads had arrived at the dignity of being called a "Machine." But this rapid vehicle of four miles an hour was not for common travellers—indeed, very genteel travellers were content with cheaper accommodation. There was a mode of transit upon the North Road, which only cost a shilling a-day to a passenger, and in conveying him from York to London did not occupy quite a fortnight. This was the conveyance of Roderick Random to the

* "George Selwyn and his Contemporaries," vol. i. p. 20.

† This sketch carries on the delineation of manners at the beginning of the century—*ante*, vol. v. chapters xv., xvi., and xvii.

metropolis, and we may believe that the waggon and its inside have been faithfully portrayed out of Smollett's personal recollections. Random, and his faithful follower, Strap, overtake the waggon upon the road; ascend by a ladder; and tumbling into the straw find themselves in the society of Captain Weazel with his spouse, and an old usurer with a vivacious female companion. The captain—an ensign made out of a nobleman's valet—when the waggon arrived at its inn, demanded a separate room for his lady and himself, with a supper apart. The inn-keeper replied that, “he could not afford them a room by themselves; and as for supping, he had prepared victuals for the passengers in the waggon without respect of persons.” In the stage-coach we find the same assumption of superiority. “The human species are divided into two sorts of people, to wit, high people and low people. . . . These two parties, especially those bordering nearly on each other, to wit, the lowest of the high, and the highest of the low, often change their parties according to place and time.” The bickerings of a stage-coach company illustrate this philosophic view of Fielding. Miss Graveairs, the daughter of a gentleman's steward who had been a postillion, would not demean herself to ride with Joseph Andrews, a footman. The youth had met with an accident:—“there were waggons on the road,” said the genteel personage. A young lady, who was an earl's grand-daughter, begged, almost with tears in her eyes, that the poor fellow might be admitted. To the remark that “no one could refuse another coming into a stage-coach,” the fine lady replied, “I don't know, madam, I am not much used to stage-coaches; I seldom travel in them.” There is another witness to the assumption of gentility in female stage-coach passengers:—“I have always remarked that within half-a-dozen miles of the end of our journey, if there has been a fine spoken lady in the coach, though but a country shop-keeper's wife, who imagined herself a stranger to the company, she has expressed great anger and astonishment at not seeing the chaise, the chariot, or the coach, coming to meet her on the road.”*

The pretension of the ladies to the respect due to “quality,” is matched in the novelists by the boasts of the gentlemen to the confidence produced by courage. To be cool and collected in the presence of danger was as necessary in a journey from London to Bath as in the march from Carlisle to Culloden. The highwayman was an institution especially connected with the stage-coach. He had been growing into a power for many years. He was in his most

* Edward Moore; “World,” November 29, 1753.

high and palmy state when Fielding had ceased to write, and George III. began to reign. In 1761, "the Flying Highwayman engrosses the conversation of most of the towns within twenty miles of London . . . He robs upon three different horses, a gray, a sorrel, and a black one. . . He has leaped over Colnbrook turnpike a dozen times within this fortnight."* A lawyer, in Fielding's stage-coach, boasts that he had often met highwaymen when he travelled on horseback, but none ever durst attack him. A ruffian stops the coach, and the lawyer and the rest of the passengers quietly surrender their money; but the lawyer informs the company that if it had been daylight, and he could have come at his pistols, he would never have submitted to the robbery. A stage-coach is crossing Hounslow Heath at day-break. The Heath at that period, and long after, invariably suggested the idea of highwaymen. The courage of a "son of Mars" was to assure the ladies of adequate protection.—"Make yourselves perfectly easy on that head, madam. I have got a pair of pistols—here they are—which I took from a horse-officer at the battle of Dettingen; they are double loaded, and if any highwayman in England robs you of the value of a pin, while I have the honour of being in your company——" The oaths may be imagined. Two highwaymen appear in sight; the ladies begin to scream; a lawyer (the novelists delight to introduce a lawyer) exclaims, "no matter—we'll sue the county and recover," his teeth chattering; the warrior quietly gives up his pistols to Smollett's hero, who jumps out of the coach to face the robbers.

Such were the scenes when few persons travelled; when the facilities of locomotion did not make travellers, as in the later days of the mail, and in our own wondrous days of the railway. A little boy going to school, and his mother, are the only passengers in the stage-coach from Worcester to Gloucester. The vehicle rolls about; and a horseman is seen speaking earnestly to the coachman, who is at last peremptorily ordered by him to stop. The horseman is not a robber. He is an honest farmer, who opens the coach door: tells the lady that the driver is so drunk that there will be an accident; conducts her and her son to his farm hard by; and finally puts a pillion upon his horse, and carries them safely to Gloucester. The relator of the incident contrasts the one coach—probably not a daily stage—between Worcester and Gloucester, and its scanty supply of passengers, with the long and well-filled trains that vibrate many times a-day between these two cities.† The coach which Fielding's Parson Adams could outstrip in pace as

* "Annual Register," vol. iv. p. 189.

† "Remains of T. W. Hill," p. 109.

he walked before it, brandishing his crab stick, was, in twenty or thirty years, to pass into a vehicle whose rapidity was somewhat dangerous upon roads very unscientifically made. Chatterton tells his sister that on his ride outside the stage from Bristol to London, the coachman complimented him upon his courage in sticking upon the roof without holding to the iron. A Prussian clergyman Charles Moritz, travelling in England in 1782, for the most part on foot, being anxious to return to London, mounts the outside of a "post coach" at Leicester. To him it was a new situation. "I sat nearest the wheel, and the moment that we set off, I fancied that I saw certain death await me." The machine seemed to fly; it was a miracle that they still stuck to the coach. "At last, the being continually in fear of my life became insupportable, and as we were going up a hill, and consequently proceeding rather slow than usual, I crept from the top of the coach, and got snug into the basket."* The increased speed of the stage operated no reform in the conveyance of letters by the post. The letter-bags were carried by boys on horseback. If a bag reached its destination in safety, without being rifled, it was more by a happy chance than by any care of the post-office authorities for the prevention of robbery. As to accelerating the conveyance of letters that was an impossibility. The post that left London on Monday night reached Worcester, Birmingham, Norwich, Bath, on the Wednesday afternoon. A letter from London to Glasgow was only five days on the road. What more could be done? The manager of the Bath theatre proposed a plan for bringing the letter-bags from Bath to London, in sixteen or eighteen hours. Great was the merriment at so wild a scheme amongst the wise officials. Mr. Palmer persevered; and he had the support of a more vigorous power than that of the salaried haters of innovation. Mr. Pitt took the project under his care; and in 1784 the first mail-coach left London. There was an end of robberies of the mail—of the system under which "the mail is generally entrusted to some idle boy without character, mounted on a worn-out hack, and who, so far from being able to defend himself, or escape from a robber, is much more likely to be in league with him."† The letters went safely, and they went at twice or thrice their former speed.

Inns. Half a century ago the inns of a small English "Borough" were described by Crabbe. More than half a century before Crabbe, Fielding and Smollett had shown us the inns of their time. Much of the poet's description is now of things passed away. The

* "Travels through various parts of England."

† Palmer's plan—presented to Mr. Pitt.

hostelries described by the novelists are as obsolete as the old signs over the London shops. We now rarely find the "Head Inn" of the time when the world travelled in carriages with post-horses ; when the ready chaise and smart driver were to be had in five minutes ; when the ample yard contained "buildings where order and distinction reign ;" when the lordly host bent in his pride to the parting guest ; when the lady hostess governed the bar and schooled the kitchen. * According to Fielding, "it was the dusk of the evening when a grave person rode into an inn, and, committing his horse to the ostler, went directly into the kitchen, and, calling for a pipe of tobacco, took his place by the fireside, where several other persons were likewise assembled." The grave person was Parson Adams, a clergyman of much learning, but humble means ; who had been accustomed to take his cup of ale in the kitchen of the squire who had given him his curacy of twenty-five pounds a-year, and whose lady did not think his dress good enough for the gentry at her table. It is true that in a nobler apartment of this inn there was another clergyman, named Barnabas, who had condescended to administer ghostly consolation to a poor man supposed to be dying ; but "proceeded to prayer with all the expedition he was master of, some company then waiting for him below in the parlour, where the ingredients for punch were all in readiness, but no one would squeeze the oranges till he came." Select as the company in the parlour might be, there was no distinction in the kitchen. The next day, in that general temple of good cheer, the reverend punch-maker, the surgeon, and the exciseman, "were smoking their pipes over some cider-ale ;" and Parson Barnabas having learnt the profession of Parson Adams (for his cassock had been tied up when he arrived) invited him to adjourn, with the doctor and the exciseman, to another room, and partake of a bowl of punch. This libation finished, Barnabas takes his seat upon a bench in the inn yard, to smoke his pipe. This inn—the great coach inn—was a very different affair from the little public-house on the side of the highway described by Smollett: "The kitchen was the only room for entertainment in the house, paved with red bricks remarkably clean, furnished with three or four Windsor chairs, adorned with shining plates of pewter and copper saucepans, nicely scoured, that even dazzled the eyes of the beholder." † In this description there is nothing obsolete ; nor have the "parlour splendours" of Goldsmith's Auburn inn passed away—"the royal game of goose"—the "broken tea cups wisely kept for show." It was proper that corporal Trim should take his seat

* Crabb—"The Borough."

† "Sir Launcelot Greaves."

in the kitchen of the Village inn ; and natural that the sick lieutenant's son should make at the kitchen fire a piece of thin toast that his father fancied with a glass of sack. But Parson Adams, and Parson Barnabas, and the surgeon, and the exciseman, drinking in the kitchen, is a scene of other times. Forty years later, landlords and landladies were growing exclusive, and despised vulgar company. The Lutheran clergyman, Moritz, set out upon a pedestrian tour to Oxford and the midland counties. Walking seems to have been considered in those days only fit for the poorest. The tired and hungry German enters an inn at Eton, and with difficulty obtains something to eat, and a bed-room that much resembled a prison for malefactors. "Whatever I got, they seemed to give me with such an air as showed too plainly they considered me a beggar. I must do them the justice to own, however, that they suffered me to pay like a gentleman." He was rejected when he applied for a bed, even at common ale-houses. At last he obtained a place of refuge at Nettlebed. "They showed me into the kitchen, and set me down to sup at the same table with some soldiers and the servants. I now, for the first time, found myself in one of those kitchens I had so often read of in Fielding's fine novels ; and which certainly gave me, on the whole, a very accurate idea of English manners." The next day, being Sunday, the pedestrian, having put on clean linen, was shown into the parlour ; and "was now addressed by the most respectful term, sir ; whereas the evening before I had been called only master."

Of the infinite diversities of the Public Refreshment life of London, there are ample materials for a full description if our space would afford any such elaboration. The kindly Scot who let a lodging to Roderick Random over his chandler's shop, told him, "there are two ways of eating in this town for men of your condition—the one more creditable and expensive than the other ; the first is to dine at an eating-house, frequented by well dressed people only ; and the other is called diving, practised by those who are either obliged or inclined to live frugally." The young surgeon was disposed to try the diving, if it were not infamous. His landlord gave him convincing proof of its propriety : "I have seen many a pretty gentleman, with a laced waistcoat, dine in that manner very comfortably for threepence half-penny, and go afterwards to the coffee-house, where he made a figure with the best lord in the land." The experiment is determined on, and the hero of the novel dines luxuriously off shin of beef, "surrounded by a company of hackney coachmen, chairmen, draymen, and a few footmen out of place or on board wages." When he is become more ambitious,

he dines at an "Ordinary"—a mode very different from the French table d'hôte, and never quite naturalized in London. The ordinary had more success in the suburbs—such as Goldsmith frequented. "There was a very good ordinary of two dishes and a pastry, kept at this time at Highbury-barn, at tenpence per head, including a penny to the waiter; and the company generally consisted of literary characters, a few Templars, and some citizens who had left off trade."* The chop-houses were more popular than the ordinaries. "In these common refectories you may always find the jemmy attorney's clerk, the prim curate, the walking physician, the captain upon half-pay."† The tavern life of Dr. Johnson is as familiar to us as his rusty wig. The houses of entertainment which he frequented are as famous as the Devil Tavern of his dramatic namesake. We know by common fame, as well as from Boswell, of "the Mitre Tavern in Fleet-street, where he loved to sit up late"—the "old rendezvous" were grave divines and smart lawyers came to listen to his violent politics, his one-sided criticism, his displays of learning, his indignation against vice and meanness, his banter of Goldsmith, and his insolence to Boswell. Johnson maintained that "a tavern chair was the throne of human felicity." "There is nothing," he affirmed, "which has been yet contrived by man, by which so much happiness is produced as by a good tavern or inn;"—and then he repeated, "with great emotion," Shenstone's lines:

" Whoe'er has travell'd life's dull round,
Where'er his stages may have been,
May sigh to think he still has found
The warmest welcome at an inn."

When Goldsmith, to complete what he called "a shoemaker's holiday," had finished his refection at Highbury-barn, he and his companions, about six o'clock in the evening, "adjourned to White Conduit-house to drink tea; and concluded by supping at the Grecian or Temple-exchange coffee-house, or at the Globe in Fleet-street." White Conduit-house, near Islington, was an especial resort of the citizens. The coffee-houses, although frequented by peculiar classes, were open to all men. The "Connoisseur" has described the coffee-houses of 1754. Garraway's, frequented by stockbrokers; the Chapter, by booksellers; the Bedford, "crowded every night with men of parts," who echoed jokes and bon-mots from box to box; White's, where persons of quality resorted, who

* Quoted from "The European Magazine" in Foster's "Life and Times of Oliver Goldsmith," book iv.

† "Connoisseur," June 6, 1750.

do not trouble themselves with literary debates, as at the Bedford. "They employed themselves more fashionably at whist for the trifle of a thousand pounds the rubber, or by making bets on the lie of the day."* The fashionable coffee-houses were gradually transformed into exclusive clubs, of which form of social life we shall have presently to speak. The more plebeian coffee-house had sometimes to endure intruders, who asserted the independence which Englishmen sturdily maintained in the last century. Dr. Thomas Campbell, in 1775, strolled into the Chapter coffee-house, which he heard was remarkable for a large collection of books, and a reading society. "Here I saw a specimen of English freedom. A whitesmith in his apron, and some of his saws under his arm, came in, sat down, and called for his glass of punch and the paper, both which he used with as much ease as a lord. Such a man, in Ireland, and I suppose in France too, or almost any other country, would not have shown himself with his hat on, nor any way, unless sent for by some gentleman: now really every other person in the room was well dressed." † The Irish Dr. Campbell must have indeed been surprised at the contrast between England and Ireland, where, according to Arthur Young, nothing satisfies a landlord but unlimited submission. "Disrespect, or anything tending towards sauciness, he may punish with his cane or his horsewhip with the most perfect security." ‡

"Such places of pleasure as are totally set apart for the use of the great world I meddle not with." Thus writes Fielding, in his capacity of magistrate. § He goes on to say, "though Ranelagh and Vauxhall, by reason of their price, are not entirely appropriated to the people of fashion, yet they are seldom frequented by any below the middle rank." Ranelagh was opened in 1742: "The prince, princess, duke, and much nobility, and much mob besides, were there," according to Walpole. In two years Ranelagh had "totally beat Vauxhall." The usual amusement was to parade round and round the Rotunda. The dullness was occasionally relieved by the depravity of the masquerade. Nevertheless, on ordinary nights, the dazzling illumination of the building; the music; the cheap refreshments (half-a-crown entrance included tea, coffee,

* No. I.

† "Diary of a Visit to England, in 1775." "The Edinburgh Review" (October, 1853) gives an interesting article on this curious book, published at Sydney in 1854. The Reviewer supposes that his copy is "the only one on this side of the equator." The author of this History met with a copy at the French Exhibition of 1855; and seeing its peculiar value wrote several notices of it, during his visit to Paris, in an English journal, in which he had an interest, "The Town and Country Newspaper."

‡ "Tour in Ireland," vol. ii. p. 127.

§ "Causes of the Increase of Robberies;" section i.

or punch); the opportunity of looking upon lords with stars and ladies with hoops,—these attractions drew a motley group to Ranelagh, who were either genteel or affected gentility. The landlady of the Prussian clergyman, a tailor's widow, told him that she always fixed on one day of the year in which, without fail, she hired a coach and drove to Ranelagh.* Johnson moralises upon this scene: "When I first entered Ranelagh it gave an expansion and gay sensation to my mind, such as I never experienced anywhere else. But, as Xerxes wept when he viewed his immense army, and considered that not one of that great multitude would be alive a hundred years afterwards, so it went to my heart to consider that there was not one in all that brilliant circle that was not afraid to go home and think."† Vauxhall was cheaper than Ranelagh in its price of admission, but far more costly in its refreshments. The citizen takes his wife and two daughters to the garden; grumbles over a chicken, no bigger than a partridge, which costs half-a-crown, and vows that the ham is a shilling an ounce. As he leaves the lamp-lit walks, he moralises also: "It would not have cost me above fourpence-halfpenny to have spent my evening at Sot's Hole; and what with the coach-hire, and all together, here's almost a pound gone, and nothing to show for it."‡ There was a great deal of good company indeed, declared the citizen's wife, though the gentlemen were so rude as to stare at her through their spy-glasses. Lady Caroline Petersham, "looking gloriously jolly and handsome," goes to Vauxhall with a large party, of which were lord Granby, "very drunk," and Horace Walpole, and Harry Vane. Lady Caroline minced seven chickens in a china dish, and steward them over a lamp; and Betty the fruit-girl brought her strawberries and cherries, and supped by them at a little table. "The whole air of our party was sufficient to take up the whole attention of the gardens; so much so, that from eleven o'clock till half an hour after one, we had the whole concourse round our booth," and Harry Vane took up a bumper and drank their healths.§ Mr. and Mrs. Tibbs were humble imitators of Lady Caroline Petersham and Harry Vane. They "would sit in none but a genteel box; a box where they might see and be seen."|| The Pantheon was opened in 1772—"a new winter Ranelagh in Oxford Road." Dr. Campbell was there in 1775, and saw "the duke of Cumberland and lady Grosvenor, a fine woman, lost to all sense of modesty;" and "lady Archer, painted like a doll, whose feathers nodded like

* Moritz, "Travels through England."

† Boswell, 1777.

‡ Connoisseur, No. 68.

§ Walpole to Montague, June 23, 1750.

|| "Citizen of the World," No. 71.

the plumes of Mambrino's helmet;" and some still more disreputable ladies who had longer peacock feathers.* Such was the mixed society of the public places of London, before the people of quality grew more exclusive, and set up coteries in which profligacy could be screened from vulgar eyes.

It has been said, "The Stage, at this period (1774), was either a school of immorality, or a vehicle of slander."† We venture to think that the Stage, at this period, was singularly untainted with the grosser vices of society; and that what is termed its slander was a fearless expression of contempt for crimes and follies which even the pulpit suffered to flourish in their rankness. Looking candidly at the time when Wycherley, Vanbrugh, Congreve, Farquhar, and Mrs. Centlivre, had been succeeded, as the popular dramatists, by Goldsmith, Colman, Cumberland, Murphy, Sheridan, and Mrs. Cowley, it can scarcely be denied that the theatre was, comparatively, a school of purity. Blemishes of course there were. It was still too much the fashion to assign the virtues of truth and sincerity to the dissipated, and the vices of hypocrisy and meanness to the decorous. Situations and expressions that would not now be tolerated were presented and uttered without offence. But there was no systematic endeavour to make licentiousness the foundation and corner-stone of wit. The chief complaint against the stage of that time was, that "the most popular plays and farces, if they were not founded on the scandal of the day, contained pointed allusions to the gossip of political and fashionable society, and persons conspicuous in either."‡ Political and fashionable society had scarcely a right to complain of the scandal, when it was so little careful of its own reputation. We may well believe that the personalities of Foote, objectionable as a system of personal satire always must be, kept many of the fashionable in awe of ridicule, who held in scorn the disapprobation of the classes below them in rank; and somewhat abated the imitative ambition of many of the rich pretenders to distinction of the middle classes, who esteemed their fellows only in the proportion of their wealth.§

The Theatre, under the management of Garrick, directed, however imperfectly, the course of public taste. He did, what Betterton had done before him, he gave Shakspeare an extended popularity

* "Diary," p. 47.

† Massey—"History of England during the reign of George III.," vol. ii. p. 220.

‡ *Ibid.*

§ The masterly essay of Mr. Forster on "Samuel Foote," amply refutes the notion that he was a mere mimic who caricatured peculiarities of manner, and an unprincipled lampooner who sold his forbearance.

by his wonderful power as an actor. But it was amongst the exaggerations of that flattery which had attended Garrick when living, and followed him in death, to pretend that the actor had given new life to the poet; that Garrick and Shakspeare were for ever to shine as “twin stars.” There had been thirteen editions of Shakspeare’s Plays when it was pretended that they were sunk to death and lay in night; * of which nine editions had appeared in the preceding forty years. Garrick did also what Tate had done before him. He mangled Shakspeare, giving improved versions of *Romeo and Juliet*, the *Midsummer Night’s Dream*, *The Tempest*, the *Taming of the Shrew*, the *Winter’s Tale*, *Cymbeline*, and *Hamlet*. He patched the mammoth’d plays with tawdry rags, in the “design to adapt them to the present taste of the public.” † His conception of Shakspeare was as imperfect as his notion of the costume in which Shakspeare’s characters should be presented. But Garrick unquestionably made the people understand the true and the natural in dramatic art, as opposed to the pomposity and the exaggeration of the actors whom he supplanted. Garrick, according to the critical Mr. Partridge, did nothing in *Hamlet* beyond what any man would do in similar circumstances: “I am sure if I had seen a ghost, I should have looked in the very same manner, and done just as he did.” The king, who spoke “half as loud again,” was the actor for Partridge’s money. ‡ The town had sense enough to confirm the verdict of Churchill, in the “*Rosciad*,” of “Garrick, take the chair.”

The Bath of the middle of the last century is familiar to all readers of the light literature of that period. The city, early in the reign of Anne, began to be frequented by people of fashion; but the nobility refused to associate with the gentry at any public entertainments. Gentlemen came to the balls in boots, and ladies in aprons. A dictator arose in the person of Mr. Richard Nash, who was elected Master of the Ceremonies, and presided over the company who assembled in a booth to dance and game.§ During a reign of many years this king of Bath had got his unruly subjects into tolerable order. He had compelled the squires to put off their boots when they came to the balls, and the ladies to forego their aprons. His dominions were the resort of all the sharpers and dupes in the land, when the London season was over. Every game of

* Epitaph on Garrick in Westminster Abbey :

“Though sunk to death the forms the Poet drew,
The Actor’s genius bade them breathe anew.”

† “*Biographica Dramatica*.”

‡ “*Tom Jones*.”

§ Goldsmith—“*Life of Nash*.”

chance was here played without restraint, and Nash had his full share of the spoil of the unwary. At Tunbridge he established a colony; and, like a great monarch, he often travelled there in state to receive the homage of his subjects, drawn in a post-chariot by six grays, with out-riders, footmen, and French horns. All went merrily till a cruel legislature passed an Act to declare Basset and Hazard and all other games of chance illegal. The statute was evaded; and an amended law was next year passed, to declare all games with one die or more, or with any instrument with numbers thereon, to be illicit. The law-makers did not foresee that an instrument with letters thereon might be as effectual; and the well-known game of E. O. was invented, and first set up at Tunbridge. Nash brought the game to Bath, not to offend the decorum of the Assembly-Room, but to be carried on snugly in private houses, to which Nash introduced those who had money to lose, confederating with the E. O. table-keepers for a share of their profits. This answered for some time, until another statute effectually put down all gaming-houses and gaming-tables, as far as law could accomplish their suppression. There was no resource for the persecuted people of quality but to establish private clubs.

CHAPTER XXII.

View of manners continued.—The Duke of Queensberry.—Club-life.—Excessive Gaming.—Excesses of Charles Fox.—Dress.—Conversation.—The Squires of England.—The Country Justice.—The Clergy of England.—The Universities.—Professional Classes.—The Mercantile Class.—The Lower orders.—The Rabble.—Mobs.—Police of London.—The Prisons.—Social Reformers.—Howard.—Coram.—Hanway.—Raikes.—Education.—Rise and Growth of Methodism.

A FEW years after the beginning of the present century, there was to be seen in Piccadilly, on every sunny day, an emaciated old man sitting in a balcony, holding a parasol. The coachman of the Bath road as he drove by would tell some wondering passenger that there was the wicked duke of Queensberry; that he kept a man in readiness to follow any female not insensible to the bewitching ogles of his glass eye; that his daily milk bath was transferred to the pails of the venders of milk around Park-lane; with many other tales, more befitting the days of the second Charles than of the third George. This very notorious nobleman died in 1810, at the age of eighty-six. As Dr. Johnson was the link between the varying literature of two periods, the duke of Queensberry was the link between the changed profligacy of two generations. He had flourished as the earl of March and a lord of the bed-chamber in the times when to violate every decency of life was to establish a claim to wit and spirit; when “at the rehearsal, on Wednesday night, of the Speech, at lord Halifax’s, lord Lichfield came extremely drunk, and proposed amendments;” * when sir Francis Dashwood, Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1762, held his frantic orgies with his brother “Franciscans” at Medmenham Abbey, drinking obscene toasts out of a sacred chalice; when George Selwyn said, with as much truth as wit, when one of the waiters at Arthur’s Club was committed on a charge of felony, “What a horrid idea he will give of us to the people in Newgate.” Queensberry lived on, into an age of comparative decorum, which to him was as insipid as he thought the Thames seen from his Richmond villa: “I am quite tired of it—there it goes, flow, flow, flow, always the same.” † He had no resources for amusement

* “Selwyn and his Contemporaries,” vol. i. p. 352.

† “Life of Wilberforce,” vol. iii. p. 417.

out of the libertine society of the turf and the gaming-house. Even these resorts had become decent. He could no longer sup with the duke of York (the brother of George III.) as in 1776, "with some of the opera girls." * "Information, as acquired by books, he always treated with great contempt." † There was nothing left for him to do, as a vigorous octogenarian, but to sit in the balcony at the corner of Park-lane, gazing upon "the full tide of human existence;" or retire to his drawing-room to enjoy what Wraxall calls a "classic exhibition," which if the unrefined passers-by had chanced to see they would have broken every window of that mansion of ill-fame. He had utterly neglected the duties of his station; he had regarded his tenantry as the mere slaves of his will, and the poor upon his estates as vermin that might be buried in the ruins of dilapidated hovels. Sir Walter Scott described, in 1813, the rebuilding of the cottages at Drumlanrig, by the duke of Buccleugh (the inheritor of the estate), for pensioners who, in the days of "old Q." were "pining into rheumatisms and agues, in neglected poverty." ‡

Time has removed the veil that hid the Club-life of Queensberry and his set from the gaze of contemporaries. We are now permitted to see the fine gentlemen of the days of Chatham and lord North pursuing their vocation of gambling with the assiduous perseverance of the most money-getting tradesman. If they were ruined there were two resources against starvation—a place, or a wife. "You ask me how play uses me this year," writes the hon. Henry St. John to Selwyn in 1766; "I am sorry to say very ill, as it has already, since October, taken 800*l.* from me; nor am I in a likely way to re-imburse myself soon by the emoluments of any place or military preferment, having voted the other evening in a minority." § This distinguished honourable, for whose misfortunes it was the bounden duty of the government to have provided a refuge, became lord Bolingbroke. He still pursued his calling with indifferent success in 1777, when Charles Townshend writes to Selwyn, "Your friend lord Bolingbroke's affairs are in a much more prosperous state than those of the public. He is gone down to Bath in pursuit of a lady, who he proposes should recruit his finances. . . . It is said she has accepted his proposal." || The reputation of lord Sandwich has survived as one of the most profligate in his private life, and one of the meanest in his public

* "Selwyn," vol. ii. p. 47.

† Craxall, "Memoirs."

‡ Letter to Joanna Baillie, in Lockhart's "Life of Scott."

§ "Selwyn," vol. ii. p. 102.

|| "Selwyn and his Contemporaries," vol. iii. p. 247.

career. His club-gambling has given a name to "a bit of beef between two slices of bread," the only food he took for four-and-twenty hours without ever quitting his game.* Common men pass away from the gambling clubs, whether to insolvency, or suicide, or death in a duel, without much sympathy from their fellows, who, like lord Sandwich, are too much absorbed in their thirst for lucre to take warning from the fate of those they call their friends. The right hon. Tom Foley is sold up. The rev. Dr. Warner gives an amusing account of the proceedings to George Selwyn. The creditors could not take the heir-looms; but every personal article was sold, whether of the right honourable or his lady. "He and she are left there among their heir-looms, chairs and tables, without any thing to put upon them, or upon themselves, when the clothes on their backs become dirty." † The hon. John Damer shot himself at the Bedford Arms in 1776. Lord Carlisle, who at this time was himself plunged in difficulties, says of this event, "It is a bad example to others in misery. . . . There never appeared anything like madness in him, yet the company he kept seemed indeed but a bad preparation for eternity." ‡ At Bath, Nash dealt rather severely with the duellist gamblers, for a few mischances might have thinned the numbers of his votaries by a general panic. He forbade the wearing of swords, "as they often tore the ladies' dresses, and frightened them;" and when he heard that a challenge was given and accepted, he immediately procured an arrest for both parties.

On the 24th of June, 1776, Gibbon, writing to his friend Holroyd, and dating from Almack's, says: "Town grows empty; and this house, where I have passed very agreeable hours, is the only place which still unites the flower of the English youth. The style of living, though somewhat expensive, is exceedingly pleasant, and, notwithstanding the rage of play, I have found more entertaining and even rational society here than in any other club to which I belong." Amongst "the flower of the English youth" was the earl of Carlisle, who, when Gibbon thus wrote, was in his twenty-eighth year. He was a man of talent; ambitious to be a poet and a statesman; happy in his marriage; fond of his children; surrounded with every worldly advantage. In July, 1776, he writes to Selwyn: "I have undone myself, and it is to no purpose to conceal from you my abominable madness and folly. . . . I never lost so much in five times as I have done to-night, and am in debt to the house for the whole." A few days after this loss of

* Grosley—"Tour to London in 765," vol. i. p. 1149.

† "Selwyn," iv. 147.

‡ *Ibid.*, viii. 148.

ten thousand pounds, he again writes to his friend, "I do protest to you that I am so tired of my present manner of passing my time—however I may be kept in countenance by the number of those of my own rank and superior fortune—that I never reflect upon it without shame." Lord Carlisle abandoned his dangerous course when not too late. This was not the case with one of far higher intellect. There is no scenic representation of the horrors of gambling so truly pathetic as the history of Charles Fox, nor one which conveys more fearful warnings.

The precocious son of lord Holland was furnished, by the overweening fondness of his father, with guineas to stake at the gaming-table at Spa, when he was a boy of fifteen. "Let nothing be done," said the rival of Chatham, "to break Charles's spirit; the world will effect that business soon enough." He soon was in Parliament. The acquirements of the young politician were as extraordinary as his abilities. His profligacy was as remarkable as either. Lord Brougham says: "The dissipated habits of the times drew him, before the age of manhood, into the whirlpool of fashionable excess. . . . The noble heart and sweet disposition of this great man passed unscathed through an ordeal which, in almost every other instance, is found to deaden all the kindly emotions."* Yet these excesses, at that period of his life when his transcendent powers had placed him in the first rank as a party leader, materially diminished the confidence which the nation would otherwise have reposed in him, and not unjustly rendered him obnoxious to his sovereign. They had probably a more fatal consequence in the encouragement of the heir-apparent in a course of profligacy, which the lower nature of the prince of Wales cherished into that confirmed sensuality which rendered him unfit for the duties of his high station, and made him odious as a sovereign to a people who would otherwise have supported him with something better than "mouth-honour." In 1772, Fox was a lord of the Admiralty, opposing, as a member of the government, the petition of some of the clergy that subscription to the thirty-nine articles should not be enforced at the Universities. Gibbon writes, "Charles Fox prepared himself for that holy work by passing twenty-two hours in the pious exercise of hazard; his devotion only cost him about five hundred pounds an hour—in all, eleven thousand pounds." Lord Carlisle said of him at this period: "He is not following the natural bent of his genius; for that would lead him to all serious inquiry and laudable pursuits." † In 1778, Fox was in opposition—with a distant prospect of office. Lord Car-

* Lord Brougham—"Statesmen of the time of George III."

† "Selwyn," vol. iii. p. 23.

lisle then says, "I do think it does Charles, or ought to do, great credit, that under all his distresses he never thinks of accepting a place on terms that are in the least degree disreputable." * In 1779 the same friend writes, "Charles tells me that he has not now, nor has had for some time, one guinea, and is happier on that account." † Yet though he possessed this extraordinary elasticity of mind—could be found calmly reading Herodotus in the morning after having lost his last shilling the previous night—yet his sense of degradation, when he had to borrow money of club-waiters, and saw his goods seized in execution, must have been somewhat real, however carefully concealed. What might he not have been, great as he was, had he possessed the firmness of Wilberforce, founded upon a juster sense of honour than Fox possessed. Wilberforce has recorded his club-experience when he came up to London, young and rich, the member for Hull, in 1780: "The very first time I went to Boodle's, I won twenty-five guineas of the duke of Norfolk. I belonged at that time to five clubs—Miles and Evans's, Brookes's, Boodle's, White's, and Goostree's. The first time I was at Brookes's, scarcely knowing any one, I joined from mere shyness in play at the Faro table, where George Selwyn kept bank. A friend who knew my inexperience, and regarded me as a victim decked out for sacrifice, called out to me, 'What, Wilberforce, is that you?' Selwyn quite resented the interference, and, turning to him, said in his most expressive tone, 'O, Sir, don't interrupt Mr. Wilberforce; he could not be better employed.'" ‡ Some time after, he was persuaded to keep the bank at a Faro table of one of the clubs. "As the game grew deep," says his son, "he rose the winner of six hundred pounds. Much of this was lost by those who were only heirs to future fortunes, and could not therefore meet such a call without inconvenience. The pain he felt at their annoyance cured him of a taste which seemed but too likely to become predominant." § Pitt once displayed intense earnestness in games of chance, but he suddenly abandoned gambling for ever. He shunned the rock upon which his rival had been wrecked.

In the letters of some of the fine gentlemen of the time of George Selwyn, we find them writing about dress much in the style of boarding-school misses—giving their friends in Paris commissions for velvet suits and embroidered ruffles. The Macaroni Club was in great repute at the beginning of the reign of George III. Wraxall, in 1815, laments over the change which forty years had produced: "That costume, which is now confined to the levee, or the drawing

* "Selwyn," vol. iii. p. 292.

† "Life of Wilberforce," vol. i. p. 17.

‡ *Ibid.*, vol. iv. p. 165.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

room, was then worn by persons of condition, with few exceptions, everywhere, and every day." Mr. Fox and his friends "first threw a discredit on dress. From the House of Commons, and the Clubs in St. James's Street, the contagion spread through the private assemblies of London." The glories of buckles and ruffles perished in the ascendancy of pantaloons and shoe-strings. "Dress never totally fell, till the era of Jacobinism and of Equality in 1793 and 1794." *

Cowper, in the days of his town life, wrote a paper on "Conversation." He holds that it is "in vain to look for conversation where we might expect to find it in the greatest perfection, among persons of fashion: there it is almost annihilated by universal card-playing; insomuch that I have heard it given as a reason why it is impossible for our present writers to succeed in the dialogue of genteel comedy, that our people of quality scarce ever meet but to game." † There is a prevailing opinion, resting chiefly upon the reputation of George Selwyn, that this was the age of conversational wit. The sayings of witty men are always reported very imperfectly. They appear to little advantage without the accessories that gave them point. The anecdotes of Selwyn's "social pleasantry and conversational wit," appear now sufficiently common-place. It does not require any great force of genius to utter such witticisms as these: A member of the Foley family having hurried to the continent to avoid his creditors, Selwyn remarked, "It is a pass-over that will not be much relished by the Jews;" or as this: Bruce having been asked if there were musical instruments in Abyssinia, and replying that he believed he saw only one lyre there, Selwyn whispered, "Yes, and there is one less since he left the country." ‡ More vapid still were the *mots* of James Hare, which had a prodigious reputation; for example: His report of Burgoyne having been defeated at Saratoga being discredited, Hare said, "take it from me, as a flying rumour." § Yet we cannot doubt that amidst the frivolity and pretence of high society, the sterling qualities of Englishmen prevailed over the fashionable attempts to imitate French vivacity. Cowper truly says, "As the English consist of very different humours, their manner of discourse admits of great variety; but the whole French nation converse alike." || Arthur Young, travelling in France in 1787, observes that at the tables d'hôte of officers you have a valuable garniture of indecency or

* Wraxall—"Historical Memoirs," vol. i. p. 138.

† "Connoisseur," Sept. 16, 1756.

‡ "Selwyn and his Contemporaries," vol. i. p. 21.

§ *Ibid.*, vol. iii. p. 285.

|| "Connoisseur."

nonsense, and at those of merchants, a mournful and stupid silence. "Take the mass of mankind, and you have more good sense in half an hour in England, than in half a year in France."* It is Government — all, all, is Government, — he says. The passing observations of the poet and the traveller are confirmed by the philosopher who looks back upon the manners of that period, for a solution, in part, of the causes of the French Revolution: "The men of that time, especially those belonging to the middle and upper ranks of society, who alone were at all conspicuous, were all exactly alike Throughout nearly the whole kingdom the independent life of the provinces had long been extinct; this had powerfully contributed to render all Frenchmen very much alike In England, the different classes, though firmly united by common interests, still differed in their habits and feelings; for political liberty, which possesses the admirable power of placing the citizens of a state in needful intercourse and mutual dependence, does not on that account always make them alike. It is the government of one man which, in the end, has the inevitable effect of rendering all men alike, and all mutually indifferent to their common fate." †

In England, "the independent life of the provinces" was as vigorous in the days of sir George Savile and the Associations, as in the days of John Hampden and Ship-money. The squires of England still exhibited the natural varieties of the rich soil upon which they flourished. From the monotonous gambling of the fashionables of St. James'-street, it is almost pleasant to turn to the rougher amusement of the Country House. There was a considerable change in provincial manners during the last half of the reign of George III. Fielding presented Allworthy, as a portrait of Allen, the friend of Warburton; benevolent, placable, not learned, but a competent judge of literature, improved by much conversation with men of eminence, Allworthy is one of the class who, with some narrowness, gave lustre to the great Country-party of the House of Commons. Squire Western, coarse, passionate, violent in his politics—a roaring, drinking fox-hunter—is not to be wholly despised, for out of his rough material was to be carved the decorous and considerate landlord of another century. There were few Allworthys and many Westerns in the last years of George II. Soame Jenyns has admirably described a visit to sir John Jolly, he proposing to exchange the bustle of London for the soothing indolence of a rural retirement. It was the race week, and a great

* "Travels in France," p. 135.

† De Tocqueville—"France before the Revolution," chap. viii.

cavalcade set out from the mansion to the country town. The Ordinary at the Red Lion before the race; the Assembly, over a stable, after the race; the dancing and cards; the cold chicken and negus; the ride home as the sun rose—this repetition of the same dreary round of pleasure, day by day, wearies the Londoner, who gets away to his quiet lodgings next door to a brazier's at Charing-cross, rather than stay upon the assurance of the lady, that though the races were over he should not want diversion, for they should not be alone one hour for several weeks.* There is a somewhat loose clerical correspondent of George Selwyn, who describes Leicester "at *reace* time"—the country squires, with their triple bands and triple buckles on their hats, "to keep in their no-brain;"—"the clod-pated yeoman's son in his Sunday clothes,—his drab coat and red waistcoat, tight leather breeches, and light gray worsted stockings, with one strap of his shoe coming out from under the buckle upon his foot,—his lank hair, and silk handkerchief, new for *reace* time, about his neck." With a touch of real wit this worldly parson finishes his picture of the yeoman's son:—"depriving of all grace and rendering odious a well-fancied oath from the mint of the metropolis, by his vile provincial pronunciation." †

The Squire sits for the portrait of the Country Justice; whose notions of law are not very different from those of the London Justice who said, "he would commit a servant to Bridewell at any time when a master or mistress desired it." ‡ The fox-hunting justice before whom Parson Adams is taken will not condemn him at once to the hangman: "No, no; you will be asked what you have to say for yourself when you come on your trial; we are not trying you now; I shall only commit you to gaol." In vain the poor curate asked, "Is it no punishment, sir, for an innocent man to be several months in gaol?" His mittimus would have been signed, had not a bystander affirmed that Mr. Adams was a clergyman, and a gentleman of very good character. Then said the justice, "I know how to behave myself to gentlemen as well as another. Nobody can say I have committed a gentleman since I have been in the commission." § But squires and justices were rapidly improving. In 1761, a writer in a periodical work called "The Genius," attributes to "the intercourse between the town and the country, of late so much more frequent," an extraordinary change which he describes with a good deal of vivacity: "It is scarce half a century ago, since the inhabitants of the distant counties were regarded as a species almost as different

* "World," No. 154.

‡ "Tom Jones," book vii, chap. x.

† "Selwyn," vol. iv. p. 311.

§ "Joseph Andrews."

from those of the metropolis as the natives of the Cape of Good Hope. Their manners, as well as dialect, were entirely provincial; and their dress no more resembling the habit of the town, than the Turkish or Chinese. But time, which has inclosed commons, and ploughed up heaths, has likewise cultivated the minds and improved the behaviour of the ladies and gentlemen of the country. We are no longer encountered with hearty slaps on the backs, or pressed to make a breakfast on cold meat and strong beer; and in the course of a tour through Great Britain you will not meet with a high-crowned hat, or a pair of red stockings. Politeness and taste seem to have driven away the horrid spectres of rudeness and barbarity that haunted the old mansion-house and its purlieus, and to have established their seats in the country.* In 1766, the rev. W. Digby writes to Selwyn, from Coleshill, "Thank you for your offer of Swift's works. They are arrived at this place; for you must know we are civilized enough in this country to have instituted a club called a book-club, where I never saw pipe nor tobacco, and take in all the new things we choose. This respectable corps consists of twenty neighbouring clergy and squires, chosen by ballot." †

In the immediate vicinity of the Country Squire is the Country Parson. The permanent resident in the parish is almost invariably the Curate. The incumbent is a pluralist, who passes much of his time in London, or Bath, or Tunbridge, or in the nobleman's establishment as chaplain; the arduous duties of his chaplaincy demanding a freedom from common parochial offices, and entitling him to hold several preferments and to do the duties of no cure of souls. From the Revolution to the Rebellion of 1745, the orthodox clergyman had a decided tendency to Jacobitism. After that period he gradually became less earnest in politics, and resolutely applied himself to uphold government and oppose innovation. He had his own peculiar business in life to perform, which was chiefly to make himself as comfortable as possible. The indecorum, if not the profligacy, of a large number of the English clergy, for a period of half a century, is exhibited by too many contemporary witnesses to be considered as the exaggeration of novelists, satirical poets, travellers, and dissenters. Passages of every variety of writer—private correspondence now laid open—strictures of those of their own profession—are overwhelming in their testimony to this deplorable laxity of morals. Ridicule, pity, indignation, produced little or no change for more than a generation. The

* Quoted in the "Annual Register," for 1761, p. 206.

† "Selwyn," vol. ii. p. 23.

curate of Fielding, engaged in a most excellent political discourse with the squire, during which they made a libation of four bottles of wine to the good of their country, is a sober picture.* The young fellow of Smollett, in the rusty gown and cassock, confederating with the exciseman to cheat two farmers at cards, swearing terrible oaths, and talking gross scandal of his rogue of a vicar, is probably a caricature.† The visitation dinner of Goldsmith, in which all are gormandizing, from the bishop to Dr. Marrowfat, may be received as the fancy-piece of a great humorist.‡ The Jack Quickset of Colman and Thornton is the representative of those "ordained sportsmen, whose thoughts are more taken up with the stable or the dog-kennel than the church; who are regarded by their parishioners not as parsons of the parish, but as squires in orders." § The wits, it may be said, are thus attacking a sacred profession in the wantonness of their scurrility. What shall we say to the testimony of Dr. Knox, head-master of Tunbridge school? "The public have long remarked with indignation, that some of the most distinguished coxcombs, drunkards, debauchees, and gamblers who figure at the watering-places, and all public places of resort, are young men of the sacerdotal order." || What, to the "shepherd" of Crabbe?

"A jovial youth, who thinks his Sunday task
As much as God or man can fairly ask;"

who comes not to the sick pauper's bed; and who, when the bier is borne to the churchyard, is too busy to perform the last office "till the day of prayer." ¶ Surely these writers are not conspiring against their own order. Hear a sober-minded traveller, if the novelists, essayists, and poets are not to be credited: "The French clergy preserved, what is not always preserved in England, an exterior decency of behaviour. One did not find among them poachers or fox-hunters, who, having spent the morning in scampering after hounds, dedicate the evening to the bottle, and reel from inebriety to the pulpit. Such advertisements were never seen in France as I have heard of in England: 'Wanted a curacy in a good sporting country, where the duty is light, and the neighbourhood convivial.'" ** A conscientious writer has pointed to the reverend Dr. Warner as an object of contemplation for "those who would hastily accuse Fielding of exaggeration in his portraitures

* "Tom Jones," book iv. c. 10.

† "Roderick Random," c. 9.

§ "Connoisseur," No. 105.

¶ "The Village."

‡ "Citizen of the World," No. lviii.

|| Knox's "Essays," 18.

** Arthur Young—"Travels in France," 1789, p. 543.

taken from the church." * Let us regard a few traits of this popular preacher from his own letters. He desires Selwyn to send him "the magazine, with the delicate amours of the noble lord, which must be very diverting." † He describes a dinner with two friends—"We have just parted in a tolerable state of insensibility to the ills of life." ‡ "I have been preaching this morning, and am going to dine—where?—in the afternoon. We shall bolt the door and—(but hush! softly! let me whisper it, for it is a violent secret, and I shall be blown to the devil if I blab, as in this house we are Noah and his precise family)—and play at cards." § The Reverend Dr. Warner is an unimpeachable witness.

The apathy of the Clergy at this period was as injurious as their indecorum. Their eloquence was of the tamest character. An accomplished foreigner thus describes their sermons: "The pulpit declamation is a most tedious monotony. The ministers have chosen it through respect for religion, which, as they affirm, proves, defends, and supports itself without having any occasion for the assistance of oratory. With regard to the truth of this assertion, I appeal to themselves, and to the progress which religion thus inculcated makes in England." || Dr. Campbell goes to the Temple Church, where the brother of Thurlow preached: "The discourse was the most meagre composition, and the delivery worse. He stood like Gulliver stuck in the marrow-bone, with the sermon, newspaper-like, in his hand, and without grace or emphasis he in slow cadence measured it forth." ¶ Goldsmith has hit upon the true cause of the dry, methodical, and unaffecting discourses of the English preachers, delivered with the most insipid calmness: "Men of real sense and understanding prefer a prudent mediocrity to a precarious popularity; and fearing to out-do their duty, leave it half done." ** He further says that the lower orders are neglected in exhortations from the pulpit—"they who want instruction most find least in our religious assemblies." The fear of being called Methodists was one of the causes that made too many of the clergy careless in their lives and indifferent in their vocation.

When Cowper denounced

"A priesthood, such as Baal's was of old,"

he tracked the "deep mischief" to its source. "The sage, called Discipline," had ceased to be revered in "colleges and halls;" he had declined into the vale of years; had fallen sick and died. Then "study languished, emulation slept, and virtue fled." The

* Forster—"Life of Goldsmith."

† "Selwyn," iii. 394.

‡ *Ibid.*, iv. 132.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 235.

|| Grosley—"Tour to London," vol. ii. p. 105.

¶ "Diary," p. 23.

** "Essays," No. 17.

schools became a scene of solemn farce; scrutiny went stone blind; gowns were mere masquerade.* Is this only the declamation of a poetical enthusiast, moping on the banks of the Ouse? A distinguished fellow of St. John's College, Oxford, a master-of-arts, describes the externals of that consecrated place—superb dining halls; painted chapels; a peculiar race in the streets; doctors and proctors in solemn procession, with velvet sleeves, scarlet gowns, and hoods black, red, and purple. He then tells us what all this parade ends in—the most absurd forms of examination for degrees, “in which the greatest dunce usually gets his *testimonium* signed with as much ease and credit as the finest genius,” in one stage of the process; and in another, when “the examiners and the candidates often converse on the last drinking bout, or read the newspaper, or a novel, or divert themselves as well as they can in any manner, till the clock strikes eleven, when all parties descend, and the *testimonium* is signed by the masters.” So much for the Bachelor's degree, which is attained after four years' term-keeping. For the degree of Master-of-arts three more years must be employed in trumpery formalities; and then, “after again taking oaths by wholesale, and paying the fees,” the academic issues into the world with an “undeniable passport to carry him through it with credit.”† “Accidental visitors to Oxford,” writes Knox, “are naturally led to conclude that here, at length, wisdom, science, learning, and whatever else is praiseworthy, for ever flourish and abound.” The Prussian clergyman, walking into Oxford at midnight, was introduced by a courteous pedestrian, who had overtaken him on the road, to an alehouse. “How great,” he says, “was my astonishment, when, on being shewn into a room, I saw several gentlemen in academic dress, sitting round a large table, each with his pot of beer before him.” He thought it extraordinary that at this unseasonable hour, he should suddenly find himself in a company of Oxonian clergy. The foreigner was kindly received. He told them stories of riots in German universities. “O, we are very unruly here, too,” said one of the gentlemen, as he took a huge draught of his beer, and smote the table with his fist. One “weakly and impiously attempted to be witty at the expense of scripture; and I had the good fortune to be able to convict him of his ignorance of its language and meaning.” As the morning drew near, after a carousal which stupefied the German, the gentleman who introduced him “suddenly exclaimed, ‘I must read prayers this morning at All Souls.’”‡ Cambridge was not behind Oxford in

* “The Task,” l. 2.

† Knox—Essay 77.

‡ Moritz—“Travels in England, in 1782.”

its capacity of qualifying its students as "gamesters, jockies, brothellers, impure." Wilberforce entered St. John's in 1776, at the age of seventeen. He tells us his experience: "I was introduced, on the very first night of my arrival, to as licentious a set of men as can well be conceived. They drank hard, and their conversation was even worse than their lives. I lived amongst them for some time, though I never relished their society; often, indeed, I was horror-struck at their conduct; and after the first year, I shook off in great measure my connection with them." He got into better society; he lived much among the Fellows of the College. "But those," he complains, "with whom I was intimate, did not act towards me the part of Christians, or even of honest men. Their object seemed to be, to make and keep me idle. If ever I appeared studious they would say to me, 'Why in the world should a man of your fortune trouble himself with fagging?'" * Wilberforce was one of the few who could "escape contagion, and emerge pure from so foul a pool."

It would be absurd to imagine that the professional class, and the trading class, were untainted amidst the corruptions of the time. "Profusion unrestrained" producing unmitigated selfishness, was not likely to decrease, during half a century of very rapidly increasing wealth, amongst those who had a more than common share of the national advantages. Public servants were as rapacious in 1783, as when, forty years before, Smollett carried his qualification for a surgeon's mate to the Navy Office, and found that he had not the slightest chance of an appointment, "without a present to the Secretary, with whom some of the Commissioners went snacks." † It was the system of corruption which gave the charge of a man-of-war to the brutal captain Oakum, who declared with terrible oaths that there should be no sick in his ship, while he had the command; and which chose for his successor, captain Whiffle, who came on board in a coat of pink-coloured silk, lined with white; his hair flowing upon his shoulders in ringlets; his blue meroquin shoes studded with diamond buckles—Whiffle, who languished on a sofa, his head supported by his valet-de-chambre, who from time to time applied a smelling-bottle to his nose. ‡ Such were the vermin of the navy, till Rodney taught even fribbles to fight, and Collingwood showed bullies how gentle manners and tenderness of heart could be combined with the most heroic courage. The Weazels and other reptiles of the army were gradually exchanged for such as went from the ball-room at Brussels to

* "Life of Wilberforce," vol. i. p. 10.

† "Roderick Random," chap. xviii.

‡ *Ibid.*, chap. xxxiv.

fight in silk stockings. Young men of fashion drank deep and swore hard; but if they saw service, and they had ample opportunities in Chatham's day, they might have some sense of religion upon the principle laid down by corporal Trim, that when a soldier "is fighting for his king, and for his own life and his honour too, he has the most reason to pray to God of any one in the whole world." *

The Medical Profession was so distracted by jealousies and rivalries between its different ranks and between individuals of the same rank, that, from Garth to Foote, the satirists have always a joke ready for the physician's pomp and the apothecary's rapacity. The Law was necessarily open to the ridicule which properly attached to the inflated harangues and absurd technicalities of the Courts—"injunctions, demurrers, sham-pleas, writs of error, rejoinders, sur-rejoinders, rebutters, sur-rebutters, replications, exceptions, essoigns, and imparlance."† Quackery was keeping pace with the progress of luxury. Litigation was encouraged by the multiplication of statutes, and by the general ignorance even of the educated, of the laws and constitution of their own country, "a species of knowledge in which the gentlemen of England have been more remarkably deficient than those of all Europe besides." ‡

The members of the Mercantile Class were, in London especially, accumulating wealth, and losing respectability. The citizen of the beginning of the century had become a hybrid of fashion before its close. After George III. had been ten years on the throne the traders began to desert the city. The capacious mansion in the narrow street was given up for the inconvenient house in the new-built square. It is curious to mark the changes in the fashionable estimate of locality. The citizen of ninety years ago is reproached for "the petty vanity of residing in the circle of fashion; to have descended from the first in the neighbourhood of the Exchange to be the last in Bloomsbury square." § The Essayist asks a question, which has not yet been more satisfactorily answered than he answers it:—"When the rich and respectable leave it, who are to fill its magistracies and its council? The lower orders of tradesmen, destitute of education and of liberal views, and thrust forward into office by nothing but their own pragmatism activity." The city had its evil reputation for gluttony and ignorance, which might be some excuse for the men of refinement and education deserting it. Dr. Campbell is taken to dine with a citizen. He says, "I'll do so no more, for there is no entertainment but meat and drink

* "Tristram Shandy."

† Blackstone, section i.

‡ Foot—"The Lame Lover."

§ Knox—Essay 8.

with that class of people."* When Johnson was told that the society of Twickenham chiefly consisted of opulent traders, retired from business, he declared that he never much liked that class of people; "for, sir, they have lost the civility of tradesmen, without acquiring the manners of gentlemen."† Johnson's contempt of trade was one of his prejudices. Boswell asked, "What is the reason we are angry at a trader's having opulence?" The answer was, "the reason is, we see no qualities in trade that should entitle a man to superiority." Reasonable men have ceased to be angry at a trader's having opulence, provided his wealth has proceeded from the true qualities of a tradesman, honesty, skill, perseverance, decision of character—qualities that in any position "should entitle a man to superiority." It is the pretence to be what they are not that has always made the traders ridiculous. Mr. Zachary Fungus learning to dance, and practising fencing, and keeping his riding-master waiting while he recites the speech which he has learnt from Mr. Gruel, "the great orationer who has published a book," by which Fungus hopes to rise in the state; ‡—this is the citizen to be despised, whether he be exhibited by Mr. Foote, or be labelled as "a snob" by a greater humorist.

Fielding, in "The Covent Garden Journal," has an amusing paper on the power of "the fourth estate," by which he means "the mob." Their insolence to passengers on the river, "whose dress entitles them to be of a different order from themselves;" their rudeness on the footpaths of the streets; the habits of carters and draymen "to exclude the other estates from the use of the common highways;" their abuse of women of fashion in the Parks of a Sunday evening—these are the crimes which an acute observer lays to their charge. To the justice of peace and the soldier, whom they hold in awe, he considers that it is "entirely owing that they have not long since rooted all the other orders out of the commonwealth."§ Foreigners agree in this species of censure. M. Grosley says that the porters, sailors, chairmen, and day-labourers who work in the streets, "are as insolent a rabble as can be met with in countries without law or police." Their rudeness to foreigners he especially dwells upon; and he gives an example. His servant had followed the crowd to Tyburn, to see three men hanged. Returning home through Oxford-road, he was attacked by several blackguards; and Jack Ketch joined in the sport. But two or three grenadiers, belonging to the French guards, who had de-

* "Diary," p. 75.

† Maxwell's "Collectanea," in Boswell. ‡ Foote—"The Commissary," act ii.

§ No 40, June 20, 1752.

serted, rescued their countryman. The man was frightened, and would not go out for a fortnight; but M. Grosley says that if he, being a stout fellow, had taken his coat off and boxed with the weakest among them, they would have carried him home in triumph. Grosley admits that the obliging readiness of the citizens and shopkeepers sufficiently consoles the foreigner for the insolence of the mob.* Nevertheless, he affirms that "even amongst those of the lowest rank, the people of London, though haughty and ungovernable, are in themselves good natured and humane." Opposed to the complaint of Fielding against the carters and draymen, the Frenchman maintains that their good nature appears in their great care to prevent the frays almost unavoidable, amidst the eternal passing of carriages in narrow streets; and in their tender treatment of children, and persons low of stature, in ceremonies which attract a crowd.† Moritz saw the proceedings at an election in Covent Garden: "What is called hanging-day arrived. There was also a parliamentary election. I could only see one of the two sights." There was no contest, and sir Cecil Wray was elected, to fill one vacant seat. "In the area before the hustings immense multitudes of people were assembled, of whom the greatest part seemed to be of the lowest order." The moment that the candidate began to speak, "even this rude rabble became all as quiet as the raging sea after a storm." Another gentleman spoke; and a gruff carter who stood near our foreigner exclaimed; "Upon my word that man speaks well." The enthusiasm of the Prussian is awakened; and it warms his heart to see "how in this happy country, the lowest and meanest member of society thus unequivocally testifies the interest which he takes in everything of a public nature,—how high and low, rich and poor, concur in declaring their feelings and their convictions that a carter, a common tar, or a scavenger, is still a man and an Englishman, and as such has his rights and privileges defined and known as exactly and as well as his king and his king's ministers."‡ Moritz, who was familiar with our literature, had probably the fine lines of Goldsmith in his mind:

" Fierce in their native hardness of soul,
True to imagined right above controul,
While even the peasant boasts these rights to scan,
And learns to venerate himself as man."

It must not be forgotten when we speak of the licentiousness of the lower orders in the period of which we are writing, that they were constantly stimulated by demagogues to abuse the liberty of

* "Observations on England," vol. i. p. 84.

† *Ibid.* p. 63.

‡ "Travels through England, in 1782."

which they were proud ; that whatever was brutal in their nature was not softened by any care for their education ; that the police of London was utterly inefficient ; and that the frequency of executions would have rendered them blood-thirsty, if, with all their curiosity to see men hanged (which low taste they partook in common with George Selwyn and others of rank), they had not had essentially a greater respect for human life than any other people in the world. A writer, who presents us many vivid but rather vague generalizations on the manners of that time, says, "The rabble of London, though to this day the most brutal and odious rabble in Europe, were never sanguinary."* This is somewhat hard upon the rabble of London, if we consider that they have not the advantage of those lessons of politeness enjoyed by every other rabble in Europe—that they are not tamed by a soldiery always ready to shoot them down without magistrate or riot act. "The English rabble," continues this historian, "are chiefly remarkable for mischief and cowardice. They destroy property, but they rarely attempt life." One who had a very considerable experience in the political power of mobs, was anxious that what he considered their courage should be kept alive by the humanizing lessons of the gallows. Romilly describes a dinner in 1785, at which he was present with John Wilkes and Mirabeau: "The conversation turned upon the English criminal law, its severity, and the frequency of public executions. Wilkes defended the system with much wit and good humour, but with very bad arguments. He thought that the happiest results followed from the severities of our penal law. It accustomed men to a contempt of death, though it never held out to them any cruel spectacle ; and he thought that much of the courage of Englishmen, and of their humanity too, might be traced to the nature of our capital punishments, and to their being so often exhibited to the people."† When the system came to an end, under which ninety-seven malefactors were executed in London in one year, and twenty were hanged on one morning, did the "cowardice" increase ; so that "a file of soldiers will, at any time, disperse the most formidable crowd ; and a few resolute individuals, armed with bludgeons, can generally beat them off."‡ The admirable metropolitan police of the present day has prevented any frequent opportunities of analyzing the composition of the qualities of the London rabble. Mischievous boys are generally more conspicuous than brutal men. The chairmen are gone, and so are the street porters. That large class who stand behind

* Massey—"History during reign of George III.," vol. ii. p. 85.

† "Memoirs of Sir Samuel Romilly," vol. i. p. 61, 3rd edit.

‡ Massey.

carriages in plush breeches and silk stockings, are no longer the most turbulent in the theatres; no longer have private riots of their own, of a character quite as formidable as those of the denizens of St. Giles's. A singular state of manners is presented in the following record of a scene which took place on the 11th of May, 1764. "A great disturbance was created at Ranelagh-house, by the coachmen, footmen, &c., belonging to such of the nobility and gentry as will not suffer their servants to take vails. They began by hissing their masters; they then broke all the lamps and outside windows with stones; and afterwards, putting out their flambeaux, pelted the company in a most audacious manner with brickbats, whereby several were greatly hurt, so as to render the use of swords necessary."* Can we have better evidence of the disorder of all society, in which the valet emulated the indecorum of his master, and the drunken mechanic copied the drunken lord.

The Police of London in the last ten years of George II., and through the remaining years of the century, was a system that combined the hateful and the ridiculous to an extent that requires some strong power of relying upon evidence to believe in. The character of the watchman may be found in every novel. A sober traveller sums up the qualifications of these protectors of life and property: "London has neither troops, patrols, nor any sort of regular watch; and it is guarded during the night only by old men chosen from the dregs of the people, who have no other arms but a lanthorn and a pole; who patrol the streets, crying the hour every time the clock strikes; who proclaim good or bad weather in the morning; who come to awake those who have any journey to perform; and whom it is customary with young rakes to beat and use ill, when they come rioting from the taverns where they have spent the night."† A curious example of the influence of routine upon public functionaries is given by Wraxall. He went out amidst the mob on the worst night of the riots of 1780, whilst the premises of Mr. Langdale, the distiller, were burning on Holborn Hill, and a frantic mob was raging in the street. "While we stood by the wall of St. Andrew's churchyard, a watchman, with his lanthorn in his hand, passed us, calling the hour as if in a time of profound tranquillity."‡ The police-officer of that day was called a "thief-taker,"—he was in no sense of the word a detective or a preventive functionary. He knew the thieves, and the thieves knew him. His business was to "let the matter ripen" when he had information of a house to be broken open or mail to be robbed. When he was

* "Annual Register," vol. vii.

† Grosley, vol. i. p. 48.

‡ "Historical Memoirs," vol. i. p. 329.

sure of a capital conviction, he took his man, and obtained forty pounds "blood-money." It was a thriving trade. "I remember," said Townsend, the Bow Street runner, "in 1783, when sergeant Adair was Recorder, there were forty hung at two executions."

The horrible state of the Prisons in 1738 has been already shown in some notice of a Report of a Parliamentary Committee.* We may trace in the writers of fiction how little the dominion of cruelty, neglect, and extortion had been diminished at the accession of George III. Fielding's Mr. Booth is committed by an ignorant justice to Bridewell, upon a charge of assaulting a watchman, when he had only interfered to prevent an outrage by two men of fortune, who bribed the constable to let them escape. When he goes to prison a number of persons gather round him in the yard, and demand "garnish." The keeper explained that it was customary for every new prisoner to treat the others with something to drink. The young man had no money; and the keeper quietly permitted the scoundrels to strip him of his clothes. All persons sent to Bridewell were treated alike, so far as the prison discipline was concerned. Three street robbers, certain to be hanged, were enjoying themselves over a bottle of wine and a pipe; the man without a shilling in his pocket, had the prison allowance of a penny loaf and a jug of water.† Felons and debtors were in some cases separated; but there was little distinction in the treatment of the burglar and the bankrupt. Those who could pay exorbitant fees had privileges and indulgences—a full meal and unlimited liquor. In 1773, John Howard, in his capacity of high Sheriff of Bedfordshire, had his eyes opened to the disgraceful condition of the prisons of England, and the enormities committed in them. Before 1775 he had personally inspected nearly every one of these abodes of vice made more wicked; of innocence corrupted; of human beings, whether innocent or guilty, subjected to filth, starvation, contagious disease, and the capricious temper of savage and mercenary gaolers. In 1777 he published his book "On Prisons." He awakened public attention to the evil; and the Legislature adopted some measures for its remedy—measures, however, founded upon no enlarged principles,—mere palliatives, that fitted a state of society in which expediency might suggest a few obvious changes, but where principle made no attempt to go to the root of one of the most difficult of social questions,—the mode of dealing with the criminal population. The system of the Hulks was commenced in 1776. In nineteen years 1999 convicts were ordered to be punished with hard labour on the Thames, and in Langston and Portsmouth har-

* *Ante*, vol. v. p. 436.

† "Amelia."

bours. It was something to have given fewer victims to the devouring maw of the gallows ; but it was more than ten years before these offerings to Moloch had been diminished. But the Hulks utterly failed in producing the reformation of offenders. " Most of them, instead of profiting by the punishment they have suffered, forgetting they were under sentence of death, and undismayed by the dangers they have escaped—immediately rush into the same course of depredation and warfare upon the public." * The system of transportation to New South Wales commenced in 1787.

The efforts of individuals to compensate for the neglect of the government, by associating benevolent persons in attempts to remedy social evils, were at this period very remarkable. The reform effected by Howard was the seed in good ground. But it was not always that energy such as that of Howard could be found in companionship with his practical sense ; or, at any rate, that the objects aimed at by philanthropy should be so little liable to misdirection, and so certain in their results, as his purification of the prison system. Thomas Coram, the master of a merchant vessel, had seen in the neighbourhood of Rotherhithe infants exposed in the streets—left to perish by their unnatural mothers. He laboured hard to establish a Foundling Hospital ; and in 1739 obtained a charter for that institution which now possesses enormous funds from subscriptions and from estates, but which had originally very inadequate means compared with the number of those who rang a bell at the gate of the hospital, left a child with a particular mark upon it, and waited its admission or rejection. In 1756, the governors obtained a parliamentary grant of 10,000*l.*, and during the subsequent fifteen years had received more than half a million of the public money, to distribute in a manner calculated to produce far greater evils than those which they sought to remedy. The wise legislators stipulated, when the grant was first made, that all children above the age of two months should be received. The age was afterwards limited to six months. A basket was hung at the gate, in which the deserted child was deposited. Purveyors of Foundlings started up in the country districts, who carried infants to London in panniers slung across a horse. Many died on their journey. In four years from 1756, children to the number of 14,934 were taken under the management of this institution, of which only 4400 lived to be apprenticed. Parliament then interfered, and declared " that the indiscriminate admission of all children under a certain age into the hospital had been attended with many evil consequences, and that it be discontinued." The

* Colquhoun—" Police of the Metropolis," p. 470, ed. 1800.

charity had offered a large premium for vice, and had been perfectly successful in the encouragement of what we now properly call "the great social evil." Another philanthropist, towards the close of the reign of George II., established two societies, which were incorporated in the subsequent reign. The one was "the Magdalen Asylum,"—the other "the Marine Society." To take distressed boys out of the streets, educate them for the seaman's life, and place them in the merchant service or the royal Navy, was an object of no doubtful good. Jonas Hanway, whose exertions mainly established these two charities, is stated to have been "the first man who ventured to walk the streets of London with an umbrella over his head."

Amidst a good deal of selfish indulgence in their own pleasures, about the middle of the eighteenth century, by the noble and the rich, there is abundant evidence that a feeling had been awakened of consideration for the miseries of the lowly and the indigent. Hospitals for the reception of the sick and the maimed were freely supported by voluntary contributions. The Westminster Hospital was the first of this character, having been instituted in 1719. St. George's Hospital dates from 1733; the London Hospital from 1740, in which year the Middlesex Hospital was also established; and the Small Pox Hospital was opened in 1746. But no benefit to society was greater than that produced by the partial extension of education to the humblest classes of the community. The old foundation-schools had, in too many instances, been wholly diverted from their original purpose of general instruction, to provide sinecures for clergymen, who pretended to instruct the few pupils to whom they could not refuse admission. Their funds were wasted and misappropriated till, in our own day, a man of extraordinary vigour tore down the cobwebbed screen that patronage and venality had raised up, to defraud the children of this land of their inheritance. What were called the Free Schools, or Charity Schools, dispensed reading and writing to select parties of boys and girls, marked out for the ridicule of their companions by a grotesque and antiquated costume. These boys were fortunate if they obtained a sufficient knowledge of arithmetic to serve behind a counter without a Ready Reckoner. Fielding has touched upon the state of popular instruction in his day, according to the experience of Joseph Andrews: "Joey told Mr. Adams that he had very early learnt to read and write, by the goodness of his father, who, though he had not interest enough to get him into a charity school, because a cousin of his father's landlord did not vote on the right side for a churchwarden in a borough town, yet had been himself

at the expense of sixpence a week for his learning." The extension of instruction to which we have referred was the work of Robert Raikes, the proprietor of the "Gloucester Journal." This excellent man was struck by the degraded state of the children in the suburbs of his city. On a Sunday their numbers were increased; and their filth and disorderly conduct more revolting. He procured a few women to teach some to read on the Sunday; he persuaded them to go to church with clean hands and face and combed hair; he gave them Testaments. Their self-respect was raised; from outcasts they became capable of honest industry. The good example was rapidly followed; and Sunday Schools were established all over the kingdom, after the successful experiment of 1781.

As we approach the period we have assigned as the limit to this general view of Manners, we find that there has been, in some degree, an awakening of society to a more decorous, and, we may therefore presume, to a more virtuous exhibition of character and conduct. Literature has been very materially purified. Scenes and expressions in writers of fiction, which were held to be natural and amusing in the middle of the century, were deemed gross and revolting towards its close. Whether these exceptionable passages were derived from the tone of the age—which is most probable; or were the oozings out of the impure thoughts of the writers, which we are unwilling to believe—it is certain that they have condemned Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne to an oblivion from which their great powers would otherwise have saved them. We see, also, that the miseries of poverty and the degradation of ignorance had stirred up some feeling of what was required for the mitigation of evils not absolutely associated with humble station. In high life, the example of the Court was working a gradual reformation. But there were influences more potent in operation to produce a more vital change than Literature or Fashion.

The observant Frenchman to whom we have several times referred, M. Grosley, says, of "the sect of the Methodists,"—"this establishment has borne all the persecutions that it could possibly apprehend in a country as much disposed to persecution as England is the reverse."* The light literature of forty years overflows with ridicule of Methodism. The preachers are pelted by the mob; the converts are held up to execration as fanatics or hypocrites. Yet Methodism held the ground it had gained. It had gone forth to utter the words of truth to men little above the beasts that perish, and it had brought them to regard themselves as akin to humanity. The time would come when its earnestness

* "Observations on England," vol. i. p. 356.

would awaken the Church itself from its somnolency, and the educated classes would not be ashamed to be religious. There was wild enthusiasm enough in some of the followers of Whitefield and Wesley; much self-seeking; zeal verging upon profaneness; moral conduct strangely opposed to pious profession. But these earnest men left a mark upon their time which can never be effaced. The obscure young students at Oxford, in 1736, who were first called "Sacramentarians," then "Bible Moths," and finally "Methodists," to whom the regular pulpits were closed, and who then went forth to preach in the fields—who separated from the Church more in form than in reality—produced a moral revolution in England which probably saved us from the fate of nations wholly abandoned to their own devices.

The individuality of opinion and conduct which is so characteristic of England—so different to the "all men alike" of France—led the two founders of Methodism into different paths. The principle of individuality originally isolated them from the torpid religion and the lax morality of the college life. It sent them to preach to the neglected poor wherever vice and ignorance most abounded, without much regard to the discipline of the Church of which they were members. But the characters of Whitefield and Wesley were in some respects very different. Whitefield was satisfied with rousing the sinful and the indifferent by his own fervid eloquence, without providing for the systematic continuance of his personal efforts. His preaching created a host of followers, who, branching off in their several localities, were content to be led by men without education. Starting up as teachers from the lowest ranks, such men, although too vain and presumptuous to see their own incompetence, were nevertheless better judges, in many cases, than the educated clergy, of the mode in which rude natures could be most effectually awakened to penitence for sin. Wesley, on the other hand, saw the danger of this indiscriminate admission of every fanatic to be a gospel-preacher; and he instituted and perfected by his incessant labours that remarkable organization known as Wesleyism. The exertions of these two men, each pursuing tracks not essentially diverging however separate, had produced effects in half a century of which their opponents could have formed no adequate estimate. The clergy, who preached and wrote against the excesses of coarse enthusiasts—the wits, who exhibited hypocrisy and credulity upon the stage, in the endeavour to laugh down the Methodists—could not wholly shut their eyes to the conviction that there was a real power at work which touched other natures than such as those of the Maw-

worms and Mrs. Coles. The power could not be despised which made floods of tears roll down the sooty cheeks of the colliers of Kingswood; and which, penetrating to Scotland, had called the lowest of the population of Glasgow to go forth to Cambuslang, and there, "at the foot of the brae near the kirk," hear the Word preached in the open fields, and surrender themselves to an irresistible influence, such as was wielded by the Puritans of old. To assist in "the extraordinary work of Cambuslang" Whitefield came, and saw thirty thousand persons assembled to receive the Sacrament. There was beheld, upon the largest scale, scenes that were familiar in England amongst the earliest converts to Methodism—shrieks, violent agitations of body, shaking and trembling, fainting and convulsions. These manifestations were, by one party in the Church of Scotland, ascribed to the delusions of Satan; by another party to the influence of the Holy Spirit; and by a third party, to natural causes, produced by sermons addressed "not to the understanding of the hearers, but to their imaginations and passions."* These early effects of the fervid preaching of the new sect passed away. But the gradual influence of a more earnest sense of religion was diffused through the whole community of Britain. The members of the Churches of England and Scotland ceased to ridicule even such extravagances as were seen at "the Cambuslang conversions." The separation between Establishment and Dissent became less marked by bitter hostility. The principle of individuality was not less strong; but it gradually put off the form of intolerance, for that honest rivalry in the attempt to do good which has, more than any other cause, enabled us to look back upon the morals and manners of the last century as a condition of society not likely to return.

* Sinclair—"Statistical Account of Scotland," vol. v.



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CHAPTER XXIII.

Retrospect of Indian affairs.—Hastings Governor-General.—Rohilla war.—New Council at Calcutta.—Hastings and the Council opposed to each other.—Nuncomar.—His execution.—Dissentions at Madras.—Mahratta war.—Capture of Gwalior.—Hyder Ali.—The Carnatic ravaged.—Hyder defeated by Coote.—Death of Hyder.—Succeeded by his son Tippoo Saib.—Benares.—Oude.—The Begums.—Committee of the Houses of Parliament on Indian Affairs.

IN June 1783, when the news arrived at Calcutta that the preliminaries of peace had been signed between Great Britain and France, the misfortunes that had at one time foreboded the downfall of the British power in India had been mainly overcome. The war with Tippoo Saib and his French auxiliaries was still maintained; although it was evident that the energy of Warren Hastings had succeeded in averting the danger in the East, which, not long before, appeared to threaten as calamitous results as those which had attended our arms in the West. Before we resume our narrative of civil affairs at home, it will be proper that we should take up the history of events in India, from the period of the appointment of Hasting as the first Governor-General.*

Previous to the nomination of Hastings to this high office by the Act of 1773, he had, in his capacity of Governor of Bengal, struck out a line of policy, in which we alternately admire his sagacity and blush, as his countrymen, for his unscrupulousness. In 1772, he was labouring, as an honest statesman, to repair as far as possible the miseries produced by the famine of 1770, and by judicious fiscal arrangements to overcome the consequent embarrassments in the collection of the revenue of the depopulated districts. He freed the country from bands of robbers, by appointing local officers to maintain authority. He secured the administration of justice, by instituting local courts of law. If he could have met, by just means, the unceasing demands of the Directors of the East India Company for lacs of rupees, he would not have resorted to those modes of gratifying the cupidity of his masters for which many apologies have been offered, but for which no adequate defence has ever been established. He was a faithful servant to the Company, not waiting for direct orders to commit injustice, but securing

* *Ante*, vol. vi. p. 154.

his own tenure of power by violating the pecuniary engagements which Clive had made, and by driving excellent bargains, of which the only defect was that they compromised the English honour. When Clive put an end to the war amongst the native princes, giving the greater part of Oude to the Vizier Sujah Dowlah, he reserved the districts of Corah and Allahabad for the Mogul, Shah Alum, and agreed to pay the fallen potentate twenty-six lacs of rupees annually. The successor of the great Mussulman conquerors of India was happy to have a certain revenue for his own luxurious gratifications, and he willingly executed a solemn deed, giving the English Company the sole administration of the provinces of Bengal, Orissa, and Bahar. Hastings, in 1773, had a plausible excuse for setting aside those arrangements with Shah Alum which were costly to the Company, or the violation of which would produce immediate advantages. The Mogul had become dependent upon the Mahrattas, and had been compelled to sign an edict to transfer to them Corah and Allahabad. Hastings promptly occupied those districts with English troops; and resolved to pay no more tribute to the shadow of the sovereignty of Hindustan. Shah Alum lost his annual lacs of rupees, which amounted to nearly three hundred thousand pounds; and the districts which were taken from him were sold to Sujah Dowlah, the Vizier of Oude, for half a million sterling. To manage these transactions Hastings paid a visit to the Vizier in his city of Benares; and there the two allies concluded another bargain, which brought more gold into the treasury of Leadenhall-street. It was agreed that an English army should be hired by Sujah Dowlah to effect the subjugation of the Rohillas—a race of Afghans, who were amongst the bravest and the most civilised of the various populations of Hindustan. With troops under the command of colonel Champion, the Rohilla country was invaded by the English in April, 1774, in concert with Sujah Dowlah and his soldiery. The English gained a victory. The forces of Oude looked on; and then applied themselves to devastate the fertile plains of Rohilcund, and to extirpate, as far as possible, the peaceful and industrious inhabitants. It was one of the charges of “high crimes and misdemeanours” against Warren Hastings, that he entered into a private engagement with the Nabob of Oude, “to furnish him, for a stipulated sum of money to be paid to the East India Company, with a body of troops for the declared purpose of thoroughly extirpating the nation of the Rohillas—a nation from whom the Company had never received, or pretended to receive or apprehend, any injury whatever.”

The Rohilla war was ended. The work of spoliation and mas-

sacre was going on under the declaration of the Governor-general that "he had no authority to control the conduct of the Vizier in the treatment of his subjects." The country, once a garden, without a spot of uncultivated ground, was reduced, by the brutal mode of carrying on the war, and by the subsequent misgovernment, to a state of utter decay and depopulation. At this period, October, 1774, three new members of the Council, and the judges of the Supreme Court, appointed under the Regulating Act of 1773, arrived at Calcutta. The principal objects of that Act were the reformation of the Court of Proprietors of the East India Company, and such a re-modelling of the Court of Directors as should secure an enforcement of their authority upon their servants abroad; the establishment of a Court of Justice capable of protecting the natives from the oppressions of British subjects; the formation of a General Council having authority over all the British settlements and who would furnish the ministers of the Crown with constant information concerning the whole of the Company's correspondence with India. The provisions of this Act were directed to the accomplishment of large and benevolent reforms; but they were found wholly inadequate for the protection of the natives, for the improvement of the country, or for the construction of a firm and united government. The three new members of the council, general Clavering, colonel Monson, and Mr. Francis, appear to have entered upon their duties with a concerted determination to oppose the measures of Hastings and of the other old servant of the Company, Mr. Barwell. The new Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, sir Elijah Impey, was a personal friend of the Governor-General. Hastings naturally looking with great disfavour upon those who were come apparently with the determination to wrest all power from his hands, by constituting a majority of the Council where he had only a casting vote. Without a day's delay they testified their abhorrence of the Rohilla war, by recalling the English troops. Sujah Dowlah having died, and his son having succeeded him as Vizier, they maintained that the treaties with Oude were at an end upon the father's death. They did some rash things which might be intended to remedy past evils, but which had the inevitable tendency of lowering the respect of the natives for that able administrator who had impressed them with a reverential fear. The natives saw, or believed they saw, that the power of Hastings was gone. Charges of corruption were made against him by his enemies, whether natives or Englishmen. An old enemy of Hastings was a Hindoo Brahmin, the Maharajah Nuncomar. He had been disappointed in his aspirations for the great and

lucrative office of chief minister of the province of Bengal; for Hastings had abolished the office, and had transferred its powers to the servants of the Company. The crafty Hindoo bided his time for revenge. He soon discovered who would be his natural ally against the Governor-General. He put into the hands of Francis a series of charges against Hastings, in which he was accused of setting offices to sale, and of receiving bribes to permit the escape of offenders. Francis brought the papers before the Council. Hastings contended that they had no right to inquire into charges against the Governor, especially into charges made by one so notoriously perjured and fraudulent as Nuncomar. Hastings and Barwell quitted the council-chamber; and the three remaining members called in Nuncomar, and allowed him to tell his story with new embellishments. Hastings instituted proceedings against the old Hindoo, and against others, upon a charge of conspiracy. But the fate of Nuncomar was decided upon a very different accusation. He was imprisoned at the suit of a native merchant, charged with having forged a bond five years before this period; for which alleged offence he had been brought to trial in the mayor's court at Calcutta, and had been dismissed on the interposition of Hastings. The Supreme Court, that had now entered upon its functions, with sir Elijah Impey as its head, had to take cognizance of such cases of lapsed justice. The apologists of the Governor-General and the Chief Justice maintain that it was in the ordinary course of events that Nuncomar should have been tried, and only a strict measure of justice that Nuncomar should have been hanged, at the precise period when he was truly dangerous to the power and influence of Hastings. Forgery, under the Common Law of England, was punished as a misdemeanour; and under the statute of Elizabeth was not treated as a capital offence. The law was made more severe as the commerce of the country became more extensive. But in Hindustan the crime, regarded as very venial, had never been dealt with capitally. Nuncomar was tried upon the severer English statute, although one of the judges associated with Impey pressed for his indictment under the earlier and milder enactment. He was tried by a jury of Englishmen, and was found guilty. He was sentenced to be hanged; and the power of reprieve which the Supreme Court possessed was not exercised. The Council had no power to interfere, although the majority remonstrated in the strongest terms against the entire proceedings. The execution of the old man, to whom the agents of the Company had once sued for favour and protection, to whom his countrymen looked up with awe as a Brahmin who was the very head

of Brahmins,—was inexorably resolved upon. He was carried in his palanquin to the common gallows, and he died with the most perfect composure. The punishment of Nuncomar put an end to all troubles and accusations against Hastings by native informers. The event, we are assured, was a mere coincidence with the attempts to shake the ascendancy of the Governor-General; and that his friend and schoolfellow, the Chief Justice, was a pure administrator of the law without respect of person.

The public quarrels, and the private immoralities, of Hastings and Francis occupy, for several years, the general narratives of Indian affairs. The adulterous intercourse of Francis with the wife of a Calcutta barrister, and the excessive fine imposed upon him by sir Elijah Impey; the very questionable relations of Hastings with Mrs. Imhoff, who afterwards became his wife, and whose reception at her Court by the rigid queen Charlotte was attributed by satirists to the influence of some of the plundered wealth of India—these are matters which, however entertaining they may be, are now of little historical importance. The Council of Calcutta, and its Supreme Court of Justice, were as discordant an administrative body as ever precipitated an empire into ruin. But Hastings had the sagacity, amidst all the rivalries which would have pulled down a man of less energetic will, to maintain his own power, and at the same time to look steadily at the aggrandizement of the British crown. Circumstances at home were favourable to him, although lord North, strongly disapproving the Rohilla war, was bent upon his recall. But the Governor-General could not be removed during the first five years of his administration, except by an address to the Crown by the Court of the East India Proprietors. The most strenuous exertions were made by the supporters of the ministry to obtain a vote against Hastings; but the proposition for the recall was finally negatived. The Governor-General had once authorized his friend colonel Maclean to tender his resignation, if his conduct should not be approved; and though he had retracted that authority, Maclean in 1776 did tender the resignation. About that time Hastings had acquired a temporary supremacy by the death of Monson. His casting vote enabled him to defeat the proposals of Clavering and Francis, and to carry his own views into effect. In June, 1777, a packet-ship arrived with the announcement that the Governor-General had resigned. Hastings denied that he had authorized any such act. Clavering and Francis claimed immediate authority. Hastings and Barwell maintained that the right of the Governor to obedience should be upheld until further information should arrive. An appeal to military force

would have unquestionably determined the victory for Governor Hastings, and not for King Francis, as the presumptuous ex-clerk of the Foreign Office was called. The Supreme Court prevented such a conflict, by deciding that the resignation of Hastings was invalid, and that Clavering had illegally assumed the power of Governor-General. Hastings then contended that Clavering had forfeited his seat in the Council, by his attempt at usurpation; but the Judges of the Supreme Court decided that the Governor-general had no power to remove any member of the Board. In two months after this contest Clavering died. A new member of the Council, Mr Wheler, arrived to fill up the vacancy caused by the death of colonel Monson; and now Hastings had a majority to support him. The same course of unworthy and dangerous rivalries prevailed in the subordinate Council of Madras, between lord Pigot and the members of his Board. He maintained that he was not bound by a majority against him; and upon their refusal to yield, ordered them to be suspended from their functions. They took a stronger step, and put the Governor under military arrest; for which violent act they were recalled home by a vote of the House of Commons; were tried in the Court of King's Bench; and were sentenced to pay a moderate fine, which lenient sentence they probably owed to a speech of Erskine, in mitigation of punishment. Lord Pigot was also recalled, but he had died during his period of imprisonment. When the five years had expired during which Hastings could not be removed by the government without the concurrence of the East India Company, he was reappointed. Lord North, in 1786, in a debate on the Rohilla war, the charge against Hastings being then under discussion, strongly expressed his disapprobation of the conduct of the Governor-General; but said that in 1778, when the French war commenced, he did not think that a fit time to make an alteration in the constitution of our government in India, and considering Mr. Hastings as a man of abilities he continued him in his government.*

In the spring of 1778 the French government had openly made a common cause with the North American colonies, and war between England and France was inevitable. In the previous year a French agent had been negotiating with the Peshwa of the Mahrattas, at his seat of vice-royalty at Poonah, and an alliance dangerous to the British interests was likely to be formed. Hastings was for immediate war; and although two of the Council were opposed to him, an army was sent to the Peshwa's country, with instructions to forward the claims of Ragoba, a pretender to

* "Parliamentary History," vol. xxvi. p. 46.

the dignity of Peshwa. It was one of the charges against Hastings, that on the 22nd of June, 1778, he made the following declaration in council: "If it be really true that the British arms and influence have suffered so severe a check in the Western world, it is more incumbent on those who are charged with the interests of Great Britain in the East, to exert themselves for the retrieval of the national loss." Hastings alluded to the surrender of Burgoyne at Saratoga. In a few weeks arrived the intelligence of hostilities with France. The French settlement of Chandernagore was immediately captured; Pondicherry was invested, and was surrendered after some resistance; and the Mahratta expedition was persevered in. Its results were very unfortunate. The small army under colonel Egerton that had approached Poonah was surrounded by bodies of hostile cavalry; and the only chance of safety was a convention, by which it was agreed that the Mahrattas should recover what the British had gained from them since 1756. Hastings persevered; and other expeditions were more successful. General Goddard took the fort of Ahmedabad by storm, and the city of Bassein by siege. Captain Popham reduced the city of Lahar; and took by escalade the hill fortress of Gwalior, deemed impregnable. The government at home, on the first outbreak of the war with France, had sent sir Eyre Coote to be the commander of the forces in India, with a seat in the Council. There had been a partial reconciliation in that body between the discordant parties of Hastings and Francis. But the animosities were only smothered. A duel was fought between the two rivals, in which Francis was shot; and upon his recovery he resigned his office, and returned to England. There were other fierce contests between the wielders of the political and the judicial power. Hastings and Impey were now bitter opponents. These feuds have ceased to command the interest which was once attached to them. Events of more real importance were now to call forth all the resources of the boldness and foresight of the Governor-General. The abilities of Hastings were exhibited in connection with a policy which did not shrink from employing means to ensure success which no amount of success can justify. However we may admire in him the great qualities which saved the British authority in the East from a danger as formidable as that which overthrew our power in the West, we cannot lament that his triumphs did not prevent him being accused as an offender against the rights of humanity, and that years of bitter anxiety and loss of fortune were the penalties he paid for his oppressions.

Hyder Ali, the sovereign of the great kingdom of the Mysore,
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had been at peace with the British since he concluded a treaty with the Council of Madras in 1769. This extraordinary ruler was now far advanced in years, but his energy was undiminished. It was one of the Articles of Charge against Hastings that his intrigues against the Peshwa of the Mahrattas had produced, amongst the chief princes and states of India, a general distrust and suspicion of the ambitious designs and treacherous principles of the British government. It was alleged that the two principal Hindoo powers—the Peshwa, and the Rajah of Berar—and the two principal Mohammedan powers—Hyder Ali and the Nizam of the Deccan—renouncing all former enmities against each other, united in a common confederacy against the English. In 1780 Hyder Ali assembled an army computed to consist of ninety thousand men. These forces had been partly disciplined by French officers. He had a more personal quarrel to avenge than his dread of the extension of the English power. The Council of Madras, under Sir Thomas Rumbold, had given especial offence to Hyder Ali. His rival in the Carnatic, the nabob of Arcot, was surrounded by English, who were his creditors, and who are accused of having carried on a continued plot in the divan, for the destruction of Hyder Ali.* The revenge of the great chief of Mysore has been described in language which makes the soberer colouring of history look pale and ineffective. “Having terminated his disputes with every enemy, and with every rival, who buried their mutual animosities in their common detestation against the creditors of the nabob of Arcot, he drew from every quarter whatever a savage ferocity could add to his new rudiments in the arts of destruction ; and compounding all the materials of fury, havoc, and desolation, into one black cloud, he hung for a while on the declivities of the mountains. Whilst the authors of all these evils were idly and stupidly gazing on this menacing meteor, which blackened all their horizon, it suddenly burst, and poured down the whole of its contents on the plains of the Carnatic. Then ensued a scene of woe, the like of which no eye had seen, no heart conceived, and which no tongue can adequately tell. All the horrors of war before known or heard of were mercy to that new havoc. A storm of universal fire blasted every field, consumed every house, destroyed every temple. The miserable inhabitants flying from their flaming villages, in part were slaughtered ; others, without regard to sex, to age, to the respect of rank, or sacredness of function—fathers torn from children, husbands from wives—enveloped in a whirlwind of cavalry, and amidst the goading spears of drivers, and the trampling of pursuing horses, were swept

* Burke—“Speech on the Nabob of Arcot’s debts.”

into captivity, in an unknown and hostile land. Those who were able to evade this tempest fled to the walled cities. But escaping from fire, sword, and exile, they fell into the jaws of famine." *

The terrified inhabitants of Madras could trace the progress of the ruthless invader as columns of smoke rose from the burning villages. The danger was approaching to the very walls of the Settlement. A force of three thousand men under colonel Baillie had been cut to pieces by Hyder. Sir Hector Munro, with five thousand men, retreated towards Mount St. Thomas. When the evil tidings reached Hastings he at once adopted his course of action. He abandoned the Mahratta war, and proposed that a treaty of peace and alliance should be concluded. Sir Eyre Coote proceeded with every man that could be shipped from Bengal, to take the command at Madras. Hyder Ali was alarmed when Coote took the field in January, 1781; and he immediately raised the siege of Wondewash, and the siege of Vellore. At length, on the 1st of July, the English commander, having only a force of nine thousand men to oppose to Hyder's enormous army, brought him to action at Porto Nono, and obtained a signal victory. Another battle, on the 27th of August, was not so decisive. Peace was not concluded with the Mahrattas till early in 1782; and the continued war with Mysore and with Poonah involved so great a cost, that Hastings had to look to extraordinary resources, to enable him to carry on this struggle against the most dangerous enemy that had yet assailed the British power. He had to repeat the policy of 1773; when he violated a solemn compact with the mogul, and let out his troops to the nabob of Oude for the enslavement of the Rohillas, with the sole object of replenishing his exhausted treasury.

The rajah of Benares, Cheyte Sing, had become a tributary to the English, the nabob of Oude having surrendered his rights to them in 1774. Cheyte Sing had regularly transmitted to Calcutta his tribute of a settled sum. Hastings demanded extraordinary aid from this Hindoo prince; and at the beginning of the Mahratta war, in 1778, had compelled him to make a contribution of five lacs of rupees (50,000*l.*) for the maintenance of three battalions of Sepoys. The Governor-General demanded that a similar contribution should be made in 1779; and again in 1780. Cheyte Sing endeavoured to propitiate his taskmaster by a present of two lacs of rupees. Hastings concealed the transaction from the Council at Bengal, and from the Directors. But after some delay, he handed over the money to the Accountant-General and insisted upon the contribu-

* Burke—"Speech on the Nabob of Arcot's debts."

tion of five lacs from Cheyte Sing, with a fine of an additional lac for neglect of payment. Hastings had evidently determined by excessive demands to drive the unhappy rajah into resistance, which would have ended in the confiscation of his possessions. To accomplish his purpose, the Governor-General proceeded to Benares; required a contribution of half-a-million sterling; and although the rajah expressed the most abject devotion, placed him under arrest. But now the despotic Englishman had to encounter a power of which he made little account. The people of Benares had been mildly governed. The rajah was popular. The religious and national feelings of the Hindoo population were roused by this outrage upon their native prince. The streets of the great Brahminical city were filled by an angry multitude. The sepöys who had been appointed to arrest and guard Cheyte Sing were butchered; and the prince escaped from his palace-prison. Hastings had to barricade the house in which he had taken up his residence; and, finally, to leave the city by night, with a small band, amidst the hootings of the populace. The rajah at first made offers of submission, to which Hastings did not vouchsafe a reply; but Cheyte Sing, having been followed by a formidable body of insurgents, was able to make a stand with forty thousand undisciplined men. Popham, the victor of Gwalior, was ready to attack the rajah, who was utterly routed, driven from his states, and finally deposed.

Hastings was disappointed in the amount of treasure which he found, when the fortress of Bidgegur, which held the rajah's wealth, was surrendered to Popham; and the quarter of a million that was taken was divided as prize-money by the army. He had another booty in view. Asaph ul Dowlah, the nabob and vizier of Oude, had obtained from the British government a brigade to defend him against the aggressions of his neighbours. The weak and depraved prince had thus virtually become a vassal of the Company. Hastings required heavy payment for his military aid. The nabob wanted money himself. The grandmother and mother of Asaph ul Dowlah, called the begums of Oude, were reputed to be possessed of enormous treasure, which they kept in their palace of Fyzabad. The nabob and the Governor-General met in the fortress of Chunar; and there it was consented to by Asaph ul Dowlah that the begums should be stripped of the domains which they retained by his father's bequest and his own grants, and that their treasure should go to the English in liquidation of the arrears which Hastings demanded. A solemn treaty was entered into; but when the weak prince was no longer under the immediate dominion of the stern

will of the Governor-General, he relented in his meditated spoliation of his parents. Hastings sent the most peremptory orders to the English resident at Lucknow, Mr. Hamilton, to carry out the treaty, even if force were necessary. If the resident hesitated, Hastings would come himself, to take the work out of feebler hands. The gates of the palace of Fyzabad were forced by the Company's troops. The aged princesses were confined to their own apartments, it being alleged that they had been concerned in exciting the insurrection at Benares. Sir Elijah Impey hurried to Lucknow to receive depositions against the begums, and then hurried back to Calcutta. The begums would not part with their treasure, though imprisoned, and dreading personal violence. An atrocity, which requires not the eloquence of Burke or Sheridan to rouse the indignation of every man jealous of his country's honour, was perpetrated upon the two eunuchs who presided over the household of Sujah ul Dowlah's widow. Through their persecution the treasure was to be extorted from the begums. They were put in irons; they were half-starved; they were ordered to be debarred from all food till they yielded. The English resident, Nathaniel Middleton, signed this cruel order. The old men agreed to produce the sum that was then required. But the whole demand was not satisfied. They were removed to Lucknow. The British resident there incurred the disgrace of issuing this order to a British officer: "Sir, the nabob having determined to inflict corporal punishment upon the prisoners under your guard, this is to desire that his officers, when they shall come, may have free access to the prisoners, and be permitted to do with them as they shall think proper." The eunuchs were imprisoned till, after months of terror, the begums had surrendered twelve hundred thousand pounds; and Hastings was content.

The case of the rajah of Benares, and the case of the begums, furnished the most exciting materials for that eloquence which determined the impeachment of Hastings; and which, during the first year of that procrastinated trial, attracted eager crowds to Westminster Hall, to listen to the greatest masters of oratory of that age—inferior probably to none of any age. From 1788 to 1795, was this memorable trial carried on. Amidst the storm of invective which denounced him as a monster of cruelty and rapacity, Hastings was sustained by the proud consciousness that he had rendered eminent service to his country. In his Address upon his defence he said, and said truly, "To the Commons of England, in whose name I am arraigned for desolating the provinces of their dominion in India, I dare to reply that they are—and their repre-

sentatives annually persist in telling them so—the most flourishing of all the States of India. It was I who made them so. The valour of others acquired—I enlarged and give consistency to—the dominion which you hold there. I preserved it.” With the treasures which he extorted from rajahs and begums he carried on the war in the Carnatic till the death of Hyder Ali in 1782; and finally concluded an honourable peace with Hyder’s son and successor, Tippoo, in 1783. His administration ceased in the spring of 1785; when a new system for the government of India was established, after a parliamentary contest of unexampled interest and momentous results.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Coalition of Lord North and Mr. Fox.—Pitt's second Reform Bill.—Affairs of India.—Fox brings forward his India Bill.—The Bill carried in the House of Commons—Rejected in the House of Lords.—The Coalition dismissed from office.—Pitt the head of the government.—His struggle against a majority of the Commons—His final triumph.—Parliament dissolved.—Results of the elections.—The Westminster election.—Pitt's financial measures.—Commercial intercourse between Great Britain and Ireland.—His third Reform Bill.—Disputes between Holland and Austria.—Pitt's Sinking-Fund.—Commercial Treaty with France.—Consolidation of Taxes.—War with France averted.—The prince of Wales's debts.—Mrs. Fitzherbert.—The king becomes insane.—Parliamentary conflict on the Regency Bill.—The king's Recovery.

THE Coalition of the party headed by lord North, and of the party headed by Mr. Fox, had succeeded in compelling lord Shelburne and Mr. Pitt to resign; but it was not without difficulty that the coalesced chiefs could induce the king to admit them to power. After a considerable delay, the duke of Portland became First Lord of the Treasury, and Fox and North were appointed Secretaries of States. The repugnance of the king to this extraordinary union of two political rivals—which, securing a majority in the House of Commons, forced upon him as the real prime minister, a man whom he disliked with an intensity approaching to hatred—was more than tolerated by the majority of the nation. The Coalition was odious to all men not bound by the trammels of party. Fox and North received the seals on the 2nd of April, 1783. The acceptance of place by Fox rendered his re-election for Westminster necessary; and Romilly writes—"It is almost a general wish that some man of character and credit may be opposed to him as a candidate." He was re-elected, because no candidate was found; "but the populace received him with hisses, and every other mark of displeasure."*

Pitt was now in opposition. He had in vain declared "a just and lawful impediment" to the "ill-omened and unnatural marriage," forbidding the banns "in the name of the public weal." The ministry were strong in their majorities. Pitt vainly opposed the conditions of the loan which they had raised upon very disadvantageous terms. On the 7th of May he, a second time, brought forward the question of Parliamentary Reform. He proposed that

* "Memoirs of Sir Samuel Romilly"—Letter to Roget.

when the gross corruption of the majority of voters in any borough was proved before a Committee of the Commons, the borough should be disfranchised; and that a large addition of knights of the shire, and of members for the metropolis, should be made to the representative body. But Pitt openly declared against the practicability of a perfectly equal representation, and held that those places known by the popular appellation of rotten boroughs, were to be regarded in the light of deformities which in some degree disfigured the fabric of the constitution, but which he feared could not be removed without endangering the whole pile. Fox earnestly defended the proposition: North opposed it. Pitt's resolutions were rejected by a majority of 144. The young reformer was more successful in carrying through the House of Commons a bill for preventing abuses in the public offices, the chief object of which was to abolish an odious system of perquisites and percentages. In the House of lords the adherents of the ministry threw out the bill. The Session came to a close on the 19th of July.

The condition of India had for some time occupied the serious attention of British statesmen. Burke and Dundas had especially devoted their most earnest labours to unravel the complicated web of Indian policy, and to devise some remedy for the abuses which from time to time were brought to light. At the close of the Session of July, 1782, the king, speaking the words of his minister, lord Shelburne, congratulated Parliament upon the diligence and ardour with which it had entered upon the consideration of the British interests in the East Indies: "To protect the persons and fortunes of millions in those distant regions, and to combine our prosperity with their happiness, are objects which amply repay the utmost labour and exertion." At the opening of the Session in December of the same year, the king, said: "The regulation of a vast territory in Asia opens a large field for your wisdom, prudence, and foresight. I trust that you will be able to frame some fundamental laws which may make their connection with Great Britain a blessing to India." This was imperial language, befitting a great nation—language pointing to far higher objects than the gains of a trading company, or the acquisition of extended territory. When the Shelburne ministry came to an end, it was imperative upon the Coalition to carry out those large views in a substantial proposal of their own. To Burke, especially, it was a labour of love to analyze the vast mass of facts that had been gathered from various sources on the affairs of India. In June, 1783, the Ninth Report and the Eleventh Report of the Select Committee were

presented to the House of Commons. In those remarkable documents, drawn up by Burke, we have the clearest details of the state of the administration of justice in the provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, and the largest views for the solution of the great problem submitted to the Committee, "how the British possessions in the East Indies may be held and governed with the greatest security and advantage to this country; and by what means the happiness of the native inhabitants, may be best promoted." Such were the preparations for a comprehensive measure for the future government of India.

The Session of Parliament was opened on the 11th of November. The prince of Wales, previous to the arrival of the king, had been introduced to the House of Peers, with great ceremony, and was conducted to his chair of state on the right hand of the throne.* Carlton House had been assigned to him as a residence. The question of India was the most important topic of the king's speech: "The situation of the East India Company will require the utmost exertions of your wisdom, to maintain and improve the valuable advantages derived from our Indian possessions, and to promote and secure the happiness of the native inhabitants of those provinces." On the 18th of November Mr. Fox brought forward his India Bill. The government had a commanding majority in the House of Commons, and a working majority in the House of Lords. The dislike of the king to his ministers had not abated during their eight months' tenure of office; their unpopularity had not materially diminished. One false move would rouse the prejudices of the king into obstinate hostility, and carry the people with the king in direct opposition to the votes of their representatives. Such a danger was involved in the India Bill. The necessity for a decisive change in the administration of Indian affairs could not be disputed. The mode in which the change was proposed to be affected raised up a storm of indignation against the authors of the measure: its opponents did not stop to consider the real point at issue—the necessity of promoting the welfare of millions committed to our rule,—but saw in the proposed enactments nothing beyond a desire in the ministry to grasp at a vast source of power and patronage, which would equally endanger the prerogative of the crown and the liberties of the people. In this view there was unquestionably much of exaggerated alarm, produced by the ordi-

* The costume of the prince on this occasion may provoke a smile: "His Royal Highness was dressed in a black velvet, most richly embroidered with gold and pink spangles, and lined with pink satin. His shoes had pink heels; his hair was dressed much out at the sides, and very full frizzed, with two very small curls at the bottom."

nary artifices of political rivalry. Mr. Fox proposed that the authority of the East India Company should be transferred to Commissioners to be named by Parliament, and not removeable at the pleasure of the Crown. "His plan," he said, "was to establish a Board to consist of seven persons, who should be invested with full power to appoint and displace officers in India, and under whose control the whole government of that country should be placed." There were to be eight assistants to this Board, who should have charge of the commercial concerns of the Company, but subject to the control of the other seven. The Board was to be held in England; it was to be established for three or five years, to try the experiment. If experience proved the utility of the Board, then the king was to have the future nomination of its members.

The principle of Mr. Fox's India Bill was resisted upon its first introduction to parliament. Mr. Pitt declared his opinion that the whole of the proposed system was nothing more on one side than absolute despotism, and on the other side the most gross corruption. Mr. Jenkinson described the proposed commission as the setting up within the realm of a species of executive government independent of the crown. Upon the first reading of the principal Bill, Mr. John Scott, who, as lord Eldon, filled so important a place in the politics of his time, spoke temperately against a hurried decision upon so important a question. This was his maiden speech; and on that occasion Erskine also spoke for the first time in the House, in advocacy of the measure. Previous to the second reading of the Bill, the corporation of London, in common-council assembled, adopted a petition to the House of Commons that the Bill might not pass into law, setting forth that a measure "which directs a seizure and confiscation of powers, privileges, and property, granted by charter, secured and confirmed by various acts of parliament, hath exceedingly alarmed the petitioners, and raised their fears and apprehensions at so unconstitutional a measure." The example of the city was followed by many other corporations. Against the ministry all the light artillery of squib and caricature was used unsparingly. There was a famous caricature by James Sayer—"Carlo Khan's triumphal entry into Leadenhall Street,"—in which Fox is represented riding on an elephant, whose face is that of lord North, which elephant is led to the door of the India House by Burke, blowing a trumpet.* Fox himself ascribed some loss of popularity to this production, at a time when this species of humour was treated seriously in the

* A copy of the print is given in Wright's "England under the House of Hanover," vol. ii. p. 83.

conflicts of party. The eloquent minister felt the difficulty of his position; but he expressed himself privately with that manliness which marked his public speeches: "I am not at all ignorant of the political danger which I run by this bold measure. But whether I succeed or no, I shall always be glad that I attempted, because I know that I have done no more than I was bound to do in risking my power and that of my friends when the happiness of so many millions is at stake." * Fox triumphed in the House of Commons by large majorities. The second reading of his Bills was carried by a majority of 114; and on the 9th of December they were presented by the minister and a numerous body of members at the bar of the House of Lords.

On the day when the Coalition ministry entered office, the king wrote to earl Temple, then Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, to express his hope that many months would not elapse before "the Grenvilles, the Pitts, and other men of character" would relieve him from a thralldom to which he had been compelled to submit.† The opportunity which the king so ardently desired did not come till the India Bill had provoked a manifestation of popular opinion which might enable the crown to defy a majority of the House of Commons. It was a dangerous experiment. The nobleman to whom the king had confided his sorrows in April was ready in December not only to whisper to the peers, but confidently to state that whoever voted for the India Bill would be considered by the king as his enemy. The effect upon all those who desired to live only in the sunshine of royal favour was instantaneous. "The bishops waver, and the thanes fly from us," writes Fitzpatrick. He adds, "the public is full of alarm and astonishment at the treachery as well as the imprudence of this unconstitutional interference. Nobody guesses what will be the consequence of a conduct that is generally compared to that of Charles the First in 1641."‡ The India Bills were rejected in the Upper House on the 17th of December, by a majority of ninety-five to seventy-six. On the 18th, at midnight, a message was sent by the king to lord North and Mr. Fox, commanding them to give up their seals of office by their under-secretaries, as a personal interview would be disagreeable to his majesty. When the result of what Fox described as treachery on the part of the king, and meanness on the part of his friends, made it clear that his official power was at an end, he wrote, "we are so strong, that nobody can un-

* "Correspondence of Fox," vol. ii. p. 219.

† "Court and Cabinets of George III." vol. i. p. 219.

‡ "Correspondence of Fox." vol. ii. p. 220.

dertake without madness; and if they do, I think we shall destroy them almost as soon as they are formed." * On the 19th Pitt was appointed First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer. Earl Temple, who had received the seals of State, was for the immediate dissolution of parliament. Pitt was against this, and Temple resigned on the 22nd, leaving the young prime minister to sustain, almost alone, the most severe conflict for power recorded in the annals of parliament.

The anxiety which Mr. Pitt endured at the period of his extraordinary elevation, in his twenty-fifth year, to the great office which few statesmen had reached except through various stages of political experience, has been described by his former tutor, George Pretyman, who had become his private secretary. Lord Temple's resignation, he says, was determined upon the evening of the 21st. "When I went into Mr. Pitt's bedroom the next morning, he told me that he had not had a moment's sleep. He expressed great uneasiness at the state of public affairs; at the same time declaring his fixed resolution not to abandon the situation he had undertaken, but to make the best stand in his power, though very doubtful of the result." † In forming his administration Pitt had scarcely a statesman of any reputation to support him, with the exception of Thurlow, as Chancellor, and Dundas, who was not of the cabinet. His father's friend, Camden, stood by him in the House of Lords, although not originally forming one of the ministry. Pitt had almost wholly to depend upon his own ability and courage to sustain the attack he had to expect from a large majority of the House of Commons, headed by Fox, Burke, North, and Sheridan. His pretensions appeared so absurd to the great party by whom he would be opposed, that when the writ for Appleby was moved for, a burst of derisive laughter issued from the crowded opposition benches. The real parliamentary battle did not begin till after the Christmas holidays. During the recess the great sinecure of the Clerkship of the Pells became at the disposal of the First Lord of the Treasury. Without any compromise of character Pitt might have taken the place himself. He gave this office to colonel Barré, upon the condition that he should resign the pension he had received from the Rockingham administration. The nation knew that Pitt was very poor. They now knew that his ambition was of a nobler kind than was ordinarily shown by those who chose politics as their vocation. His disin-

* "Correspondence of Fox," vol. ii. p. 221.

† Tomline—"Life of Pitt," vol. i. p. 233, 4th edit. (This prelate changed his name to Tomline in 1803.)

terestedness won him the public esteem, even whilst the people looked with little confidence upon his ability to maintain his perilous position. Had he dissolved parliament at the moment of his elevation, men's minds would have been greatly divided as to the fitness of an ambitious young man, however eminent his ability, to take the chief direction of the momentous affairs of a nation that required no common wisdom to repair her exhausted finances, and whose foreign relations might be compromised by the rashness of inexperience. Pitt determined that when he re-entered the House of Commons after the recess, the nation should at least comprehend the courage with which he could resist an adverse majority.

On the 12th of January, 1784, Pitt appeared in the House of Commons as the head of the government. Violent were the debates on points of form and questions of principle. The minister was beaten upon two divisions, and five adverse motions were carried against him, that night. The king wrote to him the next day, "I am ready to take any step that may be proposed to oppose this faction, and to struggle to the last period of my life." It was well that the king had found a minister whose prudence was equal to his courage. Regardless of his defeat, Pitt, on the 14th of January, brought forward his own plan for the government and management of the affairs of the East India Company. His Bill was read a first time. In a committee of the whole House on the State of the Nation, it was moved that "the continuance of the present ministers in trusts of the highest importance and responsibility is contrary to constitutional principles, and injurious to the interests of his majesty and his people." The speech of Mr. Dundas opposed this motion by an argument difficult to controvert. He assumed that the Resolution was in the nature and spirit of an Address to the king, to appoint a new set of ministers, and that his majesty would thus reason with himself upon such an Address: "You send me back the ministers I have just chosen; Have I not then the right to choose my ministers? Certainly, yes, you say. But what crimes have they committed? What is it they have so soon perpetrated? Certainly, not one act of their administration is yet passed. Are they, therefore, without the confidence of the House of Commons? Are they men so unpopular, so incapable, so insufficient, that you will not bear with them, even for a moment? Is the minister who devotes himself to the House of Commons particularly, so unpopular and so incapable? I had chosen him, I had singled him out, as a man of talents the most astonishing, of integrity the most uncorrupt, of a reputation the most

extraordinary. I had fondly imagined him the favourite of the House of Commons. I had been taught to fancy that in celebrating his name all my people joined in one anthem of praise." The Resolution was carried by a majority of twenty-one. An adjournment took place for a few days; but still no resignation. On the 23rd of January, Mr. Pitt's India Bill was thrown out; and Mr. Fox reproduced his own Bill. The minister was then goaded by many speakers to declare whether he contemplated a dissolution of parliament. He resolutely persisted in silence upon that point, though he indignantly repelled some harsh language towards him which had been used by general Conway. Fox at length moved an adjournment to the next day, Saturday, when he hoped members would attend, that proper measures might be taken to vindicate the honour and assert the privileges of the House. It was the general expectation that Parliament would be dissolved. Mr. Powys put a distinct question to the minister "whether that House might expect to be in existence, and to meet again on Monday next?" Pitt, after remaining for some time silent, at length said, that he had no intention by any advice he should give, to prevent the meeting of the House on that day. The contest between the two parties was carried on, in various shapes, till the 8th of March. Attempts were made to form a union between the leading members of the late government and those of the present; but Pitt steadily refused to resign as the preliminary condition of such a negotiation. Fox threatened the most stringent measures to compel obedience to the votes of the House of Commons. In an early stage of the contest, Pitt, at a meeting of his friends, said, "What am I to do if they stop the supplies?" Lord Mahon answered, "they will not stop them; it is the very thing which they will not venture to do."* The supplies were not stopped. At every successive trial of strength, the numbers of the opposition became reduced. On the 18th of February, Pitt informed the House that his majesty, after a full consideration of the various resolutions that had been passed, had not thought proper to dismiss his ministers, nor had the ministers resigned. Fox said that the House of Commons had never before received from a prince of the Brunswick line such a flat and peremptory negative to their sentiments and wishes. Under such circumstances he wished the House to pause, and to waive, for a very short time, the question of supplies, which stood for that day. The question of adjournment was carried by a majority only of twelve. Another motion which contemplated the dismissal of ministers was carried by a larger majority. An

* Wilberforce—"Diary," December 23.

Address to the king was resolved on by a majority of twenty-one. The king in his answer said that he was desirous that public affairs should be conducted by a firm and extended administration; but that he did not conceive that object would be advanced by the dismissal of those at present in his service. On the 27th of February, a motion of adjournment, with a view to postpone the consideration of the navy estimates, was carried by a majority of seven. On the 28th a deputation of the Corporation of London went in procession to Mr. Pitt's house, to communicate to him the resolution of the Common Council to present him with the freedom of the city. On that day he had been invited to dine with the Grocers' Company; and he proceeded, accompanied by the city deputation, to Grocers' Hall, where Wilkes, the chamberlain of the city, addressed him in a complimentary harangue, which thus concluded: "Your noble father, sir, annihilated party; and I hope you will, in the end, bear down and conquer the hydra of faction, which now rears its hundred heads against you. I remember his saying, that, for the good of the people, he dared to look the proudest connections of this country in the face. I trust that the same spirit animates his son; and, as he has the same support of the crown and the people, I am firmly persuaded that the same success will follow." At night Fleet Street and the Strand were illuminated, and the populace drew the minister home in his carriage. Another Address to the king, moved by Fox, was carried on the 1st of March, by a majority of twelve. The king's answer was in exactly the same tone as his previous one. At length, on 8th of March, an elaborate remonstrance, in the form of an Address to his majesty, which was drawn up by Burke, and moved by Fox, was carried by a majority only of one. The battle was over. The victory remained with Pitt. The Mutiny Bill was passed; the supplies were voted; and on the 24th of March, the king went to the House of Lords, to put an end to the Session, and to say, "I feel it a duty which I owe to the constitution and the country, to recur as speedily as possible to the sense of my people, by calling a new parliament." On the 25th parliament was dissolved.

During this extraordinary contest, from the 12th of January to the 8th of March, there were fourteen motions, upon which the House divided, carried against Mr. Pitt; besides many others, upon which there was no division. The mode in which the Coalition ministry was ejected, through the royal interference with the vote of the House of Peers upon the India Bill, was mean and unconstitutional. It has been conjectured that Pitt was probably

acquainted with the manœuvres of Thurlow and Temple.* But it has been also said that when Temple resigned, he "carried away with him the scandal which the best friends of the new government could not but lament. The fame of the young prime minister preserved its whiteness. He could declare with perfect truth that, if unconstitutional machinations had been employed, he had been no party to them." † Whatever opinion may be formed upon this point, even the political opponents of Pitt agree that in this fiery struggle of two months, he "joined to great boldness, sagacity and discretion. By patience and perseverance he wearied out a foe who was more ardent than measured in his attacks; and while he bore his defeats with calmness, the country, saturate with calumny, began to resent the attempt of the Coalition party as the cabal of a domineering aristocracy." ‡

Never did minister of Great Britain appear in so triumphant a position as William Pitt, when he entered the House of Commons, on the 18th of May, to meet the New Parliament. He had been himself returned at the head of the poll for the University of Cambridge. His friend Wilberforce, the son of a Hull merchant, had contested the county of York against two Whig candidates of large fortune and high connections. With the almost unanimous support of the manufacturers of Sheffield, and Halifax, and Bradford, and Leeds, he had beaten the great Yorkshire aristocracy, as the representative of the middle classes. The example presented by this stronghold of independent principles was powerful through the country. Pitt looked upon the benches of opposition, that for two months had echoed with the cheers of those who had denounced him with every virulence of invective, now thinned to a very powerless minority. The Coalition had lost a hundred and sixty members. Fox took his seat as a Scotch representative; for although second upon the poll for Westminster, a scrutiny was demanded by his opponent, sir Cecil Wray, and the high bailiff would not make a return. Out of this scrutiny a protracted contest ensued, which was amongst the memorable things of a period of intense political agitation. The election for Westminster occupied forty days, under the old system, in which corrupt influence, bribery, drunkenness, and riot, made a great electioneering contest a scene as disgraceful to morality as unfavourable to freedom. The Court exerted itself in the most undisguised manner to exclude Fox from parliament. The prince of Wales was as openly committed against

* "Correspondence of Fox," vol. ii. p. 253.

† Macaulay—"Biography of Pitt."

‡ "Correspondence of Fox," vol. ii. p. 253.

the interest espoused by his father. The beautiful duchess of Devonshire was often present in Covent Garden, wearing the colours of Fox; and the report that she had won the vote of a hesitating butcher with a kiss, was commemorated in many a gross caricature, and many an indecent libel. The wits and rhymsters on the side of Fox had one invariable theme for their invective against Pitt—the purity of his private life. In the songs of Captain Morris during the election, and in the elaborate squibs of “The Rolliad,” which subsequently were produced in a thick octavo volume, this charge is urged with a combination of the grossness of Swift and the stupidity of D’Urfey, which is revolting to taste as well as offensive to decency. “The virtuous youth,” who “was taught by his dad on a stool,” was little hurt by these missiles. The mud did not stick. But the virulence of the attacks by which he and his friends were long assailed, as well as his own wonderful success, contributed perhaps to impart to his public demeanour that cold and haughty aspect which was out of harmony with his real nature, which was amiable, affectionate, and even genial. The thinking and staid portion of the nation respected his decorous life; as much as they disliked the licentious habits of his great rival. Although the extraordinary endowments, the generous disposition, and the winning manners of Fox commanded the universal admiration of his friends, the people felt that Pitt was a safer minister. The ardour with which he applied himself to questions of finance and commerce, which Fox did not profess to understand, and probably thought beneath the leader of a powerful party, endeared the minister to the middle classes, and gave him the secure grasp of power and popularity during those nine years of real national prosperity which preceded the wars of the French Revolution.

Mr. Pitt commenced his career as a financial minister with more than common boldness. The permanent taxes produced half-a-million less than the interest of the debt, the civil list, and the charges to which they were appropriated. The annual land-tax and malt-tax fell far short of the naval and military expenditure and that of miscellaneous services. There was a large unfunded debt. The deficit altogether amounted to three millions. The confidence in the national resources was so low that the three per cents were fallen to about 56. Smuggling, especially of tea and spirits, was carried on to an enormous extent. The tea vended in the smuggling trade, conducted in the most systematic manner through consignments from foreign ports, was held considerably to exceed the five million and a half lbs. annually sold by the East

India Company. Pitt took the only effectual way to prevent smuggling. He reduced the duty upon tea from 50 per cent. to 12½ per cent.; and he also reduced the duties on foreign spirits. To compensate for the expected deficiency of revenue, he increased the tax upon windows. To meet the large general disproportion between receipt and expenditure, he imposed other taxes, that have been abolished, as injurious to industry, by the sounder economists of recent times. These taxes enabled him to provide for the interest of a new loan, in which a large amount of unfunded debt was absorbed. Taxes upon hats, linens, and calicos, have long been condemned, though the Commons of 1784 willingly granted them. Duties upon horses, excise licences, and game certificates, hold their ground. Taxes upon candles, and upon bricks and tiles, were amongst the devices that have had no permanent existence. The tax upon paper, which Mr. Pitt increased, appears to be the last of those restraints upon industry to which purblind legislators have clung, upon the principle that the consumers do not feel the tax—the principle announced by the minister of 1784, when he proposed his additional duty on candles, namely, that as the poorest cottagers only consumed about 10 lbs. of candles annually, that class would only contribute fivepence a-year to his new impost.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer carried his proposed taxes without any difficulty. He was equally successful with his India Bills. He relieved the East India Company from its financial embarrassments. He associated with its Directors in the government of India that body of Commissioners, appointed by the crown, which was long known as the Board of Control. Under this double government, our empire in India, constantly increasing in magnitude by extension of territory, and becoming year by year more complicated and dangerous, at last appeared to be falling to pieces in the great revolt, whose suppression will always be regarded as one of the most memorable examples of British energy. Under the imperial rule, we may hope that the honest aspirations of Burke and Fox for such a government of India as would regard the welfare of the natives as the first object of legislation, will be realized; that the larger experience of three-quarters of a century, and the nobler aims of statesmen who will consider India as a sacred trust, will more and more develop the beneficent powers of civilization amongst the millions over whom Providence has appointed us the guardians.

In the Session of 1785, Mr. Pitt brought forward a subject announced in the king's speech, the Commercial Intercourse between

Great Britain and Ireland. He described the system which had been pursued, from the Revolution to a very recent period, as that of debarring Ireland from the enjoyment of her own resources; of rendering that kingdom completely subservient to the interest and opulence of England. That system had been reversed; and Ireland was free to export her produce to all parts of the world, and to import, and re-export, the produce of the British Colonies. But no change had taken place in the intercourse between Great Britain and Ireland themselves. There were, he said, but two possible systems for two countries situated as these were in relation to each other. We had tried the system of having the smaller country completely subservient and subordinate to the greater. "The other system was a participation and community of benefits, and a system of equality and fairness, which, without tending to aggrandize the one or depress the other, should seek the aggregate interests of the empire. Such a situation of commercial equality, in which there was to be a community of benefits, demanded also a community of burthens; and it was this situation in which he was anxious to place the two countries." The propositions of Mr. Pitt, large and liberal as they were, although encumbered with some provisions opposed to a really free commercial policy, were thoroughly distasteful to the manufacturers of England, and equally opposed to the narrowness of what in Ireland was deemed patriotism. The Resolutions of the minister were carried by considerable majorities in the British Parliament, but being passed by a very small majority in the Irish Parliament, the Bill was withdrawn. Whilst this measure was being debated at Westminster, Mr. Pitt a third time brought forward a Bill for Reform in Parliament. His specific plan was to disfranchise thirty-six rotten boroughs, giving compensation to those who regarded them as property; to transfer the right of election to counties and to unrepresented large towns; and to extend the franchise in counties to copyholders. The Bill was not introduced as a government measure; and it was rejected by a large majority, as its author probably expected it would be. That Pitt was at this time sincere in his wish for a temperate reform there can be little doubt. George Rose says that he himself dreaded that a breach should be made in the representation which moderate reformers could not prevent being widened: "I determined against an acquiescence in Mr. Pitt's plan, which he pressed with enthusiasm, not only in the House of Commons, but in private, with such friends as he thought he could influence." Rose offered to retire from his office, but to that the minister would not consent. The Secretary of the Treasury felt, however, what probably many

others felt, "that a person in my confidential post, taking a different line from him on a question of such infinite magnitude, might lead to a doubt of his sincerity." *

At the opening of the Session on the 24th of January, 1789, the king informed the parliament that disputes which appeared to threaten an interruption to the tranquillity of Europe had been brought to an amicable conclusion. The tranquillity of Europe was always liable to be interrupted by the intrigues of the great powers for extended territory and influence. The emperor Joseph had been attempting to coerce the States of Holland, distracted by two contending political parties, into a surrender of the fortresses of the Austrian Netherlands, which had been always garrisoned by the Dutch since the conclusion of the War of the Succession, as a bulwark against the inroads of France. After four years of dispute and threatened war, the court of Versailles concluded a treaty of commercial league, and close alliance, with Holland, by which the emperor was restrained, but which placed the States very much in the power of France. Great Britain abstained from interference. It would have been difficult to interfere, whilst in Holland there was a powerful faction opposed to the House of Orange.

Pitt, at this time, was almost exclusively occupied with a great financial scheme, from which, with more than ordinary complacency, he sanguinely expected the most wonderful results. He wrote to Wilberforce, "The produce of our revenues is glorious; and I am half mad with a project which will give our supplies the effect almost of magic in the reduction of debt." † It was the scheme of the Sinking Fund. The public income now happily exceeded the expenditure, and it was proposed that the notion of an accumulating fund to be applied to the reduction of the debt, which was partially attempted by Sir Robert Walpole, should be engrafted upon the perpetual financial arrangements; that a million should be annually placed in the hands of commissioners, so as to be beyond the power of a minister to withdraw. It was believed that accumulating at compound interest, with the addition of such terminable annuities as should fall in, it would gradually extinguish the claims of the public creditor. The plan might have worked well, if the minister had been debarred from contracting any new loans. For years the public had as much confidence in this scheme as its author had. It was boasted, that "in eight years, Mr. Pitt's sinking fund, in fact, purchased 13, 617, 895*l.* of

* "Diaries and Correspondence of George Rose," vol. i. p. 35.

† "Correspondence of Wilberforce," vol. i. p. 9.

stock at the cost of 10, 599, 265*l.* of cash ;” and it was proclaimed that “ this measure, then, is of more importance to Great Britain than the acquisition of the American mines.”* There was a superstitious belief, long entertained, that the new sinking fund would, “ by some mysterious power of propagation belonging to money, put into the pocket of the public creditor great sums not taken out of the pocket of the tax-payer ” † The delusion was manifest when it was demonstrated that during the war the debt had been actually augmented, to the extent of eleven millions, by the less advantageous terms upon which money was borrowed by the Exchequer, compared with the purchases made by the commissioners who managed the sinking fund. A great authority in finance has put the whole philosophy of the matter in the form of an axiom: “ No sinking fund can be efficient for the purpose of diminishing the debt if it be not derived from the excess of the public revenue over the public expenditure.” ‡

On the opening of the Session on the 23rd of January, 1787, the king announced that he had concluded a treaty of navigation and commerce with the king of France. The negotiation was completed at Versailles, on the 26th of September, 1786. The provisions of this treaty were of the most liberal character. There was to be the most perfect freedom of intercourse allowed between the subjects and inhabitants of the respective dominions of the two sovereigns. The duties to be paid on French commodities in England were thus rated : Wines, no higher duties than on those of Portugal ; brandy, seven shillings per gallon ; vinegar, less than half the previous duty ; olive-oil, the lowest duty paid by the most favoured nation. The following duties were to be levied reciprocally on both kingdoms : hardwares and cutlery, cabinet wares, furniture, turnery, not higher than 10 per cent. ad valorem ; cotton and woollen manufactures, except mixed with silk, 12 per cent. ; gauzes, 10 per cent. ; linens, same as linens from Holland ; saddlery, 15 per cent. ; millinery, 12 per cent. ; plate glass and glass ware, porcelain and earthenware, 12 per cent. We have already glanced at the general nature of this treaty in a commercial point of view.§ Mr. Pitt set forth the political advantages of this measure in an argument worthy of a great statesman asserting principles of lasting importance : “ Considering the treaty in its political view he should not hesitate to contend against the too-frequently advanced doctrine, that France was, and must be, the unalterable

* Chalmers’ “ Comparative Estimate, corrected to 1812,” p. 189.

† Macaulay—“ Biography of Pitt.”

‡ “ Works of David Ricardo,” p. 140.

§ *Ante*, p. 357.

enemy of Britain. His mind revolted from this position as monstrous and impossible. To suppose that any nation could be unalterably the enemy of another was weak and childish. It had neither its foundation in the experience of nations, nor in the history of man. It was a libel on the constitution of political societies, and supposed the existence of diabolical malice in the original frame of man. But these absurd tenets were taken up and propagated; nay, it was carried farther; it was said, that by this treaty, the British nation was about blindly to throw itself into the arms of its constant and uniform foe. Men reasoned as if this treaty were not only to extinguish all jealousy from our bosoms, but also completely to annihilate our means of defence; as if by the treaty we gave up so much of our army, so much of our marine; as if our commerce was to be abridged, our navigation to be lessened, our colonies to be cut off or to be rendered defenceless, and as if all the functions of the State were to be sunk in apathy. What ground was there for this train of reasoning? Did the treaty suppose that the interval of peace between the two countries would be so totally unemployed by us as to disable us from meeting France in the moment of war with our accustomed strength? Did it not much rather, by opening new sources of wealth, speak this forcible language—that the interval of peace, as it would enrich the nation, would also prove the means of enabling her to combat her enemy with more effect when the day of hostility should come? It did more than this; by promoting habits of friendly intercourse, and of mutual benefit, while it invigorated the resources of Britain, it made it less likely that she should have occasion to call forth those resources. It certainly had at least the happy tendency to make the two nations enter into more intimate communion with one another, to enter into the same views even of taste and manners; and while they were mutually benefited by the connexion, and endeared to one another by the result of the common benefits, it gave a better chance for the preservation of harmony between them, while, so far from weakening, it strengthened their sinews for war. That we should not be taken unprepared for war, was a matter totally distinct from treaty.” It is painful to behold Mr. Fox contending “that France was the natural foe of Great Britain, and that she wished by entering into a commercial treaty with us to tie our hands, and prevent our engaging in any alliances with other powers.” The argument for perpetual international hostility was carried to the point of absurdity by Mr. Francis, who thus declaimed: “It seems we are arrived at a new enlightened era of affection for our neighbours, and of liber-

ality to our enemies, of which our uninstructed ancestors had no conception. The pomp of modern eloquence is employed to blast even the triumphs of lord Chatham's administration. The polemic laurels of the father must yield to the pacific myrtles which shadow the forehead of the son. Sir, the first and most prominent feature in the political character of lord Chatham was anti-gallican. His glory is founded on the resistance he made to the united power of the House of Bourbon. The present minister has taken the opposite road to fame; and France, the object of every hostile principle in the policy of lord Chatham, is the *gens amicissima* of his son."

That the commercial treaty was not a failure as regarded the products of our own country is evident from the fact that the annual average export of British manufactures to France in the six years ending with 1774 was 87,164*l.*; in the six years ending with 1792 it was 717,807*l.* Arthur Young, after the treaty had been in existence less than a year, found the French crying out for a war with England. "It is easy enough to discover that the origin of all this violence is the commercial treaty, which is execrated here as the most fatal stroke to their manufactures they ever experienced." He found this temper prevailing at Lisle.* The next year, at the fair of Guibray, near Caen, he saw many English goods, especially the crockery known as queen's ware. Of this ware there were French imitations, but very inferior. Young asked the dealer if he did not think the treaty of commerce would be very injurious, with such a difference in the goodness of the manufactured articles. The sensible Frenchman replied, "Quite the contrary. However bad is our imitation, it is the best thing we have yet produced in France. We shall produce better next year—we shall improve—we shall go beyond you." I believe, adds Young, he is a very good politician, and that without competition it is not possible to improve any fabric.† The treaty was annulled in the frenzy of the Revolution.

To Mr. Pitt belongs the honour, in this, the fourth year of his administration, of simplifying the complicated system of indirect taxation, by consolidating the several duties of customs, excise, and stamps. The duties required to be paid upon one article were sometimes to be hunted through twenty or thirty acts of parliament, each charging some additional duty, or making a special appropriation of the proceeds of a particular tax. The complication may be judged from the fact that three thousand resolutions were required to carry a measure of consolidation into effect. When Pitt had introduced his measure, Burke characterized the speech of the minister as one of ex

* "Travels in France," p. 73.

† *Ibid.*, p. 79.

traordinary clearness and perspicuity, and said that it behoved those who felt it their duty frequently to oppose the measures of the government, to rise up manfully, and, doing justice to the right honourable gentleman's merit, to return him thanks on behalf of themselves and the country, for having in so masterly a manner brought forward a plan which gave ease and accommodation to all engaged in commerce, and advantage and increase to the revenue. "Thus," says lord John Russell, "in the course of little more than three years from Mr. Pitt's acceptance of office as First Lord of the Treasury, great financial and commercial reforms had been effected The nation, overcoming its difficulties, and rising buoyant from its depression, began rapidly to increase its wealth, to revive its spirit, and renew its strength. Such was the work of Mr. Pitt, now no longer the minister of the court, but of the nation. The cry of secret influence, and the imputation of his being an organ of an unseen power, was heard less and less as the resources of his powerful understanding developed their energies and ripened their fruits." *

The amicable relations between the governments of Great Britain and France, which appeared to have been consolidated by the commercial treaty, were interrupted in the autumn of 1787 by the interference of France with the civil dissensions amongst the States of the United Provinces, which had taken a new direction after the disputes with the emperor Joseph had been terminated. To the firmness and moderation of the British government it is owing that a war was averted. The great Frederick of Prussia had died on the 17th of August, 1786. His nephew and successor, Frederick William III., brother-in-law to the prince of Orange, had espoused the cause of his sister's husband against those States who had stripped the Stadtholder of his power and prerogatives. The princess of Orange, a lady possessing great vigour of character, was proceeding to the Hague from Nimeguen, to hold a conference with the leaders of the Orange party, when she was stopped by a troop of armed burghers and placed under arrest. The king of Prussia immediately marched an army into the province of Zealand, and avowed his intention to restore the Stadtholder to his hereditary authority. It is unnecessary for us to trace the course of these events, except as they bear upon the acts of the British government. These are very clearly related in the king's speech on opening the Session on the 27th of November. Whilst Great Britain had endeavoured by good offices to restore tranquillity and maintain lawful government, she avowed her intention of counteracting all

* "Life of Fox," vol. ii. p. 138.

forcible interference on the part of France in the internal affairs of the Dutch republic. The king of Prussia having determined to obtain satisfaction for the insult offered to the princess of Orange, the party who had usurped the government of Holland applied to the king of France for his assistance, who notified to the king of Great Britain his intention of granting their request. "I did not hesitate," said the king to parliament, "to declare that I could not remain a quiet spectator of the armed interference of France, and I gave immediate orders for augmenting my forces by sea and land." The success of the Prussian troops enabled the Provinces "to deliver themselves from the oppression under which they laboured, and to re-establish their lawful government." An explanation took place between France and Great Britain, and both countries mutually agreed to disarm, and to place their naval establishments upon the same footing as at the beginning of the year.

The career of Mr. Pitt,—the only minister who appears to have received the entire confidence of George the Third without surrendering his own independent convictions on large questions of policy,—was not wholly without difficulty and danger as regarded his relations to the king and the prince of Wales, in the serious differences which had arisen between them. The pecuniary embarrassments of the prince of Wales were of so onerous a nature that his friends thought it necessary to bring them under the consideration of Parliament. When he took up his residence at Carlton House in 1783, 60,000*l.* had been voted by parliament to defray the expense of establishing a separate household. The king allowed his son 50,000*l.* a year out of the Civil List, and the annual revenue of the duchy of Cornwall amounted to 12,000*l.* At the Midsummer of 1786 the prince owed 160,000*l.* The king refused to give any assistance; and the heir-apparent dismissed the state officers of his household, sold his horses, and stopped the improvements going forward in his residence. But the debts were very slightly diminished. There were serious difficulties in making that application to Parliament, which eager worshippers of the rising sun overlooked, although public rumour spoke with no doubtful voice upon a very delicate question. It was believed that the prince of Wales, contrary to the provisions of the royal marriage act, was married to Mrs. Fitzherbert; and that the lady being a Roman Catholic, such marriage, according to the Act of Settlement, had rendered the prince "for ever incapable to inherit, possess, or enjoy the crown of this kingdom." On the 27th of April, 1787, alderman Newnham, one of the members for the City, stated that he should propose an Address to the king, praying him to take into consideration the

state of the affairs of the prince of Wales, and to grant him relief, which the House would make good. Mr. Rolle without hesitation said that this was "a question which went immediately to affect our Constitution in Church and State," and that he would oppose the motion, whenever it was brought forward, by moving the previous question. Something was necessary to be done. On the 30th, alderman Newnham stated that he had been much pressed, from various quarters, to forego his purpose. He did not wish to bind the House to the form of an Address, but said that the prince did not shrink from any inquiry. Mr. Fox, in the course of a short speech, took notice of the previous allusion to something full of danger to the Church and State. He supposed that allusion must have reference to a low malicious falsehood, propagated to depreciate the character of the prince—a pretended report of a fact impossible to have happened. In answer to a question from Mr. Rolle, Mr. Fox further said, that "he did not deny the calumny in question, merely with regard to the effect of certain existing laws; but he denied it *in toto*, in point of fact, as well as law. The fact not only never could have happened legally, but never did happen in any way whatsoever." He added, that "he had spoken from direct authority." Bishop Tomline gravely remarks that "this unequivocal and authentic assurance could not but be highly satisfactory both to parliament and the public." And yet many of the parliament and some of the public had no belief in the assurance, although they believed that Mr. Fox was authorized to deny what he termed the malicious falsehood. At the end of December, 1785, Mr. Fox had written to the prince a letter, pointing out the extreme danger of "a desperate step" which he was informed that his royal highness intended to take. The prince replied, on the 11th, that "the world will soon be convinced that there not only is not, but never was, any ground for these reports which of late have been so malevolently circulated." Within ten days of the date of this letter, namely, on the 21st of December, Mrs. Fitzherbert was married by a Protestant clergyman to the prince of Wales, in the presence of six witnesses. "Although the marriage of Mrs. Fitzherbert was void by the English law, it was sanctioned by the law of her own church, and she could without scruple live with the prince of Wales as her husband."* On the day after his declaration in parliament, a gentleman at Brooks's told Mr. Fox that he had been misinformed; "I was present at that marriage."† The prince is recorded on the same day to have said to Mrs.

* Lord J. Russell's "Life of Fox," vol. ii. p. 185.

† *Ibid.*, p. 186.

Fitzherbert, "Only conceive, Maria, what Fox did yesterday: he went down to the House and denied that you and I were man and wife."* Mr. Fox, says lord J. Russell, "perceived how completely he had been duped. He immediately renounced the acquaintance of the prince, and did not speak to him for more than a year." The matter was hushed up; the prince's debts were paid by parliament after negotiations and squabbles which are now of little interest. Mr. Fox could not retract his declaration, without exposing the prince to the risk of losing his succession to the Crown, according to lord John Russell. His indignation at having been made the instrument of declaring a falsehood did not prevent him advocating the claims of the prince of Wales to almost uncontrolled power, in the great question of The Regency which arose in 1788.

On the 24th of October, the king, having been out of health, went to the levée, "with a view of putting an end to the stories that were circulated with much industry."† A violent fever ensued; and in a few days the sovereign was decidedly insane. On the 7th Mr. Grenville wrote, "I am afraid that it would be very sanguine indeed to say that there is even any hope that the king will recover both his health and his understanding."‡ The public were to be kept in ignorance of this alarming event. But the parliament was to meet on the 20th of November. An adjournment of a fortnight was agreed to. Meanwhile the physicians who had attended his majesty were examined on oath before the Privy Council. All agreed that the king could not attend to public affairs; three expressed confidence in his recovery. A Committee of the two Houses had also examined the medical authorities, and had reported their opinions. Mr. Fox had been travelling in Italy, but being summoned home, he appeared in his place in parliament on the 10th of December; and there declared that, "in his firm opinion, his royal highness the prince of Wales had as clear, as express a right to assume the reins of government, and exercise the power of sovereignty, during the continuance of the illness and incapacity with which it had pleased God to affect his majesty, as in the case of his majesty having undergone a natural and perfect demise." The two Houses, he said, "were alone qualified to pronounce when the prince ought to take possession of, and exercise, his right; but as short a time as possible ought to intervene between the prince of Wales assuming the sovereignty, and the

* Lord John Russell, quoting "Memoirs of Mrs. Fitzherbert."

† W. W. Grenville, "Court of George III.," vol. i. p. 431.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 435.

present moment."* Mr. Pitt maintained that, although the claim of the prince was entitled to the most serious consideration, in the case of the interruption of the personal exercise of the royal authority, without any previous lawful provision for carrying on the government, "it belonged to the other branches of the legislature, on the part of the nation at large, to provide, according to their discretion, for the temporary exercise of the royal authority, in the name, and on the behalf of the sovereign, in such manner as they should think requisite; and that, unless by their decision, the prince of Wales had no more right—speaking of strict right—to assume the government, than any other individual in the country." In this first debate an amount of passion was displayed on the part of Burke, which greatly detracted from his reputation as a sound authority upon constitutional questions. Pitt had said that to assert a right in the prince of Wales, independent of the decision of the two Houses of Parliament, was treason to the constitution. Burke exclaimed, "where was the freedom of debate, where was the privilege of parliament, if the rights of the prince of Wales could not be spoken of in that House, without their being liable to be charged with treason by one of the prince's competitors?" Pitt quietly asked whether, "at that period of our history when the constitution was settled on that foundation on which it now existed, when Mr. Somers and other great men declared that no person had a right to the crown independent of the consent of the two Houses, would it have been thought either fair or decent for any member of either House to have pronounced Mr. Somers a personal competitor of William the Third?"

The question of abstract right became merged in the more practical question of what powers should be confided to the prince of Wales as Regent. The views of Mr. Fox on this point were extreme. On the 15th of December he wrote to a friend in confidence, "I am afraid they will get up some cry against the prince for grasping, as they call it, at too much power; but I am sure I cannot in conscience advise him to give up anything that is really necessary to his government; or, indeed, to claim anything else as Regent but the full power of a king, to which he is certainly entitled."† Mr. Pitt, on the other hand, brought forward propositions to prohibit the Regent from creating peers; from disposing of the king's real or personal property; and from granting offices except during pleasure; and that the queen should have the custody of his majesty's person. There was a doubt whether the

* "Parliamentary History," vol. xxvii. col. 707.

† "Correspondence of Fox," vol. ii. p. 300.

Prince would not refuse the Regency, under these restrictions. But that imprudence was not added to the other grave errors of his friends. Burke had shocked the loyalty of all men, by saying that the king had been hurled from the throne by the decree of the Almighty. Sheridan maintained that the prince had shown great moderation in not at once assuming the title and powers of Regent, and thus disgusted those who possessed any knowledge of the principles of the English constitution. There was such an evident avidity to seize upon power in the prince and his friends—there was such a distrust of his character, and such a dread of beholding a court polluted with the abominations of gaming and riot—that the national sympathy was almost wholly with Pitt, who laboured all along in the resolution that if his sovereign should be restored, he should not find everything changed. He knew that his own chances of power under the Regency were forfeited by the course he had adopted. He would “take his blue bag, and return to the bar.”* Fox appears to have acted on the conviction that the chance of the king’s recovery was very small indeed. The Regency Bill had passed the Commons on the 12th of February. But in the middle of the month it was known that a great amendment had taken place in the king’s condition. On the 23rd, Mr. Pitt received a letter, “written in his majesty’s own hand, couched in the warmest terms, thanking him for his unshaken attachment to his interests, and desiring to see him the next day.”† On the 25th, the issue of bulletins by the royal physicians was discontinued. On the 10th of March, the commissioners who had been appointed by former letters patent to open the parliament, by another commission declared farther causes for holding the same; and proceeded to state to both Houses that his majesty, being by the blessing of Providence recovered from his indisposition, and enabled to attend to public affairs, conveyed through them his warmest acknowledgments for the additional proofs they had given of affectionate attachment to his person. The other subjects of a royal speech on opening parliament were then detailed.

Pitt had won his second great victory. In 1784, against odds almost incalculable, he had defeated the Coalition with almost the unanimous support of the people. He had employed his unassailable tenure of power in carrying forward the resources of national prosperity by a series of measures conceived, not in the spirit of party, but with a large comprehension of what was essential to the public good. Another great trial came. He had to conduct an-

* “Diaries, &c., of George Rose,” vol. i. p. 96.

† Grenville, in “Court of George III.,” vol. ii. p. 125.

other conflict, full of danger and difficulty, in which, fighting for his sovereign, he had in the same manner the support of the nation. Major Cartwright, so well known for his subsequent endeavours to promote a Reform in Parliament, wrote to Wilberforce: "I very much fear that the king's present derangement is likely to produce other derangements not for the public benefit. I hope we are not to be sold to the Coalition faction."* When the battle was over, George the Third wrote to his persevering minister that "his constant attachment to my interest, and that of the public which are inseparable, must ever place him in the most advantageous light." † On the 23rd of April, a public thanksgiving was appointed for the king's recovery. His majesty went to St. Paul's, accompanied by both Houses of Parliament, to return his own thanksgivings. The day was observed throughout the kingdom. Illuminations were never so general; joy was never so heartfelt. The minister, still only in his twenty-ninth year, had reached the pinnacle of power and popularity.

* "Life of Wilberforce," vol. i. p. 100.

† Rose—"Diaries, &c.," p. 97.

CHAPTER XXV.

Symptoms of great changes in France.—Constant financial difficulties.—General view of the French social system.—Expectations of a Revolution.—The Parliament of Paris—Meeting of the States-General.—The Three Orders.—The Tiers Etat demand that all the Orders shall unite.—Excitement in Paris, during this contest.—Tiers Etat assume the title of the National Assembly.—Their meeting in a Tennis Court.—The Royal Sitting.—Open resistance of the Tiers Etat to the king's orders.—The king yields.—Dismissal of Necker.—Destruction of the Bastile.—March to Versailles of a Parisian mob.—The Royal Family and National Assembly, removed to Paris.

ON the 11th of July, 1788, the king, at the close of the Session of Parliament, said: "The general state of Europe, and the assurances which I receive from foreign powers, afford me every reason to expect that my subjects will continue to enjoy the blessings of peace." The differences with France on the subject of the United Provinces had been adjusted. On the 6th of September, Mr. Pitt exultingly wrote to the marquis of Stafford, "The state of France, whatever else it may produce, seems to promise us more than ever a considerable respite from any dangerous projects."* The "state of France" was that of a country in which the disordered condition of its finances appeared to render any new disturbances of Europe, from the ambition of the government and the restlessness of the people, something approaching to an impossibility. The "whatever else it might produce" was a vague and remote danger. Yet in September, 1788, there were symptoms of impending changes, that, with a full knowledge of the causes operating to produce them, might have suggested to the far-seeing eye of that statesmanship that looked beyond the formal relations of established governments, some real cause for disquiet. Since the peace of 1783, there had been constant and increasing deficiency of revenue in France. The area of taxation was limited by the manifold exemptions from bearing a due proportion of the public burthens, which Turgot, in 1776, had vainly endeavoured to abolish. He was dismissed, as the result of his attempts to impose taxes upon the noblesse and the clergy. Necker is summoned to fill the great post of Controller-general of Finance. He carries France through the American war by various temporary expedients; but there is still a deficit. He proposes some solid measures, and is dis-

* "Diaries, &c., of George Rose," vol. i. p. 85.

missed in May, 1781. The war comes to an end. Englishmen flock to Paris in 1782, and there, wondrous disclosure! are "struck with surprise at the freedom of conversation on general liberty, even within the walls of the king's palace."* Thus was George Rose impressed. He writes in his Diary—"On a Sunday morning, while we were waiting in an outer room to see the king pass in state to the chapel of Versailles, where several of the great officers were, there was a discussion almost as free as I have heard in the House of Commons, in which Monsieur Chauvelin was the loudest, who was in some employment about the person of the king, for he dropped on his knee, and gave his majesty a cambric handkerchief as he passed through the room." Pitt, accompanied by Wilberforce and another friend, went to France in 1783. He inquired particularly into the political institutions of the French, and in a conversation with Abbé de Lagéard, "a man of family and fortune," he said to him, "You have not political liberty, but for civil liberty you have more than you believe you have."† There were things below the surface that Pitt did not see. Wilberforce records of Pitt, that "it was the singular position occupied by La Fayette which most of all attracted his attention: he seemed to be the representative of the democracy in the very presence of the monarch; the tribune intruding with his veto within the chamber of the patrician order."‡ Theoretical democracy was in fashion amongst the patrician order. They had been talking about abstract rights, and the perfectibility of society, in their Parisian salons, without a thought of the hopeless condition of the miserable peasantry that were ground into the most abject poverty by their seigniorial rights. They had no public duties to fulfil; they were utterly isolated from the millions of whom they ought to have been the friends and protectors. The aristocracy received the doctrines of the political philosophers as if they were mere speculative opinions that would have no practical effects, and might be advocated as an indulgence of elegant sentiment which manifested their superiority to selfish prejudices. "The nobles shared as a pleasant pastime in these discussions, and quietly enjoyed their immunities and privileges whilst they serenely discussed the absurdity of all established customs. . . . Not the barest notion of a violent revolution ever entered into the minds of the generation which witnessed it."§ We need feel no surprise that the sagacious English minister felt no fear of the gathering clouds which foreboded a storm. Other Controllers of

* "Diaries, &c., of George Rose," vol. i. p. 41.

† "Life of Wilberforce," vol. i. p. 38.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

§ Tocqueville—"France before the Revolution," p. 261.

Finance succeeded Necker, with indifferent success. In 1783, Calonne took the onerous post. He got on for three years by loan upon loan, the court squandering without stint; the people excited by scandalous stories against the queen, with little foundation; a general ferment in all political circles. Calonne can do no more with the stock-jobbers, and he resolves upon a convocation of Notables, influential men from all districts of France, to devise new plans of taxation. Such an assembly had not been heard of for a hundred and sixty years. Mr. Jefferson, the American ambassador at Paris, announces this fact to his government. He saw its significance, writing, in a private letter, "this event, which will hardly excite any attention in America, is deemed here the most important one which has taken place in their civil line during the present century."* This body met towards the end of February, 1787. Calonne shows his terrible deficit; he proposes a new land-tax, from which no proprietors,—neither noblesse, nor clergy, nor any other privileged class,—shall be exempt. The majority of the Notables was composed of these privileged classes. They would have nothing to do with the scheme of Calonne; and the Controller, who had hoped for more effectual control over an enormous deficit than the worn-out system of borrowing, is dismissed to make way for others who may be able to manage more adroitly.

At this period an Englishman visited France, who could observe more accurately, and reason more acutely, than diplomatists who moved in a narrow circle. Arthur Young travelled over various parts of that kingdom in 1787, 1788, and 1789. M. Tocqueville speaks of Young's "Travels," published in 1792, as "one of the most instructive works which exist on the former state of society in France."† Let us see how this man of large experience, who had uniformly regarded the prosperous condition of the labourers as an essential concomitant of the prosperity of the farmers, describes the French peasantry. He proceeds on his journey south from Paris to Orleans, and having crossed the Loire finds that the cultivators are *metayers*—men who hire the land without ability to stock it, the proprietor finding cattle and seed and the tenant labour, and dividing the scanty produce. As he goes on he becomes excited at the wretched management and the miserable dwellings, in a country highly improveable—"the property, perhaps, of some of those glittering beings who figured in the procession the other day at Versailles. Heaven grant me

* Tucker—"Life of Jefferson," vol. 1. p. 253.

† "France before the Revolution," p. 179.

patience while I see a country thus neglected, and forgive me the oaths I swear at the absence and ignorance of the possessors." * Having passed the Dordogne, he finds all the girls and women without shoes or stockings; and "the ploughmen at their work have neither sabots nor feet to their stockings." Everywhere, however, the roads are magnificent—in Languedoc "stupendous works"—"superb even to a folly"—but roads almost without traffic. There were two modes of executing these noble causeways, carried across valleys, and through levelled hills. They were either constructed by the forced labour of the peasantry, called the *corvée*; or by assessment of the proprietors, under which the lands held by a noble tenure were eased, and those held by a base tenure were proportionably burthened. The king of France, during the administration of Turgot, tried to abolish the system of compulsory labour. The decree of this benevolent sovereign—who truly said, "I and Turgot are the only friends of the people"—contains this avowal: "With the exception of a small number of provinces, almost all the roads throughout the kingdom have been made by the gratuitous labour of the poorest part of our subjects By forcing the poor to keep them up unaided, and by compelling them to give their time and labour without remuneration, they are deprived of their sole resource against want and hunger, because they are made to labour for the profit of the rich." In spite of the decree, the system of compulsory labour was re-established in a few months. We have a striking picture of the operation of the *corvée*, in a description by M. Grosley, of a scene at a village near Langres. Sixty or eighty peasants arrive at night at this village, summoned from distant quarters, to begin next day a grand *corvée* upon the road. They could not get their carts and oxen over the mountains; they must pay a fine or go to prison; their feet were cut by the flinty byways; they were hungry. The little money they had was nearly exhausted by providing for the inexorable inspector. The traveller, an Englishman, who told Grosley the story, paid for the supper of twenty of these poor people, which procured him a thousand blessings. They were to go to work the next day without their teams.†

And yet, with such oppression, the French peasantry were not serfs, as in most of the German states. Many were even small proprietors of land. That subdivision of landed property, which some imagine to have been caused by the Revolution, existed to a large extent before the Revolution. Young was greatly surprised to find a state of things so different from that generally prevailing

* "Travels in France," p. 12. † "Observations on England," vol. ii. p. 16.

in England. He averred that half the soil belonged to these small proprietors. In the country of Bearn, in a ride of twelve miles from Pau to Moneng, he saw pretty cottages, neat gardens, and every appearance of comfort. The land "is all in the hands of little proprietors, without the farms being so small as to occasion a vicious and miserable population."* But this was an exceptional case. "All these small landowners were, in reality, ill at ease in the cultivation of their property, and had to bear many charges or easements on the land which they could not shake off."† The ancient seigniorial rights were the most oppressive; but the seigneur was not the local administrator. Neither did he select the parochial officers who exacted the various payments and services connected with the land. All the local officers were under the government and control of the central power. "The seigneur was in fact no longer anything but an inhabitant of the parish, separated by his own immunities and privileges from all the other inhabitants." The nobility had ceased to have any political power; they had no concern in maintaining public order or administering justice. Many had sold their land in small patches, and lived only on seigniorial rights and rent-charges. The greater number did not dwell among the people who were the means of their support. The peasant only knew the nobleman as a living person, or an abstract power, who was exempt from the taxes which the plebeian paid; who had the exclusive right of sporting; who compelled him to grind his corn in the lord's mill, and to crush his grapes in the lord's wine press; who made him pay toll when he crossed a river, and tolled him in selling his corn in the public market; whose perpetual quit-rents, which could not be redeemed, were always an incumbrance on his little property. Arthur Young met with a poor woman who complained of the times, and said that it was a sad country. Her husband had a morsel of land, one cow, and a poor little horse. They had to pay a quantity of wheat to one seigneur, and a larger quantity to another seigneur, "besides very heavy *tailles* and other taxes." The poor woman was only twenty-eight years of age, but she might, "at no great distance, have been taken for sixty or seventy, her figure was so bent, and her face so furrowed and hardened by labour." She said that she heard that something was to be done by some great folks for such poor ones, but she did not know by whom or how—but God send us better, for "*les tailles et les droits nous écrasent.*"‡ There was no personal sympathy of the higher classes to ameliorate the

* "Travels in France," p. 42.

† Tocqueville, p. 45.

‡ "Travels in France," p. 134.

burthens of their poor dependents. They knew them only as toilers from whom revenue was to be extracted. None of the gentry remained in the rural districts but such as were too poor to leave them. "Being no longer in the position of a chief, they had not the same interest as of old, to attend to, or assist, or direct, the village population; and, on the other hand, not being subject to the same burthens, they could neither feel much sympathy for poverty which they did not share, nor for grievances to which they were not exposed." *

In the rural districts, as well as in the provincial towns, the real administrative functions had gone out of the hands of individuals or bodies having a natural interest in local affairs, and qualified to direct them by local influence and intelligence, to be wielded by a vast army of functionaries all deriving their existence from a central authority in the capital. The King's Council was an administrative and legislative power that decided upon all affairs of a public nature, that prepared laws, that fixed taxes, to which every question was referred, the centre from which was derived the movement that set everything in motion. The individuals composing this Council were obscure; its power appeared to be that of the throne. The Controller-general was the head of this Council. Its instruments were the Intendants of provinces; who had under them each a sub-delegate. These men were the real governors of France. The taxes, whether the ancient tax of the *taille*, or taxes of more recent date, were wholly under their regulation. The quota of men to serve in the militia for each parish was prescribed by the Intendant. All the public works, all the roads, highways and by-ways, kept up out of the public revenue, were under the care of the Council, the Intendant, and the Sub-delegate. The *maréchaussée*, or mounted police, distributed throughout the whole kingdom, were under the management of the Intendants. There was no provision for the Poor in the rural districts. Under circumstances of great pressure, the Intendant distributed corn or rice, and sometimes bestowed alms in the form of work at low wages. In the towns "a few families managed all the public business for their own private purposes, removed from the eye of the public, and with no public responsibility." But the Council came in, and the government, through the Intendant with his subordinate officers, "had a finger in all the concerns of every town, the least as well as the greatest." There were semblances of local freedom in the system of parochial government; but, "compared with the total impotence which was

* Tocqueville, p. 223.

connected with them, they afford an example, in miniature, of the combination of the most absolute government with some of the forms of extreme democracy." The precise details of the complicated system of Centralization presented by M. Tocqueville, are thus summed up: "Under the social condition of France anterior to the Revolution of 1789, as well as at the present day, there was no city, town, borough, village, or hamlet, in the kingdom—there was neither hospital, church fabric, religious house, nor college—which could have an independent will in the management of its private affairs, or which could administer its own property according to its own choice."* The system of Centralization had so completely pervaded France that "no one imagined that any important affair could be properly carried out without the intervention of the state." The people had lost all power of managing their own affairs. "The French government," says M. Tocqueville, "having thus assumed the place of Providence, it was natural that every one should invoke its aid in his individual necessities." May we not add that it was equally natural that when no help came from government at a season of calamity, the people should blaspheme the Providence to which they cried in vain, and in their rage break their false idols in pieces?

The pride of birth which made the aristocracy of France a caste, separating them wholly from the middle classes, was carried forward into a more hateful separation of the middle classes of the towns from those termed the common people. The great passion of the burgher was to become a public functionary. He could buy a place connected with some real or pretended duty arising out of the administrative system of Centralization. Every man wanted to be something "by command of the king." But the honour was not altogether barren. The holders of place were exempted, wholly or in part, from public burthens. They quarrelled amongst themselves; but they were agreed in one principle—to grind the people below them. "Most of the local burthens which they imposed were so contrived as to press most heavily on the lower classes."† The isolation of classes had gradually proceeded to this height under that principle of the French monarchy which sought to govern its subjects by dividing them. The separate parts of the social fabric had no coherence. The whole fell to pieces when it was attempted to repair the rotten edifice. "The nation," said Turgot, in a Report to the king, "is a community consisting of different orders ill-compacted together, and of a people whose members have very few ties between

* See the details of Book II., chapters 2 and 3.

† Tocqueville, p. 170.

themselves, so that every man is exclusively engrossed by his personal interest. Nowhere is any common interest discernible. The villages, the towns, have not any stronger mutual relations than the districts to which they belong." To complete this remarkable isolation, Paris preponderated over the whole kingdom. It was the seat of all mental activity; it was the centre of all political action. "Circulation is stagnant in France," says Young in 1787. In 1789, whilst the mightiest events were passing in Paris, he found the people of Strasbourg, and other towns, perfectly ignorant of circumstances that most intimately concerned them. "That universal circulation of intelligence, which in England transmits the least vibration of feeling or alarm, with electric sensibility, from one end of the kingdom to another, and which unites in bonds of connection men of similar interests and situations, has no existence in France."*

Arthur Young appears to have been almost the only observer amongst Englishmen who, after the dismissal of Calonne in 1787, thought that a Revolution was approaching. Loménie de Brienne, archbishop of Toulouse, had become Controller-general. Young dined with a party whose conversation was entirely political. "One opinion pervaded the whole company, that they are on the eve of some great revolution in the government; that everything points to it"—financial confusion; no minister to propose anything but palliatives; a prince on the throne with excellent dispositions, but wanting in mental resources; a court buried in pleasure and dissipation, and adding to the public distress; a great ferment amongst all ranks of men, "who are eager for some change, without knowing what to look to, or to hope for; and a strong leaven of liberty, increasing every hour since the American revolution." He adds, "all agree that the States of the kingdom cannot assemble without more liberty being the consequence; but I meet with so few men that have any just ideas of freedom, that I question much the species of this new liberty that is to arise." †

Loménie de Brienne has dismissed the Notables, who were beginning to be troublesome, some uttering strange words about liberty, a national assembly, and other unwonted sounds. They had recommended some practical reforms, such as the formation of Provincial Assemblies; the suppression of *Corvées*; a modification of *Gabelle*. These measures were announced in edicts. But the deficit presses. New taxes must be imposed by edicts. These, however, must be registered by the *Parlement* of Paris. Very different from a British Parliament was this ancient institution. It was originally

* "Travels," p. 147.

† *Ibid.*, p. 66.

only a court of justice ; and some of the provinces had similar courts, with local jurisdiction. The members of these Parlements were formerly appointed by the king, and were removeable at his will. The appointments were afterwards sold, and those who bought the places were considered to hold them for life. The Parlements thus gradually acquired a semblance of dependence, and did not always register the royal edicts without inquiry. Towards the close of the reign of Louis XV. the Parlement of Paris, refusing to register some royal edicts, was suppressed, as well as some of the provincial Parlements. They were restored to their functions, by Louis XVI., in 1774. In 1785 the Parlement of Paris refused to register an edict for a large loan ; but the peremptory command of the king overpowered them. Calonne had then recourse to an Assembly of Notables, which was dissolved in 1787, as we have seen. One of the new taxes proposed by Loménie was a project of raising money by stamps. The Parlement of Paris refused to register the edict, unless the financial accounts were submitted to their examination. At the beginning of August, they came to a resolution that a perpetual tax, such as that required to be registered, could only be imposed by the States-General. Then commenced a collision between the Crown and the only body that stood between the Crown and its absolute power. According to the old forms of the monarchy, a Bed of Justice was to be held—a ceremony in which the Parlement should meet the king face to face, and hear his positive commands to register his decrees. On the 6th of August this command is given at Versailles. The Parlement returns to Paris, and refuses to obey the solemn mandate, even though it issued from a Bed of Justice. The refractory Parlement must be put down. The members are banished to Troyes. Paris is in a state of furious excitement. Large bodies of troops are marched into the city to suppress the growing disposition towards violence. At length a compromise is effected. The obnoxious edicts for taxation are withdrawn ; and another is proposed and accepted, which recognized equality of taxation without exemptions. The Parlement is now recalled from its exile. On the 19th of November, the king held a royal sitting (*séance royale*) when he carried to the Parlement an edict for a succession of loans for five years, amounting to nineteen millions sterling. He also submitted to them an edict for the relief of the Protestants. He called upon them to confine their functions to their ancient powers, and to show an example of loyalty and obedience. Violent discussions ensued, in which the duke of Orleans, the relative of the king, took part against the Court. The king departed, after a

contest of nine hours, and the Parlement declared the edicts null and void. The next day the duke was banished to one of his country seats; and two of the most refractory members of the Parlement, were arrested by *lettres de cachet*. Temporary expedients for raising money must be resorted to, till something could be done with this rebellious Parlement. Loménie had his scheme ready. It was to establish a grand Council of State, to be called "La Cour Plenièrè," which should dispense with the Parlement, and yet give a sanction to taxation that might be more satisfactory than the mere exercise of the royal authority. The plan was concocted in secret; but it became known, and produced the greatest agitation in the Parlement of Paris. Two of its most violent opponents, M. d'Espremènil and M. de Montsabert, were ordered to be arrested. They were taken into custody during a sitting of the Parlement, in which, after the example of the Commons of England, when Charles the First went to arrest the five members, not one of the Parlement would point out the persons demanded by a military force. D'Espremènil and Montsabert surrendered, and were taken to prison. The provincial Parlements were now in a state of revolt. The people were furious with excitement. The day after the arrest of the members, the king held another Bed of Justice at Versailles, in which he proposed a number of salutary reforms in six edicts, which provided for the more rapid administration of justice; which regulated the proceedings of the Parlement of Paris; which put all criminal procedure upon a footing which swept away many odious and cruel abuses; which established "La Cour Plenièrè"; which provided for local courts; and which suspended the proceeding of all other courts. These reforms, admirable as some were, were rejected. The edicts became waste paper, through the short-sightedness of the Parlement and the violence of the people. A visitation of Providence then became the cause of general distress. A tremendous hailstorm, on the 13th of July, 1788, destroyed, in many districts, the crops of corn and the vineyards. The ruin was almost total for sixty leagues round Paris. An edict was issued on the 8th of August, that the States-General should be assembled in May of the following year. The royal Treasury was becoming empty, and no means of warding off the pressure of the demands of the public creditors but by a measure declaratory of insolvency. The Treasury payments shall, according to a proclamation of the 16th of August, henceforth be three-fifths in money and two-fifths in paper. The alarm was universal. The Court was terrified. There was no hope but in the recall of Necker, to become Controller of the Finances. Loménie was dismissed, with the solace of more eccle-

siastical preferments. Paris was in a state of riot, which was suppressed with some bloodshed. But hope returned with the presence of Necker. He found himself a financial minister without finances. Offers of loans poured in upon him. The funds rose thirty per cent. The popular cause had triumphed, and Necker was the minister of the people. Nothing remained to do, but to provide for the meeting of the States-General. An Assembly of Notables was again convened. They recommended that each of the three Estates, the Clergy, the Noblesse, and the *Tiers Etat*, should send three hundred members. By the advice of Necker, the king issued an edict that the Clergy and the Noblesse should each elect three hundred members, and the *Tiers Etat* six hundred. The States-General were to assemble on the 4th of May, 1789. The elections began in January.

On the morning of Monday, the 4th of May, the streets of Versailles were filled with thousands of people, to gaze upon the procession of the Court and the States-General from the church of St. Louis, where all had assembled, to the church of Notre-Dame, where a sermon was to be preached. Two hundred and seventy-five years had passed since a king of France had met the States-General. As if to mark the long interval, the costume of the States-General of 1614 was prescribed. The clergy went first—the bishops in velvet robes and rochets, the curés in their plainer dress. The Noblesse came next, in embroidered velvet mantles and gold vests, laced cravats, white plumes in their hats, such as Henri Quatre wore. The *Tiers Etat* came last, in plain black mantles, white cravats, and unfeathered hats. Lastly, came the king beneath a sumptuous canopy, with the queen, the princesses and high-born dames, and the king's brothers. The duke of Orleans had contrived to walk in the last rank of the Nobles, that he might appear to mingle with the first of the Commons. The marquis de Ferrières had painted the scene with the most gorgeous tints—the respectful silence of the immense crowd, the windows filled with elegantly dressed ladies, the joy speaking from their brilliant eyes, the clapping of hands, the sound of trumpets, the chant of the priests,—ravishing picture: “I called to mind the words of the prophet, Daughters of Jerusalem, your king advances; take your nuptial robes and run before him: tears of joy flowed from my eyes.”* The daughter of Necker was at one of the windows. “I was abandoning myself,” she says, “to the most lively hopes at seeing, for the first time in France, representatives of the nation. Madame de

* “Mémoires de Ferrières.”

Montmorin said to me, 'You are wrong in rejoicing; out of this there will come great disasters for France and for us.'*'

The next day the States-General was opened. A large hall in the avenue of the palace had been provided for the assembly. This *Salle des Menus*, as it was called, was of sufficient size to contain the twelve hundred members, with galleries for spectators. There was a platform for the king and his Court. Louis—with Marie-Antoinette by his side, looking pale and ill at ease—read an address, of which the principal subject was that of the finances. When the reading was finished, the king put on his hat, as he took his seat on the throne. The clergy and nobility, also put on their hats. Some of the *Tiers Etat* also took this mode of asserting their position, and there was great confusion, which the king stopped by taking off his own hat. The costume of the Third Estate was the same as in 1614, but the sentiment which then required them to kneel in the presence of the sovereign was gone. The keeper of the seals made a speech; and so did Necker, the Controller-General of the Finances—a speech which Arthur Young said was such "as you would expect from a banking clerk of some ability." The difficult question, whether the three estates should deliberate and vote in one body, or in separate chambers, was not touched upon. It seemed to have been arranged that, contrary to the strong opinion that had been expressed by some of the constituencies, the discussions and the votes should not take place in one common assembly. It had been intended that four chambers should be provided; one for the solemn meetings of the three orders together; and for each distinct order a separate chamber. By some difference between the Court functionaries, who were of more importance than the sovereign or his ministers, the building set apart for the Commons was refused to be given up by the administration of the stables. The *Salle des Menus* was therefore occupied by the Third Estate. The Clergy and the Nobles met in their appropriated chambers, and proceeded to the verification of their powers, having decided to do so by the votes of a majority in each of the two orders. The Commons refused to proceed to a separate verification; and for five weeks this contest went on, but without any decisive results, of speeches and resolutions.

Milton has eloquently described the intellectual fervour of London in the early days of the Long Parliament. "The shop of war hath not more anvils and hammers waking, to fashion out the plates and instruments of armed justice, in defense of beleaguered truth, than there be pens and heads there, sitting by their studious

* Madame de Staël—"Considérations sur la Révolution"

lamps, musing, searching, revolving new notions and ideas wherewith to present, as with their homage and their fealty, the approaching reformation." * But in Paris, in 1789, the literary activity was of a very different character from that of London in 1644. There was the same disputing and discoursing upon "things not before discoursed or written of;" but in London "the study of highest and most important matters to be reformed" had regard to the differences of doctrine rather than the destruction of religion; and contemplated resistance to arbitrary power rather than the overthrow of all lawful authority. During the first month of the meeting of the States-General, Arthur Young was in Paris, and "was much in company." He found "a general ignorance of the principles of government; a strange and unaccountable appeal, on one side, to ideal and visionary rights of nature; and, on the other, no settled plan that shall give security to the people for being in future in a much better situation than hitherto." † He saw the booksellers' shops filled with eager crowds, squeezing from the door to the counter to buy the pamphlet of the last hour. He saw the coffee-houses in the Palais Royal not only crowded within, but other crowds without, listening to orators who, from chairs or tables, harangued each his audience. The pamphlets and the orators were admired, exactly in the proportion in which they attacked Christianity with a sort of rage, without any attempt to substitute any other belief; and proposed to the French people, not that their affairs should be better conducted, but that they should take the conduct of them into their own hands—they "a people so ill-prepared to act for themselves, that they could not undertake a universal and simultaneous reform without a universal destruction." ‡

On the 14th of June, Arthur Young repaired to the *Salle des Menus* to behold what was to him, as it was to most Englishmen, a scene eminently interesting—"the spectacle of the representatives of twenty-five millions of people, just emerging from the evils of two hundred years of arbitrary power, and rising to the blessings of a freer constitution, assembled with open doors under the eye of the public." § His feelings were roused; but he saw how the irregularities of the proceedings showed the representatives of the people to be without that self-control, in the absence of which a deliberative assembly is only an organized mob. The spectators in the gallery were allowed to applaud; a hundred members were on their legs at one time; the president, Bailly, absolutely without the means of keeping order. Specific motions, founded on distinct

* "Liberty of unlicensed Printing."

‡ Tocqueville, p. 305.

† "Travels in France," p. 105.

§ "Travels," p. 110.

propositions, were drowned in abstract declarations, producing interminable harangues. Thus had the *Tiers Etat* been debating for five weeks. But with all their mistakes of procedure they clung firmly to their principle, that they would have no verification of their powers, except in common with the other Orders. The stronger this inertia in the halls of the States-General, the more active was the public feeling without doors. Tumults were expected. Clubs, that afterwards became memorable, stimulated the popular agitation. The excessive price of bread had already produced riots in the provinces. The Court is alarmed. At length something more definite than the orations in the Palais Royal produces a terror that may end in some conflict between the Orders amongst themselves, or of the Crown with the States-General. On the 17th of June it was resolved, on the motion of the Abbé Sièyès, that the *Tiers Etat* should assume the title of "The National Assembly." The members all took an oath to discharge with zeal and fidelity the duties entrusted to their care. They passed several resolutions on the subject of the taxes and the dearness of provisions. These were not of a violent character; but they were proofs that the Commons were resolved to try their own strength. The Clergy, on the 19th, determined, by a majority, that the definitive verification of powers should be made in the General Assembly. The Nobility voted an Address to the king, in which they protested against the assumption of power by the *Tiers Etat*. On the 20th of June it was proclaimed in the streets of Versailles, that a royal sitting of the States-General would be held on the 22nd; and that in the meantime the meetings of the three Orders were suspended. At eight o'clock in the morning, Bailly, the president, and the two secretaries, were at the door of their hall. It was closed against them by military. The deputies began to collect in great numbers in the avenue of Versailles—all angry, some desperate. But they soon learn that their president, having been permitted to take away his papers from the *Salle des Menus*, has taken refuge in a large building, the *Jeux de Paume* (Tennis Court), in the Rue St. François. Upon the proposition of Mounier, each took an oath never to separate from that National Assembly, until the constitution of the kingdom was established. On the 22nd it was proclaimed that the royal sitting was adjourned till the following day. The National Assembly could not meet on the 22nd, for the *Jeux de Paume* was occupied by the princes for their tennis-play. On the 23rd the king came to the *Salle des Menus*; and one of the secretaries of state read a declaration to the effect that the distinction of the Three Orders should be main

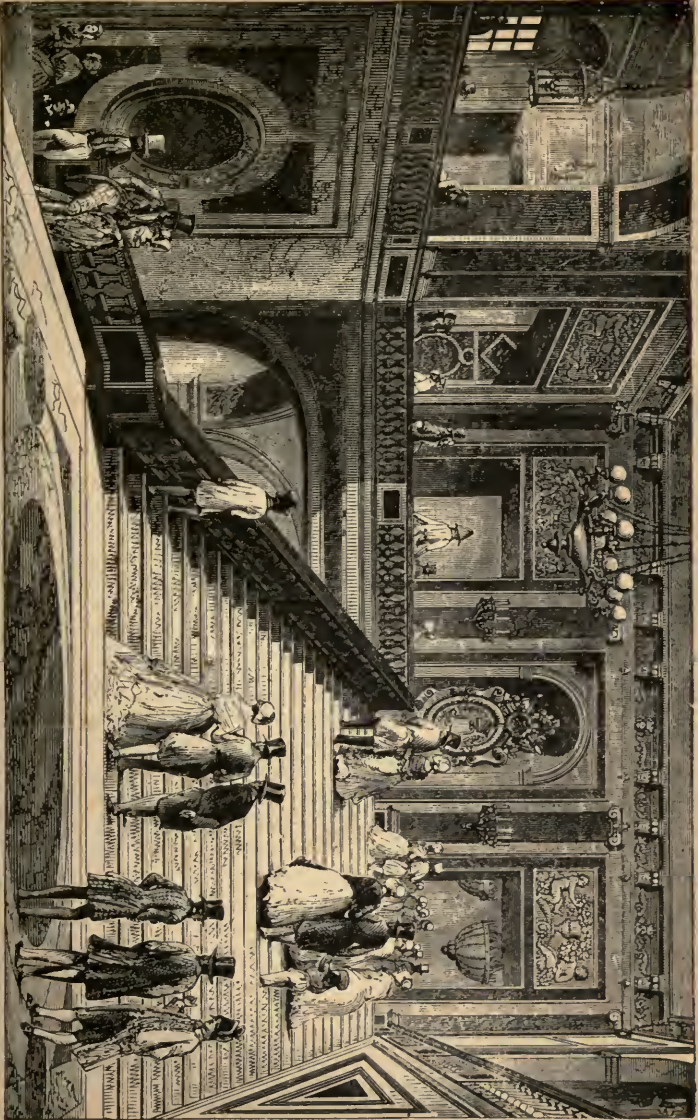
tained in its integrity; but that they might meet to deliberate together with the consent of the king. The resolutions of the *Tiers Etat*, on the 17th of June, were cancelled. Thirty-five articles were read, detailing the intentions of the king. Some pointed to useful reforms; others contemplated a strict adherence to established things, even to abuses. The king closed the sitting in a speech, wherein he rashly declared, that if the Three Orders could not agree to effect what he proposed—"I alone will accomplish the good of my people." The king leaves the hall, followed by most of the clergy, and all the nobles, having given his command that each order should meet in its distinct place on the following morning, but that they were now to separate. The Commons stir not. They look at each other in gloomy silence. De Brézé, the chief usher of the court, enters and says, "Gentlemen, you have heard the king's orders." Bailly said to the members around him, "I think that the assembled nation cannot receive any order." Then rose Mirabeau, the man of the most commanding power in that assembly, and thus addressed the awe-struck usher: "Yes, sir; we have heard what the king was advised to say; and you, who cannot be the organ of the king to the States-General—you, who have neither place nor right of speech here—you are not the person to remind us of what he has said. If you are commissioned to make us leave this place, you must ask for orders to use force; for we will only quit by the power of the bayonet."* Many speeches were made. The assembly affirmed that they persevered in their former resolutions; and upon the proposition of Mirabeau it was declared that the persons of the deputies were inviolable—that it should be a capital crime to arrest or detain any member, on whose part soever the same be commanded. On the 24th, the majority of the clergy joined the *Tiers Etat* for the verification of their powers in common. On the 25th between forty and fifty of the noblesse united in the same way. On the 27th the king, by letter, invited the whole body of the nobility, and the clergy, to do what he had protested against on the 23rd. On the 30th, the formal union is completed. The States-General have lost their ancient name. They are three orders no longer—they are the National Assembly.

The extraordinary change in the resistance of the Court to the union of the three orders was, in all probability, produced by the apprehension that the French guards could not be relied upon in any contest with the National Assembly, if the military power and an insurgent populace should be brought into conflict. There were

* *Historie Parlementaire.*"

regiments of foreign troops in the king's service, and these might be gradually concentrated in the neighbourhood of Paris, where bread-riots were becoming very fearful. On the 18th of July, Mirabeau stated in the National Assembly that there were twenty-five thousand troops between Paris and Versailles, and that twenty thousand more were expected. He moved an Address to the king that he would cause the troops to be removed. The king replied that the troops were there to maintain order, and secure the freedom of their deliberations. Necker, who had become powerless to advise or to control, begged for permission to resign. On the 11th of July he was dismissed; and was requested to depart secretly from Versailles. On the 12th it became known that the ministry of Necker, from which so much had been expected by the people, was at an end; that other men hostile to the popular cause were in the royal confidence. Marshal de Broglie, who was minister of war, with the command of the troops, was reported to have written to the prince de Condé, that with fifty thousand men he would disperse these wolves, the national deputies; and the fools who applauded them. Foulon was named intendant of marine—Foulon, who had said that if the people were hungry they might eat grass. The 12th of July was a Sunday. There were movements of troops from the suburbs of the city. Placards were issued in the name of the king inviting the inhabitants to keep their houses. The popular curiosity became more intense. At noon the Palais Royal was filled with eager crowds. A young man, who was hereafter to take a leading position, Camille Desmoulins, came out from the Café Foy with sword and pistol in hand, and mounting a table, cried "To arms." A multitude rush forth, with green cockades, or green boughs in their hats. They seize from an image-shop a bust of Necker, and a bust of the duke of Orleans, and, draping them in crape, bear them about in procession. Prince Lambesc, at the head of the Royal German regiment, encounters the procession, and disperses the people with musket and sabre. There are other fights between the Parisians and the foreign soldiery, the French guards taking part with the populace. The cry "To Arms" goes through all the city. The night falls upon a population maddened with rage or fear. In the morning, the cry is again "To Arms." Thousands of fierce men are in the streets, searching for guns and ammunition in every public place. A municipal authority is hastily formed at the Hôtel de Ville. Public criers proclaim that all men should resort to their districts to be enrolled. In a few hours the National Guard of Paris is constituted, each man wearing a red and blue cockade. But how to arm them? Smiths are making

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pikes; gunpowder has been obtained; but muskets are wanting. The great day of the 14th dawns; and the tidings go forth that at the Hôtel des Invalides there are ample stores of guns. By nine o'clock on that morning the Hôtel has been ransacked; and twenty-eight thousand fire-locks are in the hands of these furious volunteers. "To the Bastile" is now the cry that gives a precise direction to the popular violence.

France had many Bastiles, where, without legal trial or sentence, men suspected of designs against the government, or who had given offence to a courtier or a royal mistress, might be shut up even to the end of their days, under the authority of a *lettre de cachet*, through whose mysterious agency they vanished out of society, and were as if dead. The great Bastile of Paris was a fortress built in the fourteenth century—a massive stone structure of nine towers, surrounded by a deep ditch. Other ditches, with draw-bridges, and strong barriers, were between the fortress and the street St. Antoine. The Bastile had become celebrated throughout Europe, by the remarkable narrative of the escape of two men, De Latude, and D'Alegre, in 1756. Their adventures made the construction of this horrible prison familiar to Englishmen. The labour they went through for eighteen months—in plaiting ropes out of the threads of their linen, to form a ladder for their descent of eighty feet from the platform to the ditch; and in removing the iron bars from the chimney by which they were to gain the platform—this labour was almost incredible. But the perseverance of these two fellow-prisoners indicated how strong was the desire of escape from a den where men went mad, under the sense of injustice and the pressure of despair. In England, the Bastile was the great symbol of the tyranny of the French government. Cowper described it in 1785 as "the house of bondage worse than that of old which God avenged on Pharaoh;" and he thus looks forward, almost with a prophetic eye, to the catastrophe of the 14th of July, 1789:

"Ye horrid towers, the abode of broken hearts,
Ye dungeons and ye cages of despair,
That monarchs have supplied from age to age
With music such as suits their sovereign ears,
The sighs and groans of miserable men!
There's not an English heart that would not leap
To hear that ye were fallen at last."*

The attack on the Bastile had been expected by the governor, De Launay. He had placed artillery on the tops of the towers. He had a hundred and fourteen men in the fortress, with arms and ammuni-

* "The Task," book v.

tion, but with scanty store of provisions. The Committee at the Hôtel de Ville sent a deputation to the governor, to beg him to remove from the towers the cannon which commanded the quartier St. Antoine. The cannon were drawn back from the embrasures. But St. Antoine was not so easily quieted. That quarter was the residence of a great artisan population. Paris had been growing during the century into a very considerable manufacturing town; and in the Faubourg St. Antoine, especially, the working people were collected together in large numbers, in consequence of an edict of Louis XVI., intended "to relieve them from the restrictions which are injurious to their interests as well as to their freedom of trade." They had privileges then granted which relieved them from the tyranny of the guilds.* But the agglomeration of a vast working population, at a time of public excitement and of private distress, was a serious danger; and thus in every stage of the French Revolution the Faubourg St. Antoine was a terrible power in the hands of those who worked upon the popular passions. About noon of the 14th of July, Thuriot de la Rosière, an advocate, has demanded to see the governor of the Bastile, to warn him of the cry which has gone forth in the more polite quarters of Paris, and to exhort him to surrender. De Launay and Thuriot went upon the battlements; and there they saw a vast multitude swarming towards the grim towers, along every street and every alley of the Faubourg. Thuriot shows himself from the battlements; descends; and addresses the crowd from a window in the governor's house, with some words intended to calm their fury. He receives only their curses; and an attack commences in downright earnest. This roaring multitude have resolute men amongst them. Four with axes make their way from the roof of a neighbouring house to the outer wall of the Bastile, jump down into the court, and begin hewing at the chains of the drawbridge. The drawbridge at length falls; and the crowd pours into the exterior court. Another drawbridge impedes their progress. They rush at it; and are received with a fire of musketry. Dead and wounded men are carried forth, and the sight rouses the gathering multitude to additional fury. Large numbers of the French guards come to assist in the attack. De Launay fires upon the crowd from the battlements; the populace fire upon the Swiss and the Invalides who defend the fortress. There have been five hours of this contest without a reasonable expectation of the stronghold being taken. The garrison has only lost one man. Nearly two hundred of the assailants have been killed or wounded. But the Invalides wished

* Tocqueville, p. 139.

to surrender—the Swiss expressed their desire to resist. De Launay in his despair of being able finally to repel a mob of thousands, animated by one spirit, attempted to apply a match to the powder magazine, but he was stopped by one of his officers. Moved by that almost instinctive fear of a raging multitude which the bravest may feel, he was now inclined to capitulate, but not to surrender. He wrote a note to the besiegers, to the effect that he had twenty thousand pounds of powder within the magazine, and would blow up the Bastile, and thus destroy its neighbourhood, himself and his besiegers, if they did not accept a capitulation which would leave him and his garrison to go free. The note was given to Elie, an officer of the French guards; and he gave his assurance, in which his men joined, that if the drawbridge were lowered, the garrison should receive no harm. It was lowered. The furious crowd rushed in, passed the Invalides and the Swiss who were ranged in the inner court. The French guards could not wholly protect those to whom safety had been assured. It was determined to take De Launay to the Hôtel de Ville. As he moves along the yells of the multitude grow louder; the efforts to protect the unfortunate man are less and less availing. Hullin, one of the besiegers, even fights against the mob to defend his prisoner. Hullin is struck down and De Launay is murdered. Major De Losme, one of the officers of the Bastile, was surrounded. He had always shown kindness to the prisoners, and one of the crowd, who had been under his charge, now seized a musket to defend him. De Losme was killed. Two of the Invalides were hanged by the mob. Many of the besiegers have been exploring the dungeons of the Bastile, where they find only seven prisoners. Others linger around the hated place, shouting and singing in frantic joy. A vast number have marched off to the Hôtel de Ville, conducting their prisoners to receive judgment for the guilt of having been faithful to their duty. The officers of the French guard demand that the Invalides and the Swiss shall go free, as the reward of themselves and their men for their aid in this day's work. Another murder, that of Flesselles, a magistrate, was perpetrated that evening. Through the night Paris watched as if a foreign enemy were approaching to sack the city. The windows were lighted; patrols were in all the streets; orators were still haranguing the populace, amongst whom Marat was conspicuous. St. Antoine gave itself up to a frenzy of delight, and the pains of hunger were less keenly felt in the time of triumph and of revenge. The occurrences at Paris were imperfectly known at Versailles; but at midnight the duke de Liancourt entered the king's bed-cham-

ber, and told him how the Bastile had fallen. "It is a riot," (*émeute*) said the king. "No, Sire, it is a revolution," replied the duke. The danger which now threatened the throne, and all who surrounded the throne, was manifest. The power was passing away from the National Assembly into the hands of an armed populace.

On the morning of the 15th of July the king suddenly appeared in the midst of the National Assembly, to announce that he had given orders to the troops to withdraw from Paris and Versailles, and that he relied upon the Assembly to restore order and tranquillity. The deputies loudly applauded: as the king returned to the palace the people vociferously shouted. A deputation of the Assembly proceeded to Paris to proclaim at the Hôtel de Ville the glad words that Louis had that day spoken. The king, it was held, had authorized the establishment of the National Guard. A commander must be found. In the hall was a bust of La Fayette; and a deputy pointing to it, the friend of Washington was elected commander by acclamation. In the same way Bailly was constituted Mayor of Paris, in the place of Flesselles, the Provost of the Merchants, who had been shot the night before. The Parisians had now confidence in the king, and the king had confidence in the Parisians. He announced to the Assembly that he would visit his good city. He would dismiss his ministers; he would recall Necker. But some who surrounded the king had not his trust in the disposition of the people. On the morning of the 17th the king is on his way to Paris attended by a large number of the deputies. The count d'Artois (the king's brother), the prince de Condé, and others of royal blood—marshal de Broglie, the Polignacs and several of the recent ministry, are on their way to the frontiers. The queen vainly attempted to prevent the king going amongst a dangerous populace. "The king was of a weak character, but he was not timid,"* and he kept to his determination. His reception was such as to fill him with hope for the future. Loyalty and patriotism joined in the universal cry—"Vive le Roi—Vive la Nation."

The obnoxious ministers have fled from Versailles. One, the most obnoxious, Foulon, is reported to have died; for a sumptuous funeral has proceeded from his house. On the morning of the 22nd of July some peasants of Vitry, near Fontainebleau, are leading into Paris an old man bound with ropes to the tail of a cart. On his back is fastened a bundle of grass, and a collar of nettles is round his neck. It is Foulon, who has been denounced as a

* Durmont—"Souvenirs sur Mirabeau," p. 81.

speculator in famine—one who said the poor should eat grass if they could not get bread. He is dragged to the Hôtel de Ville to be judged. La Fayette arrived. Anxious to save the trembling man of seventy-four from the popular fury, he proposed to consign him to the prison of the Abbaye, that he might be tried according to the laws. “What is the use of trying a man,” cried a voice, “who has been judged these thirty years?” The crowd rushed upon their victim; dragged him out of the hall; and in a few minutes he was hanging to a lantern at the corner of the street. His head was cut off; a bundle of hay was stuffed into the mouth; and this trophy of mob vengeance was carried through the city. The same night Berthier, the son-in-law of Foulon,—Intendant of Paris, and hated as a tax-levier,—is brought in a carriage to the Hôtel de Ville, surrounded by National Guards, sent by the municipals to protect him. The protection avails him not. The superseders of law have him in their clutches. He fights against them with dogged resolution. But the lantern has its prey, and another ghastly head, and a bleeding heart, are carried in horrible procession. The municipal authorities of Paris have been trampled down by murderers. Bailly and La Fayette indignantly resigned their offices; but they were won back again, when the municipality was re-organized, under the name of La Commune.

The doings of Paris were not without successful imitations in the provinces. On the 20th of July, Arthur Young was at Strasbourg, where he first heard the news of the overthrow of the Bastille. He writes, “The spirit of revolt is gone forth into various parts of the kingdom. The price of bread has prepared the populace everywhere for all sorts of violence.” He soon saw the course which the violence was taking in the rural districts. He was at Besançon on the 27th. There he heard of châteaux burnt or plundered, the seigneurs hunted down like wild beasts, their wives and daughters outraged; “and these abominations, not inflicted on marked persons, who were odious for their former conduct or principles.”* In his inn at Dole there were “a gentleman, unfortunately a seigneur, his wife, family, three servants, an infant but a few months old, who escaped from their flaming château half naked in the night; all their property lost except the land itself; and this family valued and esteemed by the neighbours, with many virtues to command the love of the poor, and no oppressions to provoke their enmity.”† The inquiries of Arthur Young led him to believe that the burnings and plunderings had not been committed by troops of *brigands*, but by the peasants only. The

* “Travels in France,” p. 146.

† *Ibid.*, p. 149.

notion of brigands going through the country in troops eight hundred strong, and even to the number of sixteen hundred, was the prevalent belief in the towns. People came around Young to ask for news. "They were much surprised to find that I gave no credit to the existence of brigands, as I was well persuaded that all the outrages that had been committed were the work of the peasants only." *

The National Assembly, all things being tolerably quiet in Paris proceeds with its self-appointed work of sweeping away all ancient things, for the purpose of building up a wholly new system for the government of twenty-five millions of people. The Assembly had been long occupied in drawing up a Declaration of the Rights of Man. Some who were concerned in the preparation of this document, amongst whom was Dumont, considered it a puerile fiction. It declared that "men are born free and equal." It is not true, writes the fellow-worker of Mirabeau. Are men born free? They are born in a state of weakness and necessary dependence. Are they equal? By equality do we understand equality of fortune, of talent, of virtue, of industry, of condition? † The metaphysical difficulties of the National Assembly were quickly absorbed in one vast measure of sweeping change. At a nocturnal sitting of the 4th of August, after a Report of a Committee on the troubled state of the kingdom had been read, it was proposed by two noblemen that all taxes should be proportionably paid by all, according to their income, as well as all other public burthens; that all feudal rights should be made redeemable by a money value; that *corvées* and all personal services should be abolished. A Breton deputy, in the dress of a farmer, rose and exclaimed, "Let the title-deeds, the terrible instruments which for ages have tormented the people, be brought here, and burnt—those parchments by which men are required to be yoked to a wagon like beasts—which compel men to pass the night in beating the ponds, to prevent the frogs from disturbing the sleep of their luxurious lords. Declare the compulsory redemption of these services, and thus stop the burning of the châteaux." Dumont saw the extraordinary scene of the 4th of August, when a work "which would have demanded a year of care and deliberation, was proposed, voted, resolved, by general acclamation. I know not how many laws were decreed: the abolition of feudal rights, the abolition of tithes, and the abolition of the privileges of provinces—three articles which in themselves embrace a whole system of jurisprudence and of policy, were decided, with ten or a dozen others, in less time than a parliament of England would have taken for the first

* "Travels in France," p. 155.

† "Souvenirs sur Mirabeau," p. 93.

reading of a Bill of some importance."* Mirabeau was not present at that sitting. The next day he said to Dumont: "Behold our French; they take an entire month to dispute about syllables, and in one night they overturn all the ancient order of the monarchy."

On the 12th of August, Arthur Young, being at Clermont, hears of the famous decrees of the 4th. "The great news just arrived from Paris, of the utter abolition of tithes, feudal rights, game, warrens, pigeons, † &c., has been received with the greatest joy by the mass of the people." Sensible men, however, complained of the injustice of declaring what will be done, without regulations of what was to be done at the moment of declaring. About a fortnight later he was "pestered with all the mob of the country shooting." The declaration of the National Assembly, "without any statute or provision to secure the right of the game to the possessor of the soil, according to the tenour of the vote, has, as I am everywhere informed, filled all the fields of France with sportsmen, to an utter nuisance. The same effects have flowed from declarations of right relative to titles, taxes, feudal rights, &c. In the declarations, conditions and compensations are talked of; but an unruly, ungovernable multitude seize the benefit of the abolition, and laugh at the obligations or recompense." The barriers that stood between a people long misgoverned and oppressed, and all the ancient restraints of their servitude, being suddenly broken down, their excesses could scarcely be matter of wonder. There is very little exaggeration in what Mr. Eden wrote to Mr. Pitt from Paris, on the 27th of August, 1789: "It would lead me too far to enter into the strange and unhappy particulars of the present situation of this country. The anarchy is most complete; the people have renounced every idea and principle of subordination; the magistracy (so far as there remain any traces of magistracy) is panic-struck; the army is utterly undone; and the soldiers are so freed from military discipline, that on every discontent, and in the face of day, they take their arms and knapsacks, and leave their regiments; the church, which formerly had so much influence, is now in general treated by the people with derision; the revenue is greatly and rapidly decreasing amidst the disorders of the time; even the industry of the labouring class is interrupted and suspended. In short, the prospect, in every point of view, is most alarming; and it is sufficient to walk into the streets, and to

* "Souvenirs sur Mirabeau," p. 100.

† One of the exclusive privileges of the seigneurs was to have dove-houses for flocks of birds to feed upon the grain of the lands of which these lords neither owned nor captivated any part.

look at the faces of those who pass, to see that there is a general impression of calamity and terror.”*

The scarcity consequent upon a bad harvest was growing more fearful, especially in Paris. The furious multitude, filled with vague suspicions by incendiary journalists and orators, ascribed the enormous price of bread to other than natural causes. “The people,” says Dumont, “attributed the scarcity to the aristocracy. The aristocrats had caused the corn to be cut down whilst in the blade: the aristocrats had paid the bakers not to make bread; the aristocrats had thrown the grain into the rivers. There was no lie, no absurdity, that did not appear probable.”† A foolish display of loyalty at Versailles turned the follies of the people into a new channel of rage against the Court. A regiment of Flanders had come to Versailles; and the officers of the king’s body-guard gave an entertainment on the 1st of October to the officers of this regiment. The king and queen entered during the banquet. The orchestra played “*O Richard, O mon Roi,*” and shouts of “*Vive le Roi*” awoke the sentiment of loyalty even amongst officers of the National Guard who had been invited. Some of them turned their national cockade, showing only the white beneath. Even black cockades were to be seen. There was an evident re-action against the popular cause. The Parisians heard of these demonstrations; and an insurrectionary feeling was fast spreading amongst the half-starved populace, who had broken open baker’s shops, and attempted to hang a baker, who was saved by the National Guard. At daybreak on the morning of the 5th of October, a woman went into a guard-room, and took a drum, which she beat as she marched along. Crowds of market-women came forth, for this day, being Monday, was an idle day for them. They began to cry “Bread.” There was no bread in the bakers’ shops, and they would go to Versailles, to fetch the baker and his wife. The crowd of women increased to hundreds; and they soon filled the Hôtel de Ville. In four or five hours they were joined by a body of men, who obtained muskets and two pieces of cannon from the municipal stores. The excesses of the women, who wanted to burn the building, were stopped by Maillard, an usher of the court, who told them that he was one of the conquerors of the Bastile. By the consent of a superior officer he proposed to lead the women away on the road to Versailles, where they wanted to go, that the authorities might have time to collect their forces, and stop the tumult. On the troop of Amazons went, with this tall man in black as their

* Tomlin’s “*Life of Pitt,*” vol. ii. p. 74.

† “*Souvenirs sur Mirabeau,*” p. 122.

general. As the day advanced the affair became more serious. La Fayette and the Committees of Districts were at the Hôtel de Ville. The National Guard, the French Guards (now called Grenadiers), the rough men from the Faubourg St. Antoine—all gathered round La Fayette, demanding to go to Versailles. The Commune deliberated till four o'clock, and then ordered La Fayette to march. Meanwhile, Maillard, with his female host, had reached Versailles about three o'clock. The women demanded to enter the National Assembly. Fifteen were admitted, with a soldier, who had belonged to the French Guards. The soldier said Paris was starving; they came for bread; and for the punishment of the king's body-guard, who had insulted the national cockade. Mounier, the president, could only get rid of the troublesome visitors, upon the condition that he should accompany the deputation to see the king. They were admitted to the presence of Louis, who spoke to them affectionately; and they quitted the kind-hearted king crying "*Vive le Roi.*" The women outside, growing more violent, said that they had been betrayed by their deputation; but they were pacified for a time, by a written paper, signed by the king, declaring that every care should be taken for the provisioning of Paris. A conflict then appeared imminent between the men of St. Antoine and the king's body-guard. The cannon which had been brought from Paris was pointed against the guard; but the powder was wet, and the men sulkily said, "It is not time yet." In this night of peril, Mounier pressed upon the king the acceptance of the articles of the constitution, which assent he had not previously given. The king yielded. When Mounier returned to the hall of the Assembly, it was filled with women, who interrupted the proceedings. There was a discussion upon the criminal laws. A fish-woman called out—"Stop that babbler; that is not the question; the question is about bread." At midnight, La Fayette, with fifteen thousand of the National Guard, arrived. He had made the men under his command swear fidelity to the law and the king. He entered the Salle des Menus; told the president that the men had promised to obey the king and the National Assembly; and then, attended by only two commissioners, went to the king, and having explained to him the state of affairs, received orders to assign to the National Guards the external posts of the palace; the body guard and the Swiss remaining in the interior. At three in the morning the Assembly separated, and La Fayette went to rest. About six in the morning a mob of the Parisians, mingled with some of Versailles, got over the iron railing of the palace, and forced their way into the interior. The subsequent occurrences

of that terrible 6th of October are differently stated by various authorities. There is one description by the side of which all other descriptions look pale; and yet the facts which "History will record" are more definite than the general truth as coloured by the glowing imagination of Burke.* The mob of assassins and plunderers, when they had penetrated into the interior of the palace, directed their furious steps towards the queen's apartments. They were probably guided by some spy about the royal family. Madame Campan looked out of the ante-chamber, and saw a faithful guard, covered with wounds, who kept the passage from the hall against many men, and who cried out "Save the queen; they come to assassinate her." She bolted the door; the queen jumped from her bed, and made her way to the king's apartments. The assassins did not reach the queen's chamber, says Madame Campan. The body-guard had taken refuge there, and there also the king had arrived. To the famous apartment called the *Œil-de-Bœuf* the guards had been sent by the king; and in his own apartment, to which he had returned, he was joined by the queen and her children. The mob were thundering at the door of the *Œil-de-Bœuf* when a detachment of the French Guards arrived, under the command of serjeant Hoche, a man famous in after days. They came to save their brother soldiers; and they soon cleared the palace of those who thirsted after blood. Two of the guards had been killed on the staircase; and a ruffian cut off their heads, which were carried about on pikes. La Fayette arrived. The mob outside cried that the king must go to Paris. Louis showed himself on a balcony; and so did the queen with her children. La Fayette took the queen's hand, and raised it respectfully to his lips, and then the mob shouted "*Vive la Reine.*" It was agreed that the king and the royal family should go to Paris; and the Assembly voting that they were inseparable from the king, a hundred deputies were selected to accompany him. At one o'clock, a most unregal procession was in motion—National Guards mingled with shouting and singing men of St. Antoine; cannon, with pikemen astride them; waggon-loads of corn, lent from the stores of Versailles; hackney-coaches; the royal carriage; carriages with deputies; La Fayette on horseback; and, swarming round the king and his family, vociferous women, crying "We shall no more want bread; we are coming with the baker, the bakeress, and the baker's boy." As the darkness deepens, the multitudinous array reaches the barrier. Mayor Bailly harangues the king; and then, at the *Hôtel de Ville*, there are more harangues. The king says he comes with pleas-

* See "Reflections on the Revolution in France."

ure and with confidence among his people. The mayor attempts to repeat the speech, but omits the word "confidence." "Say with confidence," interposes the queen. Before wearied royalty can sleep, with hasty accommodation in the palace of the Tuileries, long since disused, the king has to be shown to the people from a balcony by torchlight, wearing the tricolor cockade. In a few days the Tuileries looks something like a palace. There was an interval of tranquillity. The harassed king, the slave of circumstances, soon manifested an outward show of that confidence which he had professed to feel. An Englishman in Paris writes, on the 18th of October, "this morning I saw his majesty walking in the Champs Elysées, without guards. He seemed easy and cheerful." *

* Trail to Romilly, in "Romilly's Memoirs."

CHAPTER XXVI.

Connexion of the French Revolution with English history.—The public opinion of England on the Revolution.—Views of eminent men.—The king of France visits the National Assembly.—Session of the British Parliament.—Divisions in the Whig Party.—The Test Act.—Nootka Sound.—War with Spain averted—Fate of the Federation in Paris.—Burke publishes his “Reflections on the French Revolution.”—Russia and Turkey.—Siege of Ismail.—Mirabeau President of the National Assembly.—His negotiations with the Court.—His death.—Parliament.—Breach of the friendship between Burke and Fox.—Clamour against the Dissenters.—The Birmingham Riots.

THE history of the French Revolution is essentially connected with the history of England, almost from the first day of the meeting of the States-General. The governments of the two countries were not, for several years, brought into collision, or into an exchange of remonstrance and explanation, on the subject of the momentous events in France. But these events, in all their shifting aspects, so materially affected the state of public opinion amongst the British people, that they gradually exercised a greater influence upon our external policy and our internal condition, than any overthrow of dynasties, any wars, any disturbances of the balance of power, any one of “the incidents common in the life of a nation,”—to use the words of Tocqueville,—even a far greater influence than the American Revolution, which was the precursor of that of France. For this cause, we feel it necessary to relate the leading events of this signal uprooting of ancient institutions and established ideas, more fully than would at first sight appear proportionate in a general history of our own land. Nevertheless, we shall aim at the utmost brevity consistent with an intelligible narrative. At every act of this great drama, we shall endeavour to show the effect of its memorable scenes upon the thoughts and feelings of those amongst us who guided the national sentiment as statesmen and writers. “Between the spring of 1789 and the close of 1792, the public mind of England underwent a great change.”* To trace the formation of that aggregate public opinion,—to which the most powerful statesman of the time was compelled to yield a reluctant obedience, and against which the most eloquent advocate of popular rights could only feebly protest,—is a task of which the

* Macaulay—“Life of Pitt.”

execution must be necessarily inadequate, but which, however imperfect, must have some illustrative historical value.

The "change in the public mind" with which the fluctuating opinions of many eminent men were identified,—changes in most of those men very unjustly denounced as apostacy,—proceeded from the original inability of the most sagacious to see the probable career, and to estimate the real strength, of the new-born liberty of France. "The English," says Tocqueville, "taught by their own history, and enlightened by the long practice of political freedom, perceived dimly, as through a thick veil, the approaching spectre of a great revolution. But they were unable to distinguish its real shape; and the influence it was so soon to exercise upon the destinies of the world, and upon their own, was unforeseen."* Much of the early feeling associated with the French Revolution depended upon youth and temperament. To young and ardent minds, 1789 was a season of hope and promise.

"Bliss was it in the dawn to be alive,
But to be young was very heaven! Oh! times,
In which the meagre, stale, forbidding ways
Of custom, law, and statute, took at once
The attraction of a country in romance."

Coleridge, who first gave to the world these verses of Wordsworth in his poem "On the French Revolution, as it appeared to enthusiasts at its commencement," says in prose, almost as eloquent as his friend's poetry, "Many there were, young men of loftiest minds, yea, the prime stuff out of which manly wisdom and practical greatness are formed, who had appropriated their hopes and the ardour of their souls to mankind at large, to the wide expanse of national interests, which then seemed fermenting in the French republic as in the main outlet and chief crater of the revolutionary torrents; and who confidently believed that these torrents, like the lavas of Vesuvius, were to subside into a soil of inexhaustible fertility in the circumjacent lands, the old divisions and mouldering edifices of which they had covered or swept away."† "I was a sharer in the general vortex," adds Coleridge. Such a young man, one of loftiest mind, William Huskisson, was in his twentieth year residing with his uncle in Paris. That young man, destined to form one of the most important members of a Tory government advancing towards liberal opinions, was present at the taking of the Bastille, and was a member of one of the Clubs of Paris. In 1823, when he was a candidate for Liverpool, he was accused of having been a member of the Jacobin Club. He denied the charge,

* "France before the Revolution," p. 3.

† "The Friend," Essay ii.

but he frankly said, "In the earlier period of my life, when I was about nineteen, I was in France; and if I should then have been misled by a mistaken admiration of what I now think the errors of that revolution, I trust that the ardour of youth would be no discreditable excuse. . . . I am not ashamed to avow that I was anxious to see a rational system of liberty established in that fine country. . . . That guilt I share in common with many great and good men."* The predilections of Mr. Huskisson did not prevent him receiving the appointment of private secretary to lord Gower, then the British minister at Paris. The destruction of the Bastile was the type of the fall of tyranny to English men and also to English women. Hannah More writes to Horace Walpole, "Poor France! though I am sorry that the lawless rabble are so triumphant, I cannot help hoping that some good will arise from the sum of human misery having been so considerably lessened at one blow, by the destruction of the Bastile."† Dumont says that in England, the most free and the most noble of the nations, the destruction of the Bastile had caused a general joy.‡ He adds, however, what is correct, that the English government had not permitted this event to be celebrated in the theatres. An opera, founded upon the story of the Iron Mask, in which that mystery was blended with a scenic representation of the destruction of the Bastile, was "maimed and mutilated by the licenser.§" As might be expected, Fox was in raptures at the great event of the 14th of July. He writes to Fitzpatrick, on the 30th of that month, "How much the greatest event it is that ever happened in the world, and how much the best."|| Even Burke expresses himself soberly, within three weeks after that "greatest event." He writes to lord Charlemont, on the 9th of August, "Our thoughts of everything at home are suspended by our astonishment at the wonderful spectacle which is exhibited in a neighbouring and rival country. What spectators, and what actors! England, gazing with astonishment at a French struggle for liberty, and not knowing whether to blame or to applaud. . . . The spirit it is impossible not to admire; but the old Parisian ferocity has broken out in a shocking manner."¶ There was another remarkable Englishman, of French extraction, who had seen much of France, was intimate with Mirabeau, and who attempted, though French vanity rendered the attempt useless, to imbue the National Assembly, through Dumont, with some

* Appendix to Huskisson's Speeches, vol. iii. p. 647.

† "Memoirs," vol. ii. p. 170.

‡ "Souvenirs sur Mirabeau," p. 95.

§ Wright, vol. ii. p. 177.

|| "Correspondence," vol. ii. p. 361.

¶ Prior—"Life of Burke," vol. ii. p. 41.

respect for salutary forms, established by the experience of the English Parliament. Samuel Romilly, then in his thirty-second year, wrote thus to Dumont, on the 28th of July, 1789:—"I am sure I need not tell you how much I have rejoiced at the revolution which has taken place. I think of nothing else, and please myself with endeavouring to guess at some of the important consequences which must follow throughout all Europe. I think myself happy that it has happened when I am of an age at which I may reasonably hope to live to see some of those consequences produced. It will perhaps surprise you, but it is certainly true, that the Revolution has produced a very sincere and very general joy here. It is the subject of all conversations; and even all the newspapers, without one exception, though they are not conducted by the most liberal or the most philosophical of men, join in sounding forth the praises of the Parisians, and in rejoicing at an event so important for mankind."* The news of the murder of Foulon and his son-in-law somewhat abates his enthusiasm. When the events of the 6th of October were known in England, he dreads the removal of the National Assembly to Paris: "I fear for the freedom of debate in the midst of a people so turbulent, so quick to take alarm, and so much disposed to consider the most trifling circumstances as proofs of a conspiracy formed against them." He had seen France during a rapid visit in September, and had ventured an opinion that "the horizon was overcast." In October he writes, to express what is a presentiment of a coming change in English feeling:—"I find the favour with which the popular cause in France is considered here, much less than it was when I quitted England. We begin to judge you with too much severity; but the truth is, that you taught us to expect too much, and that we are disappointed and chagrined at not seeing those expectations fulfilled."†

The interest excited by the Revolution was not confined to the higher circles, metropolitan or provincial. Arthur Young, complaining in August of the apparent indifference to political affairs, as exhibited in their conversation, of the French in towns through which he passed, says, "The ignorance or the stupidity of these people must be absolutely incredible. Not a week passes without their country abounding with events that are analyzed and debated by the carpenters and blacksmiths of England." This was the result of what he frequently laments, the want of

* "Memoirs," p. 272.

† *Ibid.*, p. 282.

that rapid and easy communication which almost every part of our island enjoyed. The carpenters and blacksmiths of England had some prejudices corrected by the early struggles of the French to be better governed. Their old notion of the subjects of the Grand Monarque was, that they ate frogs and wore wooden shoes; that they were a starved people, who had not spirit to resist their oppressors. Hogarth appealed to the popular notions when he published his prints of "The Invasion" in 1756, and wrote under them certain patriotic lines about "lanthorn-jaw and croaking gut," and "the hungry slaves have smelt our food." There is a remarkable testimony to a change in the popular feeling, supplied by an intelligent foreigner in 1790:—"The French used to be the great object of English national dislike and jealousy; but this seems now to be greatly abated, especially since the late revolution in France has given the English rather a more respectful opinion of the French nation."*

The beginning of the year 1790 presents a singular contrast between the aspect of the Parliament of England and of the National Assembly of France. On the 21st of January, George III. opened the Session with a royal speech which notices "the interruption of the tranquillity of other countries;" and expresses his majesty's deep and grateful sense of the favour of Providence, in continuing to his subjects "the inestimable advantages of peace, and the uninterrupted enjoyment of the invaluable blessings which they have so long derived from our excellent constitution." On the 4th of February, Louis XVI. went to the National Assembly, which held its sitting in the Salle du Manège, near the Tuileries, and addressed the deputies in very remarkable words, indicative not only of his acquiescence in the great changes which the Assembly had decreed, but of his earnest desire to unite with them in building up a solid and enduring fabric of public liberty. The Assembly, during the four months in which it had sat at Paris, had passed some sweeping measures of reform. The most important was that of a new territorial division of the kingdom. The old boundaries of provinces, with their various and conflicting systems of administration, were swept away; and France was distributed into eighty-three departments, with each its subdivision of districts and cantons. Throughout France one system of administration, under municipal functionaries to be chosen by the people, was established. The king declared to the Assembly that ten years previous he had desired to substitute some general system of administration for one founded upon ancient customs; but to the

* Wendeborn—"View of England," vol. i. p. 375.

Assembly was due the grand idea, the salutary change, of the new departmental division, which he would second by all the means in his power. The privileges of the nobility had been destroyed—feudal rights had been abolished—during the sittings of Versailles. A change of equal importance had since taken place. The question of church property, which in France was of enormous amount, had been warmly debated in the early sittings of the Assembly. Talleyrand, bishop of Autun, contended that the nation had the right of making a new disposition of that property; the Abbé Maury maintained that the proprietary rights of the clergy should be preserved inviolate. On the 2nd of November, it was carried by a large majority that all ecclesiastical property is at the disposal of the nation, but charged with a suitable provision for the expenses of religious worship, for the support of the ministers of religion, and for the relief of the poor. A better income than previously existed was to be provided for the inferior clergy. The religious houses were also suppressed, but provision was to be made for their inmates, whose vows were declared no longer binding. The king, on the 4th of February, expressed in words of no common force, his adoption of these changes, which were essentially a Revolution. "In concert with the queen, who partakes all my sentiments, I will at the proper time prepare the mind and the heart of my son for the new order of things that circumstances have brought about." * The address of the king worked up the excitable Parisians to a fever-fit of constitutional loyalty manifested in universal oath-taking and illuminations, each district having its own swearing and its candles in the windows. Nevertheless, Journalism, and Clubs, and secret advisers in the Tuileries soon clouded this "day-star of liberty;" and Englishmen generally felt that they were safer from storms under that tutelary genius which George III. invoked on all occasions, "our excellent Constitution." The time was approaching when those amongst us who looked with apprehension upon the French Revolution, should be violently opposed to those who as violently became its partisans. The progress of this conflict of opinions was very gradual; but the tendencies towards a rupture of the old ties of one great political party were soon manifest. The distinctions of Whig and Tory would speedily be obliterated. Those who clung to the most liberal interpretation of the principles upon which our Revolution of 1688 was founded, would be pointed at as Jacobins—the title which became identified with all that was most revolting in the French Revolution. The Tory became the Anti-Jacobin. Thus, through ten years of social bitterness, execra-

* The speech is given in Thiers' "Révolution Française," note 15.

tion and persecution made England and Scotland very unpleasant dwelling-places for men who dared to think and speak openly. Democratic opinions, even in their mildest form, were proscribed, not by a political party only, but by the majority of the people. Liberty and Jacobinism were held to be synonymous.

Burke, Fox, and Sheridan, from the commencement of the administration of Pitt, had been closely united as the chief leaders of the Whigs. They had been brought intimately together as managers of the impeachment of Hastings, whose trial at the commencement of the Session of 1790 had been proceeding for two years. Fox and Burke had cordially joined with Wilberforce, who was supported by Pitt, in taking a prominent part in advocating the total abolition of the Slave Trade, in 1789. On the 5th of February, 1790, when the army estimates were moved, Mr. Pitt held that it was necessary, on account of the turbulent situation of the greater part of the continent, that we should be prepared for war, though he trusted the system uniformly pursued by ministers would lead to a long continuance of peace. Mr. Fox opposed the estimates on the ground of economy alone. He had no dread of the increase of the army in a constitutional point of view. "The example of a neighbouring nation had proved that former imputations on armies were unfounded calumnies; and it was now universally known throughout all Europe that a man by becoming a soldier did not cease to be a citizen." On the 9th of February, when the Report on the Army Estimates was brought up, Mr. Burke proclaimed, in the most emphatic terms, his views on the affairs of France. He opposed an increase of our military force. He held that France, in a political light, was to be considered as expunged out of the system of Europe. "Since the House had been prorogued in the summer much work was done in France. The French had shown themselves the ablest architects of ruin that had hitherto existed in the world. In that very short space of time they had completely pulled down to the ground, their monarchy; their church; their nobility; their law; their revenue; their army; their navy; their commerce; their arts; and their manufactures. They had done their business for us, as rivals, in a way in which twenty Ramilies and Blenheims could never have done." Burke held that, in this fallen condition, it was not easy to determine whether France could ever appear again as a leading power. Six years afterwards he described the views he formerly entertained as those of "common speculators." He says, "deprived of the old government, deprived in a manner of all government, France, fallen as a monarchy, to common speculators might have

appeared more likely to be an object of pity or insult, according to the disposition of the circumjacent powers, than to be the scourge and terror of them all."* Burke's alarm, in 1790, was not an apprehension of France as a military power. In the age of Louis XIV. we were in danger of being entangled by the example of France in the net of a relentless despotism. "Our present danger, from the example of a people whose character knows no medium is, with regard to government, a danger from anarchy; a danger of being led, through an admiration of successful fraud and violence, to an imitation of the excesses of an irrational, unprincipled, proscribing, confiscating, plundering, ferocious, bloody, and tyrannical democracy." He went on to say, that, "in his opinion, the very worst part of the example set is in the late assumption of citizenship by the army." With the highest compliments to the masterly understanding and benevolent disposition of his friend, he regretted that Mr. Fox had dropped a word expressive of exultation at the conduct of the French army. He had no difference about the abstract principle whether the soldiers were to forget they were citizens. In France, where the abstract principle was clothed with its circumstances, he thought what was done there furnished no matter for exultation, either in the act or the example. Mr. Fox, in reply, avowed his deep obligations for the improvement he had derived from his friend's instruction and conversation. From him he had learnt more than from all the men with whom he had ever conversed. His friend might be assured that they could never differ in principles, however they might differ in their application. He maintained his opinion of the conduct of the French soldiers as men who, "feelingly alive to a sense of the oppressions under which their countrymen had groaned, disobeyed the despotic commands of their leaders, and gallantly espoused the cause of their fellow-citizens." It was manifest that the difference between the two great orators was something more than the application of principles. The respect which each felt for the understanding of the other prevented, at that time, a stronger expression of the thoughts that were tearing them asunder. A smaller man interfered in the friendly contention; and then the Whig ranks were first broken by Burke's war-cry. Sheridan elaborately defended the proceedings of the National Assembly, apologized for the excesses of the French populace, and charged Burke with being the advocate of despotism. Burke rose, and declared, as an inevitable necessity, that henceforth his honourable friend and he were separated in politics.

* "Letters on a Regicide Peace," Letter i. 1796.

The influence of the French Revolution upon great questions of our domestic policy was very soon manifested in the proceedings of Parliament. In 1789, a bill for the relief of Protestant Dissenters was rejected by a very small majority. During the prorogation, the Dissenters had agitated for the repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts, with unwonted earnestness and considerable indiscretion. Some of the Establishment were equally zealous in the encouragement of a resistance to the claims of the Dissenters. Mr. Fox, on the 2nd of March, proposed the abolition of these religious tests. Mr. Pitt opposed the motion. Mr. Burke declared that had the repeal been moved for ten years before, he should probably have joined Mr. Fox in supporting it. But he had the strongest reasons to believe that many of the persons now calling themselves Dissenters, and who stood the most forward in the present application for relief, were men of factious and dangerous principles, actuated by no motives of religion or conscience, to which tolerance could in any rational sense be applied. The motion was rejected by a very large majority. Two days after, a proposition made by Mr. Flood, to amend the representation of the people in Parliament, was withdrawn; the minister, who had three times advocated Reform, now holding that if a more favourable time should arise, he might himself bring forward a specific proposition; but he felt that the cause of reform might now lose ground from being agitated at an improper moment.

There was a warlike episode in May of this year, which indicated, perhaps advantageously to European powers, that Great Britain was not prepared to endure insults to her flag. In the previous year two England vessels had been seized by a Spanish frigate in Nootka Sound, a harbour of Vancouver Island, and the buildings for a settlement on that coast by English traders had been pulled down, by direction of the Spanish government, which claimed all the lands from Cape Horn to the 60th degree of latitude. His Catholic Majesty long refused to make reparation. War was the tone of a royal message to Parliament. A million was voted. But Spain yielded; and at a great crisis of European affairs we were saved from one of those petty quarrels which had so often been the beginning of lavish bloodshed for the attainment of small commercial advantages. Fox supported the minister in the spirited conduct which averted this conflict; and Pitt had the merit of obtaining, by resolute negotiation, concessions which rendered a future dispute improbable. The possibility of a war between Great Britain and Spain raised an important question in the French Assembly. The governments of Spain and France were bound by

treaty to mutual support. The question arose in the Assembly as to the power of making peace or war. Mirabeau, with surpassing eloquence, prevented the legislative body from assuming that power to itself; and it was resolved that war can only be decided on by a decree of the legislative body, passed on the formal proposal of the king, and sanctioned by him. A resolution was carried by acclamation that the French nation renounced for ever all ideas of conquest, and confined itself entirely to defensive war.

France during this summer presented the semblance of a happy people celebrating the triumphs of liberty and equality by a pompous spectacle in Paris; and the reality of disturbances in the army on the eastern frontier, with much bloodshed at Nanci, and a general resistance amongst the higher clergy to the adhesion required of them to the new order of ecclesiastical affairs. It was resolved that the anniversary of the taking of the Bastille should be honoured by a magnificent festival in the Champ de Mars—a grand Federation to which deputies should come from every one of the eighty-three departments of France. To prepare an immense amphitheatre for this gathering from the most remote parts, twelve thousand workmen were employed. But they worked too slowly. All Paris then went forth to dig and to move earth—all classes, men and women, coming in the early morning from their sections, and returning home by torchlight. Vast troops of federates had arrived in Paris, and were hospitably lodged. At six o'clock of the morning of the 14th of July, three hundred thousand persons, of both sexes, dwelling in Paris and the neighbourhood, had taken their seats on the grass of the amphitheatre, amidst a pouring rain. The federates marched into the area, each troop with the banner of its department. Fifty thousand armed men were in the space surrounded by the spectators on their grassy elevation. The king and the royal family, the president of the National Assembly, and the deputies, were on a raised seat, beneath an awning ornamented with *fleurs de lis*. Mass was celebrated by the bishop of Autun, attended by three hundred priests, at an altar placed in the centre of the amphitheatre. La Fayette then ascended to the altar, and swore, in the name of the troops and the federates, to be faithful to the nation, the law, and the king. The president of the National Assembly, and each of the deputies, took the same oath. Then Louis, standing in front of his throne, said: "I, king of the French, swear to the nation to employ all the power which is delegated to me by the constitutional law of the state, to maintain the Constitution decreed by the National Assembly, and accepted by me, and to cause the laws to be executed." The queen took

the Dauphin in her arms, and presented him to the multitude. The sun shone out; the cannon boomed; one universal shout went out as if to proclaim that France had attained the consummation of its felicity. But again a deluge of rain came down, whilst Talleyrand was blessing the banners of the eighty-three departments. Again sunshine; and illuminations; and dancing in the Champs Elysées; and merriment for a week before the federates went home—perhaps to think whether it were possible that the loving oaths of the 14th of July would ever be broken.

The Sixteenth Parliament of Great Britain, having nearly completed its full term of seven years, was dissolved soon after the prorogation in June, 1790. The new parliament assembled on the 25th of November, when Mr. Addington was chosen Speaker. There was no allusion to the affairs of France in the king's Speech. That the great events which had taken place in that country were occupying the thoughts of public men, there could be small doubt. Whilst the royal Speech, and the echoing Addresses, dwelt upon a pacification between Austria and the Porte, upon dissensions in the Netherlands, upon peace between Russia and Sweden, and upon war between Russia and the Porte, the national mind was absorbed almost exclusively by conflicting sentiments about the Revolution in France. A few weeks before the meeting of Parliament, Burke had published his famous "Reflections on the Revolution." * Probably no literary production ever produced such an exciting effect upon public opinion at the time of its appearance, or maintained so permanent an influence amongst the generation to whose fears it appealed. The reputation of the author as the greatest political philosopher of his age; his predilections for freedom, displayed through the whole course of the American Revolution; his hatred of despotic power, as manifested in his unceasing denunciations of atrocities in India; his consistent adherence to Whig principles as established by the Bill of Rights—this acquaintance with the character and sentiments of Burke first raised an unbounded curiosity to trace the arguments against the struggle for liberty in another country, coming from a man who had so long contended for what was deemed the popular cause at home. The perusal of this remarkable book converted the inquirer into an enthusiast. In proportion as the liberal institutions of our own country were held up to admiration, so were the attempts of France to build up a new system of government upon the ruins of the old

* The title of the book indicates that its chief purpose was to spread alarm as to the prevalence of revolutionary opinions in England: "Reflections on the Revolution in France, and on the proceedings in certain Societies in London relative to that event."

system, described as the acts of men devoted to "every description of tyranny and cruelty employed to bring about and to uphold this revolution." To the argumentative power was added an impassioned eloquence, which roused the feelings into hatred of the anarchists who led the royal family captives into Paris on the 6th of October, and directed every sympathy towards a humiliated king, a proscribed nobility, and a plundered church. Burke was accused of abandonment of his old principles, as he grew more and more strongly opposed to the French Revolution, even before the period of its greatest excesses. He who produced the most elegant and temperate answer to the "Reflections," most truly said: "The late opinions of Mr. Burke furnished more matter of astonishment to those who had distantly observed, than to those who had correctly examined, the system of his former political life. An abhorrence for abstract politics, a predilection for aristocracy, and a dread of innovation, have ever been among the most sacred articles of his public creed."* Coleridge, at a period when his Gallican enthusiasm had entirely sobered down, complains of "the errors of the aristocratic party," in lamenting with tragic outcries the injured monarch and the exiled noble, and displaying a disgusting insensibility to the sufferings and oppressions of the great mass of the population; and he adds, in a note, "The extravagantly false and flattering picture which Burke gave of the French nobility and hierarchy, has always appeared to me the greatest defect of his, in so many respects, invaluable work." † Another eminent thinker of our own day has thus given his opinion of the causes of Burke's indifference to the condition of the governed, and his sympathies with the governing: "It is the natural tendency of men connected with the upper ranks of society, and separated from the mass of the community, to undervalue things which only affect the rights or the interests of the people. Against this leaning, to which he had yielded, it becomes them to struggle." ‡

Mackintosh, writing in 1791, says: "No series of events in history have probably been more widely, malignantly, and systematically exaggerated than the French commotions." He adds, with reference to the furious indignation with which Burke had spoken of some popular atrocities: "The massacres of war, and the murders committed by the sword of justice, are disguised by the solemnities which invest them." § "The massacres of war"

* Mackintosh—"Vindiciæ Gallicæ," Introduction.

† "The Friend," Essay I.

‡ Lord Brougham—"Statesmen of the time of George III."—Art. "Burke."

§ "Vindiciæ Gal."—Mackintosh, *Miscellaneous Works*, vol. iii. p. 32.

were never more fearfully exhibited than at the season when the revolutionists of France were held up to execration, and the savage murders perpetrated by the ministers of vengeance let loose by Catherine of Russia provoked no parliamentary denunciation, and excited little public feeling. On the anniversary of our Saviour's nativity, in 1790, Suwarrow, the Russian general, wrote to his court: "Glory to God and to the Empress, Ismail is ours." It is not necessary to read the two cantos of "Don Juan," which Byron devoted to the siege of Ismail, to shudder at the atrocities which have been perpetrated by established authorities. This fortress, the key of the Lower Danube, was stormed; the Turks obstinately resisted till midnight, and then the conquering Russians entered the body of the place. The rising sun exhibited such a spectacle in Ismail as had not for several ages shocked the feelings of mankind. In the morning, when the Russian generals put an end to the carnage, thirty thousand of the Turkish population, of all ages, sexes, and conditions, had perished.*

Mirabeau, in January, 1791, was named President of the National Assembly. During the previous year he had pursued a systematic course of opposition to the measures of the extreme democratic party. He supported, as we have seen, the king's prerogative as to the right of peace and war. He opposed the violent measures that were contemplated with regard to emigrants. He maintained a complete independence of clubs and mobs. He saw that the Revolution was passing out of the hands of the few who were qualified to guide it to a moderate course, into the management of factions, who were ready to stifle the comparatively sober voice of the legislative body. He dreaded the turbulence of those who were becoming a real and a terrible power, as the Club of the Friends of the Constitution (who, from their place of meeting, the Hall of the Jacobins' Convent, came to be known as Jacobins); and of another body, still more violent, the Club of the Cordeliers. There were in Paris, too, somewhat more than a hundred Journals. Mirabeau was himself a journalist, and counselled in this character adherence to constitutional moderation. Marat, the representative of the fury of the Revolution, was for erecting eight hundred gibbets, and for hanging Mirabeau the first, as the chief of the advocates of order. Nevertheless, the wonderful energy, the indomitable courage, the overwhelming eloquence of Mirabeau not only made him supreme in the National Assembly, but gave him the hearty allegiance of the people, in their universal recognition of his intellectual supremacy. The very post-boys called the best

* There is a very graphic account of this event in the "Annual Register," 1791.

horse of a team—the horse that did the most work—their Mirabeau. The king and queen of France began to feel that their safety might depend upon the efforts of this man, who had done so much to destroy the ancient order of things, but in whom the will, and probably the power, abided, of saving the monarchy. Mirabeau secretly met Marie Antoinette at St. Cloud, to which palace the royal family had removed in the summer of 1790, and there enjoyed some little freedom. He came away with the conviction that she was the only man of the family. He was poor; and he doubtless accepted great presents from some source, for his style of living suddenly became extravagantly luxurious. Louis wrote to Bouillé that he had paid the services of Mirabeau at an enormous price. Dumont believes that Mirabeau thought himself, on receiving payment, as an agent who could accomplish salutary ends with adequate means. He also says, that Mirabeau's only object was to have the ministerial power in his hands; that he had no notion of a counter revolution; that his desire was to re-establish the royal authority, with a national representation; that he even would have endeavoured to revoke the decree of the National Assembly which had abolished the nobility; and that he was dissatisfied with the part he had himself taken as to the question of the clergy. When Mirabeau entered upon his functions as President of the National Assembly, the versatility of his talent was signally displayed. He was no longer the impassioned tribune of the people. He was the moderator of a tumultuous body—the impartial supporter of orderly proceedings—the dignified assertor of the respect due to the legislature. But the physical health of this extraordinary man was gone. Dumont parted with Mirabeau, on quitting Paris after the nomination of his friend to the presidency of the Assembly. "If I believed in slow poisons," said Mirabeau, "I should think I was poisoned. I am perishing. I am consuming with a slow fire." His mode of life, Dumont pointed out to him, would have long before killed any man not so robust as he was:—unremitting work; imprudent regimen. Intellectual and sensual excess, Dumont might have added—those destructive agencies that, combined, always destroy the victims who unite the loftiest ambition to the grossest indulgence. "You should have been a salamander," said Dumont, "to live in a devouring flame without being consumed." The image was founded upon a popular error applied to a great truth. When Dumont quitted Mirabeau, the dying man, to whom an intense egotism was pardonable, said, "We shall never meet again. When I am gone, they will know how to value me. The misfortunes which I have arrested will rush in from all parts over

France. The criminal faction which trembled before me will no longer have any bridle. The Commons won a victory in declaring themselves a National Assembly, of which they have never ceased to shew themselves unworthy. They have desired to govern the king, instead of governing by him; but very soon neither he nor they will govern. A vile faction will dominate over all, and fill France with horrors." * Mirabeau survived only three months after he had uttered this prophetic speech to Dumont. He repeated the same sentiments to Talleyrand. He died on the 2nd of April. The pomp of his funeral; the procession of nearly all Paris to the church of St. Geneviève; the mournful music; the intermittent cannon; the thousand torches; the deep and solemn silence of the countless multitude; have often been described, as the tribute of a great nation to the greatest of its citizens. By a decree of the Assembly, the church of St. Geneviève was to be called the Pantheon—was to bear the inscription, *Aux Grands Hommes la Patrie reconnaissante*. Mirabeau was the first occupant of the temple set apart by a grateful country as the tomb of its great men. In November, 1793, by a decree of the Convention, his body was disinterred as that of an unworthy aristocrat.

Six months elapsed between the publication of Burke's "Reflections" and his final separation from his party, involving an irrevocable breach of friendship with Fox. The night of the 6th of May exhibited a scene in the House of Commons of no ordinary interest. From that time this country became divided into two hostile bands, each upholding opinions that were calculated to make men irrational partisans rather than calm reasoners; that opposed exaggerated alarm to mistaken enthusiasm; that rendered the majority persecutors and the minority agitators. The passions then spread through the country inspired a panic about property, and a dread of revolution, when, as had been truly said, "the people were more heart-whole than they had been for a hundred years previously;" † and these passions drove a minister, really a friend to civil and religious liberty, into acts of tyranny, whose influence long survived the immediate occasion of their exercise, and produced fears and hatreds which arrested the march of social improvement for a quarter of a century. On the 15th of April, Mr. Fox had incidentally spoken in somewhat extravagant terms about "the new Constitution of France." He admired it, "considered altogether, as the most stupendous and glorious edifice of liberty which had been erected on the foundation of human integrity in any time or

* "Souvenirs sur Mirabeau," p. 186.

† Coleridge—"Table Talk," vol. ii. p. 192.

country." There had been animated debates on a proposition of Mr. Pitt for the government of Canada, which contemplated the establishment of two Houses of Assembly, one for the Upper and one for the Lower Province. In the discussion of this question, general principles of representative government were naturally brought under view. On the 6th of May, upon the question in Committee that the Quebec Bill should be read paragraph by paragraph, Mr. Burke took occasion to raise his voice against the possibility of sending to our colonies "a cargo of the Rights of Man;" and then entered upon some recent circumstances in Paris—the interference of the people to prevent the king going to St. Cloud, as he proposed to do. The orator was proceeding in this strain, when he was called to order. Five times he attempted to proceed in explanation of his views on the French Revolution, and five times was he interrupted by members of the Whig party—his old associates. Burke pertinaciously held his ground. The irony of Fox, and the remonstrance of Grey, moved him less than the incessant calls to order of smaller men. At last he exclaimed :

"The little dogs and all,
Tray, Blanch, and Sweetheart, see, they bark at me."

Lord John Russell, quoting this anecdote from the "Life of Lord Sidmouth," says that Burke made his exclamation "with the grief, and somewhat, perhaps, of the insanity of Lear." The notion of attributing to insanity the extreme opinions of the most powerful mind of that age, has been maintained with much earnestness, and some attempts at proof.* To a certain extent it is true that Burke's mind, "once so steady, so little swayed by prejudice and passion, reeled under the pressure of events which turned the brain of thousands." But it may also be said, that the aspirations for a new æra of happiness for mankind also turned the brains of sober men, to regard only what was full of hope and promise in that Revolution, and to divert their eyes from its crimes and follies. The extreme views which produced enthusiasts on either side are very justly pointed out by a French lady, in her correspondence with Romilly: "We have had Mr. Paine's work in answer to Mr. Burke: it is the opposite extreme of madness."† On the night of the 6th of May, Burke, after his burst of indignation at "the little dogs" in answer to the taunt of Fox, that "minute discussions on great events, without information, did no honour to the pen that wrote, or the tongue that spoke, the words,"

* See Buckle—"Civilization in England," pp. 424 to 431.

† "Mr. Paine's work" was "The Rights of Man," Part I.

addressed him no longer as "his honourable friend." He complained of the asperity with which he had been treated that night. He had differed from Mr. Fox on former occasions; but no difference of opinion had ever before interrupted their friendship. There was no loss of friendship, Fox whispered; Burke instantly exclaimed that he had done his duty at the price of his friend; "their friendship was at an end." This was too much for the kind nature of Fox. He wept, and was for some minutes unable to speak. Then there was mutual explanation; and mutual recrimination. Mr. Curwen, the member for Carlisle, relates a circumstance which shows how intense was the hostility of Burke to any who exhibited even a slight indication of admiring or tolerating the principles of the French Revolution; "The most powerful feelings were manifested on the adjournment of the House. While I was waiting for my carriage, Mr. Burke came to me and requested, as the night was wet, I would set him down. As soon as the carriage-door was shut, he complimented me on my being no friend to the revolutionary doctrines of the French; on which he spoke with great warmth for a few minutes, when he paused to afford me an opportunity of approving the view he had taken of those measures in the House. At the moment I could not help feeling disinclined to disguise my sentiments; Mr. Burke, catching hold of the check-string, furiously exclaimed, 'You are one of these people! Set me down.' With some difficulty I restrained him;—we had then reached Charing-cross; a silence ensued, which was preserved till we reached his house in Gerard-street, when he hurried out of the carriage without speaking."

In the debate on the proposed Repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, on the 2nd of March, 1790, Mr Burke read extracts from a sermon of Dr. Price, and from the writings of Dr. Priestley and other Non-conformists; inferring from certain passages that the leading preachers among the Dissenters were avowed enemies to the Church of England, and that thence our establishment appeared to be in much more serious danger than the Church of France was in a year or two ago.* The "Reflections on the Revolution" diffused this alarm more extensively through the country. Burke, in reprobating the harangue at the chapel in the Old Jewry of Dr. Price, said that "politics and the pulpit are terms that have little agreement;" that "no sound ought to be heard in the Church but the healing voice of Christian charity;" that political divines, "wholly unacquainted with the world in which they are so fond of meddling, and inexperienced in all its affairs, have nothing of poli-

* "Parliamentary History," vol. xxviii. col. 439.

tics but the passions they excite." But he addressed these just remarks to "political theologians," such as Dr. Price and Dr. Priestley, who preached from heterodox pulpits; not to those who from the pulpits of the establishment made the French Revolution the constant theme of their invective; and whose churches "resounded with language at which Laud would have shuddered, and Sacheverel would have blushed."* The clamour was at last got up, that the Church was in danger. There were results of this spirit which were perhaps more disgraceful to the English character than the violence of the Parisian populace in the attack upon the Bastille or the march from Versailles. It was a lower and a more contemptible fanaticism than had been evoked by the first call in France to fight for freedom, that produced the Riots at Birmingham which broke out on the 14th of July, 1791.

Dr. Joseph Priestley, in 1780, became the minister of the principal Unitarian congregation in Birmingham. He was ardent in his political views, having written an answer to Burke's "Reflections," and he did not hesitate to avow his opposition to the Church, in his zeal to obtain what he deemed the rights of Dissenters. But in his private life he was worthy of all respect, and in his scientific pursuits had attained the most honourable distinction. But even as a politician he avowed himself a warm admirer of the English Constitution, as the best system of policy the sagacity of man had been able to contrive, though its vigour had been impaired by certain corruptions. He published, in 1791, "Familiar Letters to the Inhabitants of Birmingham"—a work in which, according to Robert Hall, "the seeds of that implacable dislike were scattered" which produced the outrages that we shall briefly relate.

On the 11th of July, according to a royal proclamation of the 27th of that month, "a certain scandalous and seditious paper was printed and published in the town of Birmingham," for the discovery of the author of which a reward of one hundred pounds was offered. This handbill called upon the people to celebrate on the 14th the destruction of that high altar and castle of despotism, the Bastille; but not to forget that their own parliament was venal; the ministers hypocritical; the clergy legal oppressors; the reigning family extravagant; the crown too weighty for the head that wears it. This paper, says the proclamation, was printed and published in the town of Birmingham. † William Hutton, a cautious man, says that it was fabricated in London, brought to Birmingham, and a few copies privately scattered under a table at an inn. On that 14th of July, about eighty persons assembled at a tavern,

* Mackintosh, vol. iii. p. 165.

† See "Annual Register," 1791.

known as Dadley's, to commemorate this anniversary; and at the Swan Inn, some magistrates, and persons opposed to the celebrationists, met to drink "Church and King." There was a small mob about Dadley's tavern, who hissed and hooted; and there was another mob around the Swan. The dinner went off quietly amongst the friends of French liberty, the King and Constitution being duly toasted, and afterwards the National Assembly of France. After the company had separated, a rabble broke into the tavern in search of Dr. Priestley, who had not dined there, crying out that "they wanted to knock the powder out of Priestley's wig." The loyal company at the adjacent Swan huzzaed; and it is affirmed that a gentleman said, "Go to the Meetings." In another hour Priestley's chapel, in New Street, called the New Meeting-House, was on fire. This work accomplished, the Old Meeting-House was also quickly in a blaze. Dr. Priestley lived at Fair Hall, about a mile and a-half from the town. He and his family had fled from mob vengeance; but his house was destroyed, and his books burnt, with his manuscripts and his philosophical instruments. The disgraceful scene has been related by some with more or less of apology for a fury which it is held that Priestley had provoked; and by others with more or less of indignation against a brutal intolerance which it is alleged was encouraged by loyal churchmen. There was a young man then dwelling at Birmingham, who was a member of the congregation then under the care of Dr. Priestley, and to some extent was his pupil; for the younger members of Priestley's flock received instruction from him on moral and religious subjects. In after life he would relate to his children the scene which he witnessed on that night of July, 1791. One of the family, since so honourably distinguished, has given this interesting notice of a memorable incident in his father's life: "My father formed a strong attachment to Priestley, and when the famous, or rather infamous, riots of 1791 broke out, he, with a small body of his fellow-pupils, repaired to Dr. Priestley's house, which they offered to defend against the mob. To their sore disappointment their services were declined. The doctor had scruples as to the lawfulness of withstanding a religious persecution by force—the why and wherefore of this distinction between repelling civil injuries and religious, which indeed are only civil injuries on religious grounds, my father never comprehended. His companions went away, perhaps to escort their good pastor and his family, whose lives would not have been secure against the ruffians coming to demolish their home and property. My father barred the doors, closed the shutters, made fast the house as securely as he could

against the expected rioters, and then awaited their arrival. He has often described to me how he walked to and fro in the darkened rooms, chafing under the restriction which had been put on him and his friends. He was present when the mob broke in, and witnessed the plunder and destruction, and the incendiary fire by which the outrage was consummated. Lingered near the house, he saw a working-man fill his apron with shoes, with which he made off. My father followed him, and as soon as the thief was alone, collared him, and dragged him to the gaol, where he had the mortification to witness the man quietly relieved of his booty, and then suffered to depart, the keeper informing my father that he had had orders to take in no prisoner that night.* The burnings and plunderings, invariably of the houses of Dissenters, continued till the night of Sunday, the 17th, in Birmingham and the neighbourhood. On the 15th, the house of Mr. Ryland, at Easy Hill, was burnt down; six or seven of the rioters, who had drunk themselves insensible with the booty of the wine-cellar, perishing in the flames. Mr. Ryland was a friend of Priestley—a man devoted to the public interests of Birmingham, and emphatically described as “a friend to the whole human race.” On that day, Bordesley Hall, the residence of Mr. Taylor, another dissenter, was burnt. The warehouse of William Hutton was then plundered; and on the next morning his country-house, at Bennett’s Hill, was set on fire and consumed. Five other houses of Dissenters, whether Presbyterians, Baptists, or Unitarians, were that day burnt or sacked. Justices of the peace sat in conclave; squires made speeches to the mobs, telling them they had done enough. The Birmingham magistrates issued a placard, addressed to “Friends and Brother Churchmen,” entreating them to desist; for that the damage, which already amounted to £100,000, would have to be paid by the parishes. On the Sunday there were burnings of chapels and private houses in the neighbourhood of Birmingham; and then three troops of Light Dragoons rode into the town, having come in one day from Nottingham, and this disgraceful exhibition was at an end. Five of the rioters were tried at the assizes at Worcester, for offences committed near Birmingham, but only one was convicted. A larger number were tried at the Warwick Assizes, and four were sentenced to death. Three of the whole number were executed. Every attempt was made to impede the conviction of the rioters. The prosecutions were confined to the ignorant mob, whose passions were undoubtedly inflamed by their superiors in station. There

* Autobiography of Thomas Wright Hill—with “Continuation of Mr. Hill’s Life, by his son, Matthew Davenport Hill.”—Privately printed, 1859.

was no zealot prosecuted of the many whose offences were undoubtedly as great as that of the madman, lord George Gordon, in 1780. There was in Birmingham a hateful spirit of slavishness and ferocity, in the guise of loyalty and religion, which unhappily, to some extent, pervaded the whole kingdom. The atrocities were almost justified from the pulpit as "a judgment." One of the most eloquent of Dissenters—one strongly opposed to Priestley's theological opinions—published in 1791 a tract, in which he says, that to the unenlightened eyes of posterity "it will appear a reproach, that in the eighteenth century—an age that boasts its science and improvement—the first philosopher in Europe, of a character unblemished, and of manners the most mild and gentle, should be torn from his family, and obliged to flee, an outcast and a fugitive, from the murderous hands of a frantic rabble; but when they learn that there were not wanting teachers of religion who secretly triumphed in these barbarities, they will pause for a moment, and imagine they are reading the history of Goths or of Vandals."*

* Robert Hall—"Christianity consistent with a love of freedom, being an answer to a Sermon by the Rev. John Clayton." 1791.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Flight from Paris of the king and his family.—The National Assembly after the discovery of the flight.—Hatred of Royalty.—Thomas Paine.—National, or Constituent, Assembly at an end.—Meeting of the Legislative Assembly.—The Declaration of Pilnitz.—French princes and emigrants at Coblenz.—Opening of Parliament.—Pacific Speech.—Pitt's display of British prosperity.—The Slave Trade.—Pitt's eloquence.—The Libel Law.—Attempts to form a Coalition.—Proclamation against Seditious.—Chauvelin and Lord Grenville.—Partition of Poland.

WHILST from the night of the 14th July to the night of the 17th, the rabble of Birmingham were shouting "Church and King," and plundering and burning chapels and houses, the rabble of Paris, many thousands in number, were assembled on Sunday, the 17th, in the Champ de Mars, clamouring for the deposition of the king, and manifesting their patriotism by hanging two men denounced as spies. The magistrates of Birmingham looked smilingly on the loyal and orthodox havoc; but the authorities of Paris, with their mayor, Bailly, at their head, resolved to put down this mob-dictation, and, hoisting the red flag of martial law, to disperse the multitudes with volleys of musketry. What has produced this demand for the deposition of the king? He has attempted to fly from his good people of Paris. He broke out of his prison-house, and he has been brought back again. He has been suspected of a plan to escape, when he desired to keep Easter at St. Cloud; and a fierce mob, when he was seated with the queen in his carriage, then prevented their departure from the Tuileries although La Fayette was desirous to make way for them by force. It was known that an Austrian army was gathering on the frontiers; that the royal princes, d'Artois and Condé, were surrounded by emigrants, ready to return in arms. "Citizens," wrote Marat, the most influential of the journalists because the most ferocious, "watch closely around the palace. . . . The genius of Austria is there, hidden in committees over which Antoinette presides. They correspond with foreigners, and furnish the armed tyrants who are assembling on your frontier with gold and materials of war." The writings of Marat echoed the denunciations of the Clubs. The National Assembly, and the National Guard, were growing less and less popular with the anarchists. "What is La Fayette doing?" asked Marat, "is he

a dupe or an accomplice? Why does he leave the avenues of the palace free?" The suspicions thus excited in the populace naturally produced a greater vigilance in La Fayette. For some time the whole of the interior of the Tuileries was under the watchfulness of the National Guard; and La Fayette and his officers were constantly about the palace, often till a late hour. The royal family, too, were surrounded by unfaithful menials. A waiting-woman had for several months been watching the queen; had seen her jewel-boxes empty, and had conjectured that the royal diamonds had left France. She reported her suspicions to an aide-de-camp of La Fayette; and for several nights a stricter watch had been kept within and around the palace. A secret correspondence had been maintained between the king and the marquis de Bouillé, the commander of the royalist army in the frontier provinces of Champagne, Lorraine, and Alsace; but the loyalty of a few regiments only could be relied upon. It was arranged between Louis and his faithful general that the king should leave Paris on the night of the 19th of June; and De Bouillé took his measures of placing relays of horses on the road, and detachments to guard the royal family at certain stations through which they were to pass on their way to Montmédy, at which fortress the general had formed a camp where the fugitives would be safe. The arrangements were disturbed by the delay of one day in setting forth; and, as in many of the minor occurrences of life, the misadventures of an hour or two were fatal to success. The count de Fersen, a Swiss, was admitted into the confidence of the king; and he accomplished the business of obtaining a passport for a Russian baroness, travelling home, with a waiting-woman, a valet, and two children; and he has had a new coach built; and has engaged horses. All at last is ready for a start. The Russian baroness is Madame De Tourzel, the *gouvernante* of the two royal children; her waiting-woman is the queen; the valet is the king. The king's sister, Elizabeth, is of the party as travelling companion. Three of the devoted soldiers of the king, who had belonged to the disbanded body-guard, were admitted into the confidence of count Fersen, and it was arranged that they were to mount behind the carriage, as some sort of protection.

The king and queen received at their usual hour, on the evening of the 20th of June, those who were accustomed to wait on them before they retired to rest. They dressed themselves in the clothes prepared for their disguise; and when a midnight stillness reigned around left the Tuileries, but not all at once. A lady in a hood had come out from a small door, leading two children—a visitor of some one of the household, no doubt. These pass into the open

space before the Tuileries, called the Carrousel, and thence into a street where a glass-coach is waiting. Another lady comes out, also hooded, and enters the same coach. A stout man now reaches the capacious carriage. One of the party is still wanting—the waiting-maid. She, in a gipsy-hat, attended by a servant, is about to join them, when the carriage of La Fayette, with torch-bearers, appears. He has been hastily sent for, upon some report from his aide-de-camp. The waiting-maid stands up under the arch and sees the well-known face. She is herself unobserved; but is somewhat flurried. The fair one and her attendant take the wrong road, and cross the Pont Royal to the other side of the Seine. They wander about the long Rue du Bac in great perplexity, but at last make their way over the river again, and find the coach waiting upon the quai. Count Fersen is the royal hackney coachman. He drives furiously off, but they have to go to a distant part to find the travelling carriage. At last they have passed the dark and narrow streets of the city, have reached the Boulevard, and at the Porte St. Martin the travelling carriage is waiting. Fersen is again upon the box, with a German coachman, who will be trusty; and after some time he receives the grateful adieus of those for whom he has risked so much, and leaves them to make his own way to Brussels. Another carriage is at Bondy, with boxes and waiting-women. Through the summer-night, the heavy coach, with six horses, is lumbering on towards Chalons, where it arrives, having found proper relays, about five in the afternoon of the 21st.

At six o'clock in the morning following that midnight when La Fayette has looked round the Tuileries, and can discover nothing wrong he is roused with the news that the king and royal family are gone. Paris is alarmed, and is quickly in motion: but there is no riot or outrage. The Assembly meets, and declares its sitting permanent. A letter has been found addressed by the king to the National Assembly, in which he goes through the chief events of the Revolution; describes the personal indignities he had undergone, and says that, finding it impossible for him to effect any good, or to prevent any evil, he has sought to recover his liberty, and to reach a place of safety for himself and his family. The Assembly confirmed an order which had been previously issued by La Fayette, which enjoined all functionaries to arrest the fugitives; and at once assumed the powers of an executive government. The news of the flight of the king reached London on the 25th, when George Rose thus wrote to Wilberforce:—"The National Assembly has acted in a collected manner, and with prudence in their situation. They have given assurances to the foreign ministers of firmness, continu-

ance of friendship, &c., and have ordered the great seal (we shall be told like our phantom during the regency) to be put to all instruments which require the royal authority."*

The king's route may be easily traced. The heavy carriage, called a "Berline," is somewhat remarkable. Escorts of dragoons have been hanging about on the road from early morning; and no one knows what they are waiting for. Suspicion is roused. As the evening draws on, a courier rides through the village of Sainte-Ménéhould; and then the lumbering vehicle with its six post-horses rolls in, and stops at the post-house. The master of the post has been to Paris. He looks hard into the carriage. He fancies he has seen the lady in the gipsy-hat in some public place. Another face is familiar to him, from the engraved head on the new assignat. He is sure the stout man is the king. The carriage moves on; and this vigilant post-master, by name Drouet, and a trusty companion, hurry after it upon fleet hackneys. The escort that followed the royal fugitives from Sainte-Ménéhould is impeded by the people at Clermont, who have been roused by Drouet. But the village of Varennes is reached by Louis and his family about four-and-twenty hours after they had been wandering out of the Tuileries through dark ways into a dark future. The small town of Varennes is divided by the river Aire. Relays of horses prepared for the travellers are in the upper town. The couriers can find no horses in the lower town, where the carriage is waiting. For half-an-hour the wearied and anxious sitters in the "Berline" listen with impatience for the sound of horses' feet. Two horsemen have dashed past them over the bridge. Drouet is an old dragoon, and knows something of barricades. He rides into the town, obtains help, and the bridge over the Aire is soon rendered impassible by an overturned cart. At length the carriage drives up, the post-boys having been induced to proceed with their jaded hacks. Passports are demanded by half-a-dozen National Guards, led by the inexorable Drouet. Resistance is vain; and Louis, his queen, his sister, his children, and the *gouvernante* are handed into the house of the Procureur of the town, named Sausse, a grocer. Refreshments are asked for by the king; and he relishes bread and cheese, and a bottle of Burgundy. The alarm-bell is rung; the people hurry out of their beds; the house is surrounded. Louis feels confident that a large force will arrive from M. de Bouillé for his deliverance. A squadron of hussars is at hand; but they have received no orders. The night is passed in terrible uncertainty. In the morning, National Guards are assembled in

* "Wiltberforce Correspondence," vol. i. p. 80.

great numbers, and La Fayette's aide-de-camp gallops into Varennes. It is all over. Even Bouillé flies across the frontier. The Berline is turned round; and is soon on the road to Paris, with the unfortunate family within, and the couriers bound with ropes upon the box. Three or four thousand men, armed with pikes and muskets, surround the carriage. As the cavalcade slowly went on, the people in the villages uttered reproaches and threats to the king and queen. They bore the insults with that calmness which marked their demeanour through all their subsequent heavy troubles. Two Commissioners from the National Assembly, Petion and Barnave, met them on the road; and their interference probably saved the lives of the unhappy family from the rage of barbarous crowds. At seven o'clock in the evening of Saturday, the captives re-entered the Tuileries. There was something more terrible than even the clamour of a mob, in the mode of their reception, as they passed through the streets of Paris. An Englishman has described the scene: "Profound silence was recommended to the people on the entrance of the royal family; and it was in general observed. I stood in the Champs Elysées, on the edge of the road, from three till near eight, and I never saw more tranquillity, or even indifference, on any occasion. An officer passed us about half-an-hour before the king's arrival, and called out as he passed, 'Chapeau sur tête.' This order was punctually obeyed. In all the conversation I heard, not a symptom of pity or sympathy appeared, nor much resentment."* A placard had been everywhere affixed which, in a few words, prescribed the popular demeanour required by those who in this week of alarm had preserved Paris from anarchy: "Whoever shall applaud the king shall be flogged; whoever shall insult him shall be hanged."† The semblances of a monarchical government were to be maintained a little longer.

The flight of the king was the occasion of an unmistakeable demonstration of the contentions that were likely to arise between those who desired to maintain the constitution to which the king had sworn, and the party—a minority in the Assembly, but overpowering in the clubs—who sought the abolition of the monarchy, or the deposition of the existing monarch. In the popular temper the hatred of royalty was displayed during the five days of the king's absence from Paris, by pulling down the signs over the shops that indicated the patronage of the Court. "*Roi*" was no longer a name to attract customers. There was in Paris an Englishman who had become hateful at home as the expounder of "The Rights

* Trail to Romilly, June 27.

† Thiers—"Histoire de la Revolution," livre iv.

of Man." Thomas Paine—a staymaker of Thetford in Norfolk, afterwards an exciseman; then a settler in America, who stimulated the revolt of the colonies by his writings; an agent of the Congress, employed in France towards the close of the war; a man of various talents, a powerful but coarse writer, an ingenious mechanic—was, in June, 1791, the guest of Condorcet, the philosophical patrician, who had become an ardent republican. After the peace Paine had been received with some respect in England, and even Burke admitted him to a sort of intimacy. But he hated his native country, and its institutions. Intensely vain, he believed that his writings had produced the American Republic; and he fancied, that his mission was to establish a republic in France. He asserted that, if he had the power, he would destroy all the books in existence which only propagated error, and would re-construct a new system of ideas and principles, with his own "Rights of Man" as its foundation.* In the week of the flight of Louis, Paine wrote in English a proclamation to the French nation, which, being translated, was affixed to all the walls of Paris. It was an invitation to the people to profit by existing circumstances, and establish a Republic. Dumont perhaps ascribes too much to the influence of such a production, when he says that the audacious hand of Paine sowed the seed which germinated in many heads.† Many persons of condition, Condorcet amongst the number, were of opinion that the moment when the king had forfeited the confidence of the nation was favourable to the establishment of a republic. A majority of the Assembly were resolved that the disloyalty which had been increased so fearfully by the king's attempt to leave Paris, if not France, should not interfere with the establishment of the Constitution. This had now, after a long process, been elaborated into a complete digest of all the principles which were held to be necessary for the happy existence of a form of government so just and so harmonious, that it would command the obedience and admiration of all who were to administer it and of all who were to live under it. Dumont has described this constitution as in truth a monster:—"It had too much of a republic for a monarchy, and too much of a monarchy for a republic. The king was a *hors d'œuvre*"—a somewhat superfluous dish, such as the anchovy served between the soup and the meat. The populace did not comprehend these refinements; and so, as we have mentioned, on the 17th of July, the mobs of St. Antoine filled the Champ de Mars, signing petitions for the deposition of the king; and the once popular mayor hoisted the red flag, and dispersed

* Dumont—"Souvenirs," p. 231.

† *Ibid.*, p. 226.

them by sword and bullet. Bailly, La Fayette, and a majority of the Assembly, began to fear the Jacobins more than they feared the royalists. They began to see that, by the popular outrages, and the restraints which had been imposed upon the king, he had been driven to despair. They wished to retrace their steps; to make the sovereign a real power in the state, instead of a puppet. They found that it was easier to destroy than to re-establish. The popularity which they had acquired as destructives was lost when they began to be conservatives. The forms were, however, to be gone through to establish the anomalous Constitution. On the 5th of August, the multifarious document was presented to the Assembly by a committee, who had been for many months engaged in classifying and revising the various decrees which had been promulgated. On the 3rd of September it was presented to the king by sixty members of the Assembly; and on the 14th, Louis declared his solemn acceptance of what he considered, and not unjustly, his humiliation. "*Vive le Roi*" was again heard in the streets. The Assembly is to be dissolved on the 30th of September, and a new body of representatives, whose elections have been going on throughout all France, is to meet on the 1st of October, and to be called the Legislative Assembly. Seven hundred and forty-five members are to be chosen by primary assemblies, themselves chosen by every man of twenty-five years of age in every canton, who had paid direct taxes equal to three days' labour. The electors of the deputies were to be the possessors of a certain income, or the renters of a house of a certain value. No member of the first Assembly was eligible to be elected for the second. No member of the Legislative Assembly was allowed to be a functionary of the Executive Government. The sittings of the Assembly were to be permanent, leaving no power to the king to convoke the body, or to prorogue it. And so some of the best and most moderate men who formed the first States-General, are to be replaced by men of provincial reputation, chiefly of the legal profession; and the violent men of the old Assembly are to find fit exercise for their powers in the Jacobin clubs.

The Legislative Assembly quickly arranged into two defined parties—the right side (*côté droit*) and the left side (*côté gauche*), with a fluctuating body known as the centre. The *côté droit* comprised the supporters of the Constitution, whose opinions were generally those of the middle classes, and were represented in the Club of the Feuillans. The Girondins, or deputies from the department of Gironde, of whom Vergniaud was the most eloquent, with Brissot and Condorcet, two of the Paris deputies, were the types

of the more moderate of the *côté gauche*. The extreme men of this left side were in intimate connection with the Jacobin Club, and the Club of the Cordeliers; and the mobs of Paris were consequently at their command. Robespierre was the presiding spirit of the Jacobins, as Danton was of the Cordeliers. The extreme men of the Assembly were called the Mountain, from their seats on the topmost benches of the *côté gauche*. There is a Municipality, too, in Paris, which has more active power, for good or evil, than the Assembly. At the elections of November, Pétion has been chosen mayor of Paris, in preference to La Fayette; and in that common council, where there is much haranguing, Danton is a leading speaker. But the Mother-Society of Friends of the People, sitting in the old Hall of the Jacobins, with all the appliances of a parliament—president, secretaries, a tribune for fiery speakers, and large galleries for excited men and women—this terrible Society, with its branch Societies in every town and village of France, “forms,” to use those words of La Fayette which he spoke too late, “a distinct corporation in the middle of the French people, whose power it usurps in subjugating its representatives.” Robespierre moved and carried the self-denying ordinance of the first Assembly, which prevented its members being re-elected, that he might dominate in another place over thousands of fanatical worshippers of first principles of liberty and equality, who would risk any perils of anarchy and bloodshed for an idea, as he was ready to do out of the purest and most disinterested benevolence.

When the Legislative Assembly met on the 1st of October, a puerile contest, but not without its significance, ensued between the Constitutionals and the Republicans. The king should not be addressed as “Sire,” or as “Majesty,” contended one party; he should not sit in a gilded chair; the members should not be uncovered in his presence. Louis felt that it was intended to affront him, and he determined that the Assembly should be opened by his ministers. The republican spirit became moderated, and the constitutionalists became more assured, for the National Guard intimated their resolve that the revolution should go no further. On the 7th of October the king proceeded to the Assembly, and delivered a speech which seemed to give him back the loyalty which he had lost. There must be harmony, he said, between the king and the legislative body; that thus the property and the creed of every man would be protected, and no one would have a pretence for staying away from a country in which the laws should be faithfully executed and the rights of all respected. Confidence returned to the king and queen; and they thought their calamities were over when they

went that night to the Opera, and were received with unwonted shout, and even with the tears of those who were melted at seeing a mother, so long wretched, apparently at ease and happy as her little boy sate on her lap, and looked upon the people without fear.

In this autumn of 1791, whatever might be the apprehensions amongst a portion of the British nation of the progress of French doctrines, the prime-minister preserved an imperturbable serenity, which he appears to have communicated to the inferior members of the government. The editor of the "Diaries and Letters" of the Secretary of the Treasury, says, "It is a remarkable feature of this correspondence, that while the revolutionary mania in Paris was disclosing its horrors and crimes more and more, we look in vain to these letters [those of Rose and Pitt] for any intimation of what was going on. There is not a symptom of alarm or indignation, or even astonishment; both writers seem to be wholly intent upon the interior administration of the country, in a calm and undisturbed atmosphere."* Lord Sidmouth, in his old age, was fond of relating an anecdote of the period when, as Mr. Addington, he was Speaker of the House of Commons. In September, 1791, Pitt, for the first time, invited Burke to dine with him; Lord Grenville and Addington were the only other guests in Downing Street. "After dinner, Burke was earnestly representing the danger which threatened the country from the contagion of French principles, when Pitt said, 'Never fear, Mr. Burke; depend on it we shall go on as we are till the day of judgment:—' Very likely, sir,' replied Burke, 'it is the day of no judgment that I am afraid of.'† The internal condition of Great Britain was so essentially prosperous, and the abuses which required a reform were so limited in comparison of the evils that in France demanded a revolution, that Mr. Pitt might well have looked without serious alarm upon the clubs that sympathised with the French Assembly, and upon writers that attempted to spread the doctrines of the Jacobins. Neither would a peace-loving minister, who was at heart a friend to liberty, take any part with the despotic sovereigns of the continent, or with the emigrant princes who were dreaming of conquering and avenging the Revolution. On the 24th of August, the emperor of Germany and the king of Prussia had met at the Château de Pilnitz, the summer residence of the elector of Saxony, who was their host. The count d' Artois arrived, to urge the intervention of these sovereigns to rescue his brother, the king of France, out of the hands of rebellious subjects: and especially sought to move the emperor

* "Diaries, &c., of the Right Hon. George Rose," vol. i. p. 109.

† "Life of Lord Sidmouth," vol. i. p. 72.

in the cause of that emperor's sister, the humiliated queen. Out of these interviews came the famous declaration of Pilnitz, which appealed to the other European powers to make common cause with the emperor and the king of Prussia, and to employ, conjointly with them, "the most efficacious means, proportioned to their forces for enabling the king of France to strengthen, with the most perfect liberty, the basis of a monarchical government, equally conformable to the rights of sovereigns and the welfare of the French nation." The German courts were not agreed upon that policy of armed intervention which was thus timidly threatened. Prussia was reluctant to adopt the warlike views of Austria. Catherine of Russia and Gustavus of Sweden agreed to raise an army, which Spain was to subsidize; and they sent plenipotentiaries to the emigrant princes at Coblenz. Mr. Pitt wisely kept aloof from counsels in which the timid and the rash appeared equally likely to precipitate a war of opinions. He maintained the truly elevated position of the minister of a country enjoying its own constitutional liberty, which could neither sympathize with the regal despotism that would crush all freedom, nor with the popular violence that would overthrow all order.

There can be no doubt that, about the close of 1790, the king of France was in correspondence with foreign courts, either directly or through the emigrant princes and nobles. But in 1791, after his solemn acceptance of the Constitution, brought about by his conviction that his escape from the nets in which he was bound was impossible, he, apparently with sincerity, earnestly desired the emigrants to disarm. His injunctions were treated with contempt, as coming from a prince under duress. The Declaration of Pilnitz had raised a violent spirit of indignation amongst nearly every class and every party of Frenchmen, against the threat of any interference with their domestic concerns. For a short time the Constitution and the Monarchy seemed capable of being worked together; but the delusion soon came to an end. The king has an absolute veto according to the Constitution. The orators of the Palais Royal and the mobs of the street knew very early in the revolution what Veto meant. Mirabeau advocated the Veto. His carriage stopped at a bookseller's door, and a crowd surrounded it, crying out to the great orator, "You are the father of the people—you might save us—if the king has the Veto we have no need of the National Assembly—we are slaves."* On the 9th of November the Legislative Assembly decrees that all emigrants shall be "suspect of conspiracy,"

* Dumont—"Souvenirs," p. 108.

that is, that they shall be outlawed unless they return before the following new year's day; that the revenues of the absent French princes should be sequestered; that priests who would not take the oaths should forfeit their pensions, and sustain other penalties. The king to these decrees ought to apply his Veto, say the friends of the monarchy. The king's ministers and the Assembly argue these matters with fluent pertinacity. The time will come when this question will be settled by a force stronger than words. The king now feels strong enough to refuse his consent to these decrees in their entirety.

Whilst some of the leading emigrants of rank were gathered round the French princes at Coblenz, a large number of the nobility, and of the higher orders of clergy, were living in obscurity in England, many in very painful poverty. The grave-stones in some of the suburban churchyards of London used to present the memorials of many a great family who found obscure resting-places in the foreign land which had afforded them the means of a humble existence. In 1791, even after the unsuccessful flight to Varennes, many of these emigrants had still hope and confidence. Charles Butler, in August of that year, having called on Burke, saw him surrounded, as he usually was at that time, by many of the French nobility, and discoursing eloquently on the horrors of the Revolution. One of his hearers interrupted him with the ill-timed question, "But when shall we return to France?" "Never," was the reply; "False hopes," continued the orator, "are not the money that I keep in my drawer." "*Coquins!*" exclaimed one. "Yes," said Burke, "they are *coquins*, but they are the most terrible *coquins* that the world has known."*

In the winter of 1791-2, M. de Talleyrand visited London, to make his observations upon the temper of British statesmen, and to dispose the ministry to regard the French Constitution without alarm. According to the self-denying decree of the National Assembly, he was restrained from holding office. But he was no less the agent of the French government. The British cabinet had appeared decided not to depart from its neutrality in the event of war, but it manifested no sympathy with the new order of things. Talleyrand, according to Dumont, who was in his confidence during this visit to England, had a long conference with Lord Grenville: but the Secretary of State was dry and laconic. Talleyrand had known Mr. Pitt, who, when he was in France in 1783, was a guest at the house of Talleyrand's uncle, the archbishop of Rheims; but

† Butler's "Reminiscences"—*Coquin* has a comprehensive application to roguery and beggary.

Mr. Pitt made no allusion to his former acquaintance. Talleyrand went to Court. The king paid him little attention, and the queen turned her back upon him. Talleyrand, in spite of the charms of his conversation, did not find a ready admission to the highest society of London; although he had special introductions to lord Lansdown and other leading Whigs. Amidst the reserve of the ministry and the neglect of the court, Talleyrand could expect little success from his irregular mission. He returned to Paris at the beginning of March.

At this period of Talleyrand's return from London, the Girondin party, as we shall have to relate in the next chapter, had acceded to power, with Dumouriez as minister for foreign affairs. It was then determined to send an embassy to London. The difficulty with regard to Talleyrand was still an obstacle to his appointment as plenipotentiary. The title was given to M. Chauvelin, a young negotiator; the power was with Talleyrand, who formed part of a numerous suite that accompanied the ambassador. The party left Paris in two carriages in a fine spring season; several, such as Talleyrand and Dumont, familiar with England; the greater number eager to gratify their curiosity in an unknown country. Garat, a man of letters, who afterwards acquired a hateful distinction as minister of justice, was one of the most agreeable of this large company. The impressions of England made upon this man, who desired the reputation of a philanthropist, and became the apologist of massacre, are pleasantly described. When they arrived at Dover, Garat mounted the imperial of the carriage, with Dumont at his side. He adjusted his eye-glass, and exhibited as much excited curiosity as if they had arrived in the moon. He made the most amusing exclamations, upon the small cottages, the small gardens, the neatness that reigned throughout, the beauty of the children, the modest air of the female peasantry, the decent dress of the country people;—in a word, this scene of ease and prosperity, which contrasted so strongly with the misery and the rags which they had just seen in the people of Picardy, struck Garat in a singular manner: "Ah, what a pity, what a pity," he exclaimed, "if they set about to revolutionize this fine country! When will France be as happy as England?"* The man of letters, who was preparing to write the history of the French Revolution, might have considered that the comparative happiness of the English peasantry would render such attempt at revolutionizing altogether vain. One of the great causes of the Revolution did not here exist—the feudal privileges which had long made the

* "Souvenirs," p. 298.

people slaves, and in revenge of which they became savages—the crushing despotism of a government of centralization, which stood in the way of all social improvement. The embassy of Chauvelin and Talleyrand was established in London; but it was coldly received by the court, and almost injuriously by the public. Its members were attacked by the ministerial newspapers, and they committed the imprudence of assiduously cultivating the society of the Opposition. The official communications of the embassy and the Secretary of State were not of a very agreeable character. Their public reception was anything but flattering. Talleyrand and Chauvelin went to Ranelagh, Dumont being of the party, with five or six others of the ambassador's suite. They saw that they attracted the attention of the gay crowd; but that regard was not complimentary; for as they moved round the ring a free passage was made for them, right and left, as if the people feared to breathe an atmosphere of contagion. They also saw the duke of Orleans walking alone, shunned even in a more especial manner. Nevertheless, at this period the British government was anxious to preserve its neutrality in the affairs of France: it was cold, but it was not hostile.

The Parliament of Great Britain was opened on the 31st of January, 1792. The king's speech was not a speech of alarm, but of unbounded confidence. It declared that the general state of affairs in Europe appeared to promise to his majesty's subjects a continuance of their present tranquillity. "Under these circumstances," said the king, "I am induced to think that some immediate reduction may safely be made in our naval and military establishments." The speech also announced "a continual and progressive improvement in the internal situation of the country." The private correspondence of members of the government clearly shows that the expectation of continued peace, and the boast of internal prosperity, were not used as devices to keep up the spirits of the nation. "Everything looks like peace, on the side of France," writes Lord Grenville in January. "There certainly are some in France who wish the war, but very many more who fear it; and the ruin of the finances is approaching with very rapid strides indeed. What a contrast we shall make with them, when I come to state to you the particulars."* The finances of England and France were scarcely capable of being compared. The disturbance of the ordinary laws of exchange produced by the issue of Assignats in 1790—which paper-money was based on the security of the Church Lands remaining unsold—had rendered the financial

* "Court and Cabinets of George III.," vol. ii. p. 201.

condition of France very difficult of contrast with a country whose paper-money was convertible into specie. The financial ruin of France, in the ordinary sense of ruin, was approaching very surely though gradually at the beginning of 1792; but towards the end of the year the excessive issue of Assignats, based upon the forfeited property of emigrants, produced a terrible amount of private ruin and misery. Yet the amount of private calamity did not in the least prevent the French revolutionary government from carrying on hostilities with an energy that astonished the statesmen of other countries, who provided the means of war by the ordinary routine of loans and taxes. The mistake which the British government constantly made with regard to France, long after 1792, was to believe that the ruin of her finances necessarily involved the submission of her rulers—"as if credit was necessary to a government of which the principle was rapine; as if Alboin could not turn Italy into a desert till he had negotiated a loan at five per cent.; as if the exchequer bills of Attila had been at par."*

On the 17th of February, in a Committee of the whole House, Mr. Pitt brought under consideration a general view of the Public Income and Expenditure. No prospect could be more gratifying than the eloquent minister's survey of the resources of the country; no declaration of policy more statesmanlike. He looked forward to the operation of the Sinking Fund during a period of tranquillity that was likely to endure for some years; he calculated what that fund would amount to in 1808. "There never was a time in the history of the country," he said, "when, from the situation of Europe, we might more reasonably expect fifteen years of peace than we may at the present moment."† He displayed the great increase of revenue. He enlarged upon the causes of that increase, derived from the natural industry and energy of the country; the improvement of every branch of manufacture; the invention of machinery for the abridgment of labour; that continual tendency of capital to increase, whenever it is not obstructed by some public calamity, or by some mistaken and mischievous policy. Such circumstances were naturally connected with the duration of peace; they were connected still more with our internal tranquillity, and with the natural effects of a free but well-regulated government. "It is this union of liberty with law, which, by raising a barrier equally firm against the encroachments of power, and the violence of popular commotion, affords to property its just security, produces the exertion of genius and labour, the extent and solidity of credit, the

* Macaulay—"Biography of Pitt."

† "Parliamentary History," vol. xxix. col. 826.

circulation and increase of capital; which forms and upholds the national character, and sets in motion all the springs which actuate the great mass of the community through all its various descriptions." Fox complimented his rival upon his eloquence; upon his philosophical view of the principles of government; upon his true and splendid enumeration of the causes of national prosperity. What, indeed, we may now say, could a free nation desire more than such an expositor of its principles, and such a leader in a continued course of greatness and honour? Throughout that Session we see William Pitt truly the foremost man of all the world—calm, amidst the storms which were raging around; in his majestic oratory asserting the grandeur of his country, and vindicating the soundest doctrines of public economy, and the most noble principles of justice for the oppressed. On the 2nd of April, Wilberforce moved for a Committee of the whole House to consider the African Slave Trade, with a view to a resolution for its immediate abolition. Pitt on this occasion supported his friend in one of the most eloquent speeches on record. "Windham, who has no love for Pitt," writes Wilberforce, "tells me that Fox and Grey, with whom he walked home after the debate, agreed with him in thinking Pitt's speech one of the most extraordinary displays of eloquence they had ever heard. For the last twenty minutes he really seemed to be inspired. He was dilating upon the future prospects of civilizing Africa, a topic which I had suggested to him in the morning." This almost inspired passage of Pitt's oration may scarcely bear the sober examination of those who contend for the difference of races; but there are certainly few things in the whole compass of oratory more magnificent than his retrospect of the early condition of the Britons, as slaves exported to the Roman market, and his reproof of those who contended that Africa was incapable of civilization: "Why might not some Roman senator, reasoning on the principles of some honourable gentlemen, and pointing to British barbarians, have predicted with equal boldness, 'There is a people that will never rise to civilization; there is a people destined never to be free; a people without the understanding necessary for the attainment of useful arts; depressed by the hand of nature below the level of the human species; and created to form a supply of slaves for the rest of the world.' Might not this have been said, in all respects as fairly and as truly of Britain herself, at that period of her history, as it can now be said by us of the inhabitants of Africa?"* It was decided that night, by a large majority, that the Slave Trade

* "Parliamentary History," vol. xxix. col. 1155.

should be gradually abolished. Pitt and Fox contended for the immediate abolition.

In this session was carried that great improvement of the law known as Mr. Fox's Libel Bill, by which was established the right of juries to give a general verdict of guilty or not guilty upon the whole matter put in issue upon the indictment. This Bill was carried in the House of Commons in the Session of 1791, Pitt supporting Fox and Erskine in the necessity of taking some step, at least to regulate the practice of the Courts on the trial of libels, and render it conformable to the free spirit of the constitution. In the House of Lords, the Chancellor, lord Thurlow, moved the postponement of the Bill; and it was lost for that Session. In the Commons, in 1792, it was again passed; and sent to the Lords. It was again opposed by the Chancellor, who was supported by the whole body of the Judges—"sad to relate," says lord Camden, and by lord Loughborough, and the measure was finally carried on the 11th of June. Lord Thurlow had become troublesome in the ministry of Mr. Pitt, occasionally setting up an independent authority, in which pretension he appears to have reckoned upon the support of the king. On the 14th of May he made an unexpected opposition to a ministerial measure in parliament, and had nearly obtained a majority. Grenville wrote to his brother, "I think the consequences must be decisive in his situation or ours. But it requires some reflection, and some management in the quarter you know."* In that "quarter," there was no hesitation. The king sent a message to the chancellor requiring him to give up the office; but leaving the time to his choice. The great seal was then put in commission. Lord Loughborough, who belonged to the Whig party, was ardently desirous for the seat on the wool-sack. He attempted for some time to bring about a Coalition between Pitt and Fox, to which Pitt appears to have opposed no insuperable obstacle, though Fox declared that the minister was not sincere. The Whigs were divided between the opinions of Burke and those of Fox on the question of the French Revolution; though many were not indisposed to join Pitt to form "a strong government." Burke thought that "Mr. Fox's coach stops the way," but that there was no doing without him or with him.† The attempts to bring about a Coalition failed, as might naturally have been expected—not so much from any insuperable difference of principles between the two great parliamentary leaders at that time,

* "Court of George III.," vol. ii. p. 207.

† See "Malmesbury's Diary," pp. 418 to 443.

as from the difficulties that were sure to arise out of the conduct and opinions of the extreme men of either party. If Pitt, united with Fox, had adhered to his principle of neutrality in the impending struggle between France and the German powers, Fox might have moderated many of those opinions which appeared to make him the advocate of the excesses of the French Revolution. But the great question of peace or war with the French republic really depended upon the feelings of the majority in parliament; and before the close of the Session of 1792, it became pretty evident that the strongest ministry would have real difficulty in preserving England from an interference in this question, which so stirred the passions of the community.

On the 30th of April, Mr. Charles Grey gave notice of a motion for Reform in the representation of the people—he who, as earl Grey and Prime Minister forty years afterwards, carried the Reform Bill. On the 26th of April, 1792, at a general meeting of the Society of “The Friends of the People, associated for the purpose of obtaining a Parliamentary Reform,” a Declaration was agreed to be signed by many members of parliament and other gentlemen; and it was resolved that Mr. Grey and Mr. Erskine be requested to make a motion on the subject in the next Session. Mr. Grey accordingly gave notice of his intention in a brief speech. Mr. Pitt at once came forward to declare his opinions on the subject. He had supported reform in former times, when he thought that “if some mode could be adopted, by which the people could have any additional security for a continuance of the blessings which they now enjoy, it would be an improvement in the constitution of the country. . . . He would ask all moderate men what were their feelings on this subject at this moment? He believed he could anticipate the answer—‘This is not a time to make hazardous experiments.’ Could we forget what lessons had been given to the world within a few years?” Mr. Pitt made some pointed allusions to the Declaration of “The Friends of the People,” and a heated debate followed, in which Mr. Fox supported Mr. Grey, but intimated his opinion of the impolicy of joining an Association for Reform. On the 21st of May, a Royal Proclamation was issued, against the publication and dispersion of seditious writings. On the 25th, an Address to the king was proposed, expressing the determination of the Commons to support his majesty in the resolution which he had adopted. Mr. Grey moved an amendment, in which he brought forward Mr. Pitt’s former opinions on the subject of Reform; described his conduct as that of an apostate; and treated the Proclamation and the proposed Address as calculated to throw odium upon a

Society that had been formed with the purest intentions. The Proclamation, he said, was intended to separate the Whig party. There were, indeed, many signs that a separation of old political friends was inevitable. In the House of Lords, the prince of Wales, always hitherto associated in politics with Mr. Fox, Mr. Sheridan, and the Opposition, spoke, for the first time, on this subject of the king's Proclamation. The matter in question was, he said, whether the constitution was or was not to be maintained; whether the wild ideas of theory were to conquer the wholesome maxims of established practice; and whether those laws under which we had flourished for such a series of years were to be subverted by a reform unsanctioned by the people. "I exist," exclaimed his royal highness, "by the love, the friendship, and the benevolence of the people, and their cause I will never forsake as long as I live." *

The Proclamation against Seditious Writings stated that "we have reason to believe that correspondences have been entered into with sundry persons in foreign parts, with a view to forward the criminal and wicked purposes" alluded to. M. Chauvelin, the French minister plenipotentiary, upon the appearance of this Proclamation, addressed a note to lord Grenville, in which he says, "If certain individuals of this country have established a correspondence abroad, tending to excite troubles therein, and if, as the proclamation seems to insinuate, certain Frenchmen have come into their views, that is a proceeding wholly foreign to the French nation, to the legislative body, to the king, and to his ministers; it is a proceeding of which they are entirely ignorant, which militates against every principle of justice, and which, whenever it became known, would be universally condemned in France. Independently of these principles of justice, from which a free people ought never to deviate, is it not evident, from a due consideration of the true interests of the French nation, that she ought to desire the interior tranquillity, the continuance and the force of the constitution, of a country which she already looks upon as her natural ally?" Arguing thus, at considerable length, M. Chauvelin requests that the Secretary of State would communicate his note to both Houses of Parliament previous to their deliberations upon the proposed Address. Lord Grenville administered a dignified rebuke to the French ambassador: "The deliberations of the two Houses of Parliament, as well as the communications which his majesty shall be pleased to make to them, relative to the affairs of the kingdom, are objects absolutely foreign to all diplomatic correspondence, and upon which

* "Parliamentary History," vol. xxix. col. 1517.

it is impossible for me to enter into any discussion whatever with the ministers of other courts." It is clear that there could not be any very cordial communication between the French envoy and the English ministers although the forms of diplomatic courtesy were sedulously preserved. On the 18th of June, M. Chauvelin, having previously announced the commencement of hostilities, invites his Britannic majesty, in the name of the king of the French, to use his influence, "to stop, whilst it is still time, the progress of a confederacy, which equally affects the peace, the liberty, and the happiness of Europe." Lord Grenville, coldly answering this impassioned exhortation, says, "the same sentiments which have determined the king not to take part in the internal affairs of France ought equally to induce him to respect the rights and the independence of other sovereigns, and especially those of the allies; and his majesty has thought that, in the existing circumstances of the war now begun, the intervention of his counsels, or of his good offices, cannot be of use, unless they should be desired by all the parties interested."

The Parliament was prorogued on the 16th of June. In his speech on closing the Session the king said, "I have seen with great concern the commencement of hostilities in several parts of Europe." The war between Turkey and Russia was at an end. The disciplined armies of Austria has scarcely yet come into conflict with the raw levies of France. But if there were evils to be dreaded from the progress, of democratic opinions, there was no less a danger to be apprehended from the daring ambition of absolute monarchs. There was another Revolution upon which those who feared anarchy but loved liberty looked without apprehension. In 1791 a great change had been effected in the government of Poland. The tyranny of the nobles had been abolished with the entire concurrence of the king and the people. A new Constitution was established, which provided for an hereditary Crown; a Legislature consisting of two Houses; equality of civil rights; a complete toleration of all religions. This rational system was offensive to the despotic empress of Russia; and she sent an army into Poland to destroy the new liberties of the country. The king of Poland appealed to his ally the king of Prussia, to send him that aid which Prussia was bound by treaty to render. The tricky court of Berlin replied that the change in the government of Poland had cancelled the obligation. Such were the Allies to whom Great Britain had to look, if she was to take any hostile proceedings against the revolutionary government of France. Some enthusiasts in England thought, in the summer of 1792, that it

would be a wise policy for our country to make common cause with France in resisting the despots who were crushing the independence of Poland. Against this scheme, Burke was indignant. He applauded the Revolution of Poland; he hated that of France. He lamented the fate of Poland; but he would sooner let affairs there take their course than enter "into a confederacy with the horror, turpitude, baseness, and wickedness of the French Revolution." * Things in Poland did take their course. The crimes of monarchy were at hand to make men careful not to exhaust all their indignation against the crimes of democracy.

* "Correspondence of Burke," vol. iii. p. 472.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Deaths of the emperor and the king of Sweden.—The Girondin Ministry.—French declaration of war against the king of Hungary and Bohemia.—The Veto.—Roland, and two other ministers, dismissed.—Insurrection of the 20th of June.—The Country in Danger proclaimed.—Arrival of the Marsellais.—Proclamation of the Duke of Brunswick.—Insurrection of the 10th of August.—Attack on the Tuileries.—Royal family removed to the Temple.—Longwy taken by the Prussians.—The Massacres of September.

IN March, 1792, two of the crowned heads of Europe who were meditating upon the great question of a war with France were removed by death. Leopold, the emperor, died on the 1st of March. He was succeeded as king of Hungary and Bohemia by his eldest son, Francis II. Gustavus III., king of Sweden, was shot on the 6th of March, at a masked ball, by Ankerstroem, one of the nobles whose privileges he had abrogated in 1789 to establish his own absolute power. He was succeeded by his son, a boy of thirteen years of age. The successor of Leopold was not yet elected emperor when France declared war against him on the 20th of April. This declaration was the act of the Girondin ministry. The administration which represented the Feuillans, or party of the Constitution, of whom Bertrand de Moleville and Narbonne were leading members and political rivals, was broken up by its own differences. The king had now to look to a party of greater power in the Assembly, but more likely to precipitate the Court into dangerous measures. On the 15th of March, general Dumouriez was offered the ministry of Foreign Affairs. By the 23d a new administration was formed. Clavière was appointed minister of finance; and Roland de Platière was appointed minister of the interior; he, of whom Authur Young writes, in 1789, as "a gentleman somewhat advanced in life, who has a young and beautiful wife," and who then filled the humble office of inspector of fabrics at Lyons.* Roland has now brought to Paris his beautiful wife, the daughter of an engraver, to aid him in weightier matters than such as he discussed with the English agriculturist. The grave man goes to Court in plain black, with strings in his shoes; and the horrified master of the ceremonies points to him; and ejaculates to Dumouriez—"Quoi !—no

* "Travels in France," 4to., p. 262

buckles!" "All is lost," said the sarcastic general. Madame Roland, an enthusiastic republican, was admitted to the political meetings of her husband and the men of his party. Dumont says of these committees of ministers and the principal Girondins, at which he was sometimes present and saw Madame Roland, "a woman might appear there somewhat out of place, but she took no part in the discussions. She sat at her own writing-table, busy over letters, but she lost not a word of what was going forward." Madame Roland, he says, "who had an easy and energetic style, was too fond of writing, and engaged her husband in writing unceasingly. It was the ministry of writers." † He conceived that they were too much occupied in labouring to influence the opinions of the moment, not to sacrifice too much to a vulgar policy, instead of rising above the dominion of prejudices. Brissot, equally active in the Assembly, and in the Jacobins' Club, was the head of a faction sufficiently powerful to make himself feared by the ministry. Brissot had strong prejudices against the king. Clavière had become convinced that the king had pure intentions; and he was detailing, at a meeting at Roland's house, an instance of the knowledge of the Constitution which Louis possessed. Brissot and Clavière had angry words; Roland was afraid to be just towards a king, whose minister he was. The dispute was made up by the address of Roland's wife.* Such small circumstances indicate the internal influences that bore upon the actions of the ministry. The war with Austria was forced on by Brissot. It was opposed by all except Dumouriez. "Brissot," says Dumont, "was so violent, that I have heard him propose to disguise some soldiers as Austrian hussars, who should make a night attack upon some French villages; and, upon receiving this news, he would have made a motion for war, and would have carried an enthusiastic decree." † Dumouriez says in his Memoirs, that, as minister, he endeavoured to prevent the war; but that he would have considered the nation cowardly, and unworthy of liberty, if it had longer submitted to the hostile insolence of the Court of Vienna. The king was against the war; although he formally proposed to the Legislative Assembly a declaration of hostilities. The Assembly resolved on war the same night. The plan of the campaign was formed by Dumouriez. Its chief object was to advance into the Low Countries, where it was expected that the French armies would be welcomed by a population which disliked the rule of Austria. The first movements were not successful. La Fayette commanded the army of the cen-

* "Souvenirs sur Mirabeau," p. 276—p. 278.

† *Ibid.*, p. 284.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 288.

tre; Rochambeau, the army of the north; two of his officers, Dillon and Biron, were to move forward with divisions, as a feint, whilst La Fayette made the real advance. The troops under Dillon and Biron were each seized with a panic, at the sight of the Austrian troops. La Fayette, hearing of these misfortunes suspended his own march.

There was a crisis at hand of more importance in the future destinies of France and of Europe, than the first failure of the French arms in the advance from the frontier. The possibility of the Constitution of 1791 working in times of trial was to be demonstrated. That Constitution gave the king an absolute veto upon the acts of the Legislature. He had the sole power of nominating his ministers; and of appointing to every civil and military office. He had a large and uncontrolled revenue. That he was subject to popular insult was perhaps in some degree an unavoidable consequence of the anomaly that had been established between the power of the crown and the spirit of the people. A democratic legislature; a monarch, with the power in his own person of overturning their decrees, without any reference to ministerial responsibility. A ministry forced upon him by a party in the Assembly inclined towards a republic; an army upon the frontier, stimulated by the princes of the blood and a body of noble emigrants, in secret communication with him, and resolved to undo the work of the Revolution. The king had too much power of a dangerous nature; and too little power for the preservation of his own authority, in connection with the vast changes which had cut away all the natural props of the monarchy. The Girondin ministry, represented by Roland, were disposed to coerce the king but not to adopt the extreme opinions of the Jacobins. Dumouriez, a man of vivacity and pleasure, was not at ease with his formal associate of the shoe-strings; who went straight forward to the assertion of his own opinions without intrigue or compromise. The king hesitated about his sanction of a decree of the Assembly for the deportation of the priests who had not taken the oath; and of another decree for the formation of a large camp of federates near Paris. Roland, or rather his wife, had drawn up a letter of advice to the king, which he proposed that all the ministers should sign. They declined to do so. Another letter was then drawn up by the enthusiastic lady, which was addressed by Roland to the king in his own name. It demanded, almost in a tone of menace, that the king should give his sanction to the two decrees about which he was deliberating. Dumouriez was asked by the king if he ought to endure this insult; and Dumouriez advised him to dismiss Roland and two other of

the ministry. This was on the 13th of June. Roland went to the Assembly, and read his letter; and it was declared that the three dismissed ministers had the confidence of the country. The king resolved to sanction the decree for a camp near Paris, but not that for the deportation of the priests; and he prepared a letter to that effect to the Assembly, which he asked the remaining ministers to countersign. They refused, and were dismissed. Other ministers were appointed from the party of the Feuillans. They entered upon office on the 17th of June. On the 20th a popular demonstration of the most formidable nature showed where the power resided that would command an interpretation of the constitution according to its own will. Lamartine has truly said, "the first insurrections of the Revolution were the spontaneous impulses of the people. . . . Public passion gave the signal, and chance commanded. When the Revolution was accomplished, and the Constitution had imposed legal order on each party, the insurrections of the people were no longer agitations, but plans. . . . Amongst the citizens anarchy had disciplined itself, and its disorder was only external, for a secret influence animated and directed it unknown to itself."* In every quarter and section of Paris there were local leaders, who took their direction from the great agitators of the Clubs and of the Journals.

The 20th of June is the anniversary of the famous day of 1789, when the States-General in the Tennis Court swore never to separate. In the faubourg Saint Antoine, and in the faubourg Saint Marceau, there are great crowds assembled betimes in the morning. Their purpose ostensibly is to plant a tree of liberty, and to petition the Assembly about certain constitutional grievances. They have music; and tricolor streamers on pikes; and dainty emblems with inscriptions, such as a bull's heart pierced through, inscribed "Aristocrat's heart," and a pair of black breeches, with a label intimating that tyrants must tremble at the *sans-culottes*. The mob of armed men and armed women, led by Santerre, the brewer, have reached the Salle de Manège, to the number of eight thousand. They gain admittance, and a petition is read to the Assembly, the text of which is, that "blood shall flow, unless the tree of liberty which we are going to plant, shall flourish." They defile through the Hall, singing "*ça ira*," and shouting "Down with the Veto." The crowd had prodigiously increased when the petitioners came out. The tree is planted; and then, the king must be visited in his palace. The king is expected to come out, but he does not think proper to appear. The Place de Carrousel and the

gardens of the Tuileries are filled with this wild rabble; and at last they are battering the doors of the palace with axes and crow-bars. The king goes to the Council Chamber, where some of the ministers are assembled, and three grenadiers are also there. The rabble are in the adjoining room, when the king orders the door of the Council Chamber to be opened. "Sire, be not afraid," said a grenadier to the king. "Put your hand upon my heart; it is tranquil," replied the king. He asks the mob what they want? His courage somewhat awes them. They then cry "Remove Veto." "This is not the time to do so, nor is this the way to ask it," says the brave Louis. A petition was then read to him by Legendre, a butcher. For four hours did this extraordinary scene continue. The red cap was handed to the king, and he put it on. A drunken man, with a bottle in his hand, offered the king to drink, and he drank "To the Nation." Pétion, the mayor of Paris, at last arrived. He had been very slow in coming, and was not very alert when he did come. To his connivance is attributed the disgrace of this outrage; and it is even alleged that the agitators hoped that the king would fall by the hands of the mob. The education of the people in the school of bloodshed was not yet sufficiently advanced for this scheme to be realised. The king at last got out of the hands of the rude crowd, vociferous but not ferocious, though many were intoxicated. They marched through the apartments of the palace. They passed before the queen and her son, who stood behind a table, protected by some grenadiers; they placed a red cap on the little boy's head. The sun has set before the palace is cleared; but no lives have been sacrificed. The firmness of the king has saved him. Mr. Huskisson, in a letter of the 29th of June, pays a just tribute to the deportment of the king: "His admirable presence of mind during this long and painful scene, have gained him many friends among the better order of people, and seem to have added much to the affection of the army. His friends only wish that his courage was of a more active nature. In his conduct he seems to be supported by the spirit of a martyr, the tranquillity of a good conscience, the resignation of a Christian; but nothing hitherto shows the enterprising courage and intrepidity of a hero, capable of great and astonishing resolutions, executed with that energy which strikes his enemies with terror, and ensures success to his cause." *

General La Fayette, on hearing of the atrocious proceedings of the 20th of June, arrived in Paris from his army, and appeared at the bar of the Legislative Assembly, to urge an inquiry into the

* "Speeches of Huskisson," vol. i.—Introductory Memoir.

cause of these excesses, and to denounce their instigators. La Fayette was received with honour at the Assembly. The Jacobins in their club called for his impeachment. He left Paris in time to preserve his own life; and the Jacobins had only the satisfaction of burning him in effigy. On the frontier there is inaction in the German army and in the French. But events are ripening. On the 11th of July, it is resolved by the Assembly to proclaim "The Country in danger." On the 14th of July there is a festival in the Champ de Mars—another feast of the Federation, when the king again takes the National oath. But there are no shouts for the king. The popular idol of this day is the mayor of Paris, Pétion, who had been suspended from his functions by the Directory of the Department, for his conduct on the 20th of June. "Pétion, or death," is the shout at the Feast of the Federation. On the 22nd of July there is a civic procession to proclaim "The country in danger." The ominous words are inscribed on an enormous flag which is fixed on the Pont-Neuf; and a similar flag is hoisted on the top of the Hôtel de Ville. Each section is headed by its municipal officer; and he is ready to inscribe the names of those who will go forth to fight for their country. Young men of Paris are going out to do battle against the foreigner. Other young men are marching into Paris, from the extreme south of France—how called together no one knows, with what object few can guess. They have travelled six hundred miles from the city of Marseilles, singing that stirring song of the Marseilles, whose chorus was an expression of the patriotism which exalted and the ferocity which disgraced the revolution.

"Aux armes, citoyens! formez vos bataillons!
Marchons! qu'un sang impur abreuve nos sillons!"

These five hundred tired and travel-stained patriots have entered Paris on the 30th of July, and on that same day are fighting with the National Guards. Who has brought these men of the south to Paris; and why are they fighting with the troops who are there to defend the constitution? A few days will show. They began their career in Paris by taking part with a rabble against the sworn defenders of the law. Barbaroux, a fierce republican, who came from Marseilles, had gone out from the city to meet these adventurers, and he was fully competent to give them their instructions in the duty of patriots.

The capital of France was in this state of excitement, when a proclamation of the duke of Brunswick, dated the 25th of July, from Coblenz, arrived; and was immediately printed in the journals. It is impossible to read this declaration without regarding it

either as an act of insanity ; or an atrocious attempt to render the most violent instruments of the Revolution more desperate, and thus to deliver up France, torn to pieces by civil war, an easy prey to those who would partition her, as they had partitioned Poland. We must regard it as the madness of the emigrant princes and their besotted followers. The declaration of the duke of Brunswick, in the name of the emperor and the king of Prussia, disavows any intention to make conquests, or to meddle with the internal government of France ; but announces that they intend to deliver the king and the royal family from their captivity, and to enable him to make such convocations as he shall judge proper, and to labour in security for the welfare of his subjects. The National Guards are called upon to preserve order till the arrival of the troops of the emperor and the king of Prussia ; those who fight against these troops shall be punished as rebels to their king : the members of departments, districts, and municipalities, are held responsible, under pain of losing their heads, for all crimes which they shall suffer to take place ; if the inhabitants of the towns and villages shall dare to defend themselves against the troops of their imperial and royal majesties, they shall be punished according to the most rigorous rules of war. The inhabitants of Paris are called upon to submit instantly to their king ; “to set that prince at full liberty, and to ensure to him and to all royal persons that inviolability and respect which are due, by the laws of nature and of nations, to sovereigns ; their imperial and royal majesties making personally responsible for all events, on pain of losing their heads, pursuant to military trials, without hopes of pardon, all the members of the National Assembly, of the department, of the district, of the municipality, and of the National Guards of Paris, justices of peace, and others whom it may concern ; and their imperial and royal majesties further declare, on their faith and word of emperor and king, that if the palace of the Tuileries be forced or insulted—if the least violence be offered, the least outrage done, to their majesties the king, the queen, and the royal family—if they be not immediately placed in safety, and set at liberty, they will inflict on those who shall deserve it the most exemplary and ever memorable avenging punishments, by giving up the city of Paris to military execution, and exposing it to total destruction.”

There was a Scotch physician of some celebrity, Dr. John Moore, the author of a popular novel, “Zeluco,” travelling, in company with the earl of Lauderdale, to Paris, at the beginning of August, 1792. He saw the peasants dancing on a green plain, without any fear of Austrians or Prussians. He met people in

carriages flying from Paris, who seemed to be impressed with a notion that some important event was about to happen; and one person said that a conspiracy would break out on the 9th of the month. Moore and his friend laughed at the notion of a conspiracy so well known beforehand.* There were certainly grounds for apprehension; for Pétion had been, on the 3rd of August, at the bar of the Assembly, at the head of a deputation of the Commune, who demanded the deposition of the king. Louis had sent a message to the Assembly, disavowing the proclamation of the duke of Brunswick, and expressing doubts of its authenticity. The friends of the king were in serious alarm, and were concerting measures for his flight. The Court apprehended an attack upon the Tuileries, and were bribing Danton, Santerre, and others of the Jacobin faction, to avert the dreaded insurrection. The decrees of the Assembly were wholly in the power of the Girondins, who desired a Republic, and of the Mountain, who would not scruple to destroy the Monarchy whatever amount of butchery the attempt might involve. The real hope of the Court was that the duke of Brunswick might be able to reach Paris before any serious outbreak. There were men there who had the absolute command of a fierce multitude, who would do their bidding with terrible promptitude, whilst the allied troops were slowly advancing towards the French frontier. There was an insurrectional Committee ready to strike a blow whenever the time came. The faubourg Saint Marceau, and the faubourg Saint Antoine, and the Club of the Cordeliers, were their three centres of action. On the evening of the 9th of August, Danton was crying "to arms." The Marseillais were forming their ranks at the entrance of that Club of which Danton was the leading mover. The Sections assembled, and sent their Commissioners to assume the municipal authority at the Hôtel de Ville, and to displace the Council. At midnight the tocsin was sounded in every quarter. Drums were beating to arms. The National Guards were rushing to the posts of the several departments. The streets were illuminated by order of the municipality. It was a night of terror; but it was more especially terrible to the king and the royal family, who had heard the deadful note of the tocsin. They were surrounded by faithful servants who were resolved to share their perils. The National Guards, who were bound to defend the palace, had assembled very slowly at the beat of the rappel. The protection of the king almost wholly fell upon the Swiss guards. Mandat, a constitutionalist, then commanding the National Guard, made the best preparations in his power to

* "Journal of 1792," August 6.

resist an attack. He had given orders to the gendarmerie about the Tuileries, and at the Hôtel de Ville; which had the sanction of the Council that had been superseded in the night by the Sections. Mandat was sent for to the Hôtel de Ville, as the morning was approaching. He went, and was murdered. There was now no plan of defence for the Tuileries, which, as the sun rose, was surrounded by thousands of insurgents. There were National Guards sufficient to have driven back the multitude, if the men had done the duty to which they had been sworn. The king was advised to go into the courts and the gardens of the palace and review these troops. He was received with cries of "Down with the Veto." Battalions left their positions, and joined the assailants in the Place du Carrousel. The Assembly had hastily met during the night; and continued their sitting whilst this hurricane of popular violence was raging around them. They were debating some unimportant law, having no reference to the crisis whose development they were quietly expecting. The king and his family were strongly urged to place themselves under the protection of the Assembly. They at last consented; and when he entered the Hall, Louis said, "I am come here to prevent a great crime. I believe myself in safety in the midst of you, gentlemen." It was then about nine o'clock.

The royal family were placed in the logographe, a small box used by the reporters. Soon the sound of cannon was heard. No orders were given when the king left the palace. It was known to the leaders of the insurgents that he was gone. The great crime, the murder of the royal family, was averted by their leaving the Tuileries; but a wholesale butchery was to manifest the devotion to liberty and patriotism of the mobs of Paris. All the troops in the courts were received into the interior of the palace. Domestic, male and female; gentlemen of the household; priests; National Guards and Swiss guards, filled the apartments. The king had told the Assembly that he had given orders to the Swiss not to fire. The insurgents had obtained possession of the Court Royale, and they called to the Swiss at the windows to deliver up the palace. The Swiss manifested no disposition to fire upon them. Some of the most furious of the rabble reached the vestibule. There was a barricade at the foot of the stairs; and when it was attempted to be forced, a combat began. The insurgents were driven back. The Swiss, boldly headed by two officers, marched into the court, and drove out the crowd. They even penetrated to the Carrousel, and the multitude fled before them. Had they been supported by the gendarmerie, the contest might have ended differently. An order had been sent by the king that the Swiss should

repair to the Assembly. About two hundred marched thither, fired upon by the National Guards. The insurgents returned to the attack; obtained possession of the vestibule; rushed up the staircase, which was defended by eighty Swiss against the furious Marseillais and the pikemen of the faubourgs, till not a Swiss on the staircase was left alive. A general massacre of all within the walls, with the exception of the women, then ensued. A large number of the Swiss and National Guards, who were in the courts, attempted to make their way to the Hall of the Assembly, but the Swiss were all picked out and murdered.

By eleven o'clock on that morning of the 10th of August, the Tuileries was in the complete possession of the rabble of Paris; the greater number of its inmates slaughtered; all its luxurious furniture, and works of art, broken to pieces or burnt. For sixteen hours the king sat in the logographe; and he and his family witnessed those proceedings of the Assembly which accomplished another Revolution. There was no constitutional party here now to control the Jacobins and the Girondins. A body of citizens appeared at the bar to demand the deposition of the king. Vergniaud retired; and soon returned with the draft of a decree by which a National Convention was to be formed; and the chief of the Executive was suspended, until the decision of the Convention. The decree was put and adopted without discussion. A new ministry was appointed. Roland, Clavière, and Servan resumed their offices. Danton was chosen minister of justice. The Assembly sate till one o'clock in the morning, the royal family continuing in their close box all the time. A lodging was provided for them. The next morning they were brought back to the Assembly, to listen to other decrees of their masters. Dr. Moore has described the scene, at which he was present: "From the place in which I sat I could not see the king, but I had a full view of the queen, and the rest of the royal family. Her beauty is gone. No wonder. She seemed to listen with an undisturbed air to the speakers. Sometimes she whispered to her sister-in-law, and to Madame de Lamballe; once or twice she stood up, and, leaning forward, surveyed every part of the hall. A person near me remarked, that her face indicated rage and the most provoking arrogance. I perceived nothing of that nature; although the turn of the debate, as well as the remarks which were made by some of the members, must have appeared to her highly insolent and provoking. On the whole, her behaviour in this trying situation seemed full of propriety and dignified composure."*

* "Journal," August 11.



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It was decided on that day that the king and the royal family should be placed in the Temple—an isolated building surrounded by high walls. On the 13th of August they were removed to this, their prison abode. On the 17th of August, earl Gower, the British ambassador at Paris, was recalled by a letter from Mr. Dundas. A writer of great ability says, "In defiance of every maxim of sound policy, the English ambassador was recalled from France, simply because that country chose to do away with the monarchy, and substitute a republic in its place."* This strong opinion seems scarcely to be borne out by the letter of recall, signed by Mr. Dundas, which is referred to, but not quoted. "Under the present circumstances, as it appears that the exercise of the executive power has been withdrawn from his Most Christian Majesty, the credential, under which your excellency has hitherto acted, can be no longer available. And his majesty judges it proper, on this account, as well as most conformable to the principles of neutrality which his majesty has hitherto observed, that you should no longer remain at Paris. It is therefore his majesty's pleasure that you should quit it, and repair to England, as soon as you conveniently can, after procuring the necessary passports. In any conversation which you may have occasion to hold previous to your departure, you will take care to make your language conformable to the sentiments which are now conveyed to you; and you will particularly take every opportunity of expressing that, while his majesty intends strictly to adhere to the principles of neutrality, with respect to the settlement of the internal government of France, he, at the same time, considers it as no deviation from those principles, to manifest, by all the means in his power, his solicitude for the personal situation of their Most Christian Majesties, and their royal family; and he earnestly and anxiously hopes that they will, at least, be secure from any acts of violence, which could not fail to produce one universal sentiment of indignation through every country of Europe." †

La Fayette, with his army, was at Sedan, when the Assembly, after the 10th of August, sent three commissioners to him with their decrees. La Fayette caused them to be arrested; refused to administer to his troops the new oath which the Assembly had sent; and called upon his soldiers to repeat the constitutional oath of obedience to the laws and the king. On the 17th, when the conduct of La Fayette was known in Paris, he was declared a traitor by the Assembly, and ordered to be arrested. New commissioners

* Buckle—"History of Civilization," vol. i. p. 440.

† "Parliamentary History," vol. xxx. col. 143.

arrived at Sedan. The troops of La Fayette, beloved as he was by them, began to waver; and he thought it prudent to quit his camp with a few of his officers, and pass into the Austrian Netherlands. The Austrians arrested him and his companions, as prisoners of war; and for five years he was confined in a castle in Moravia. The Prussian army continued to advance. On the 22nd of August, Longwy was taken by them, after a cannonade of a few hours. They blockaded Thionville; and were advancing towards Verdun. Paris was in great alarm; and it was decreed that thirty thousand men should be immediately raised and equipped, and go forth to meet the invader. The patriotic spirit of the people was honourably excited by the orators of the Assembly. Let the entrenchments round Paris be completed by the voluntary labour of every citizen. Let a deputation of the members of the Assembly go daily to stimulate the labourers and work with them. So spake the fervid eloquence of Vergniaud. But there were other orators who were preparing for the ferocious bands whom they swayed, for deeds of bloodshed surpassing in atrocity any which had gone before. On the 29th of August, by order of the Commune, every citizen was required to be in his house by six o'clock in the evening. The barriers were closed. What was to happen no one knew. At one o'clock in the morning, patrols of pikemen were going through the streets, for the purpose of entering every house, under the pretence of searching for arms, but really to carry off every suspected royalist. That night the prisons were filled with hundreds of destined victims.

On the morning of the 2nd of September, Paris was in great agitation. It was reported that Verdun had been betrayed by treachery into the hands of the Prussians. Some who mixed with the crowd shook their heads, saying, that the traitors within Paris were most to be feared. At noon, the people were started by the firing of cannon, and by the peals of the tocsin. Danton, in the morning sitting of the Assembly, said that the commissioners of the Commune were going to invite the citizens by solemn proclamation, to go forth to the defence of their country. "The tocsin which is about to sound is not a signal of alarm; it is the signal for attacking the enemies of our country: in order to vanquish them we require audacity, audacity, audacity." The Assembly sate again in the evening. Municipal officers came to announce that the people had massacred two hundred priests at the church Des Carmes; that crowds were collected round the prisons, and were about to force the doors. The Assembly appointed five of their members to exhort the people to tranquillity. They returned to say that the darkness

prevented them seeing what was going on. Many in that Assembly knew too well what was going on. Throughout that night of horror the city which, two hundred and twenty years before, had been polluted by the massacre of St. Bartholomew at the command of a crowned bigot, in the name of Religion, was again polluted by a massacre as frightful, at the command of furious demagogues, in the name of liberty. The priests in the prison of Des Carmes, once a convent, were those who have been sentenced to deportation. They comprised many of the higher clergy. The greater number of the National Guards and gendarmerie who were posted at this prison, were removed by order in the morning. The crowd of assassins, headed by Cerat, a friend of Danton and of Marat, forced the gates. They immediately commenced shooting down the priests in the garden and the cloisters; stabbed them in their cells; or brought them out of the church, one by one, to be murdered. For four hours this terrible work went on, till no victim remained. One hundred and ninety bodies were carried away in carts. At the prison of the Abbaye, after a few murders in the afternoon, a general slaughter took place as night drew on. A tribunal was formed, for the pretended trial of the prisoners. The trial consisted of identifying the prisoners by the entries on the prison rolls. That ceremony performed, the president, Maillard, the leader of the women to Versailles on the 5th of October, cried, "To the prison of La Force,"—and the man thus condemned to death by a word, well understood, which sealed his fate, was butchered as he passed to the outer court. Thirty-eight Swiss in the prison were put to death without this ceremony. The murderers became tired as the night advanced; but they were again ready for their business in the morning. Billaud de Varennes, one of the functionaries of the municipality, arrived at the Abbaye, and presented to each of the executioners twenty-four livres as his reward. "Think you," said a baker's boy, "that I have only earned twenty-four livres? I have killed more than forty myself." The Commune paid the dissatisfied scoundrels their miserable wages. To detail the atrocities which were committed at every prison throughout Paris, would be to make our readers as sick at heart as we are in reading of them in the narratives of eye witnesses. The prison of La Force was the scene of a crime that history cannot shrink from recording. That prison contained the persons belonging to the Court, whose lives were spared on the 10th of August. Amongst the ladies there was the Princesse de Lamballe, the intimate friend of the queen. When the slaughter of the prisoners had been

nearly completed, this beautiful woman was brought before the tribunal, where two members of the Commune presided. The judges required her to swear love of equality and liberty, and hatred to the king and queen. "I cannot swear the last," she said; "it is not in my heart." She was led to the door. When she saw the heaps of dead she uttered a cry of agony. She was instantly struck down. Her head was placed upon a pike; and was borne in horrid procession to the Temple. By the permission of the commissioners of the Commune, the ruffians were allowed to exhibit the head before the windows of the royal apartments. The king saw it; but his presence of mind saved the queen from beholding this terrible spectacle.

Of the origin of these dreadful transactions there can be no doubt. They were not the result of any spontaneous popular movement. They were organized by the Commune, acting by their committee of surveillance, and pressed on by Danton and Marat. They were tolerated by the Assembly. No attempt was made to repress them by the commanding officers of the National Guards. A circular was issued on the 3rd of September, in the name of the Commune of Paris, to inform the departments that a portion of the ferocious conspirators detained in the prisons had been put to death by the people—"acts of justice which appeared to them indispensable." The massacre was defended as the subversion of a conspiracy. The massacre, it was maintained, prevented Paris from being given up to foreign troops. Dumont, writing to Romilly from lord Lansdown's seat at Bowood, says: "I walk about half the day in a state of the greatest agitation, from the impossibility of remaining still, with my thoughts fixed upon all the sad events which are flowing from a source whence we had flattered ourselves human happiness was to arise." But he then turns to other thoughts as a counterpoise:—that the Parisians "in their last paroxysm murdered the prisoners, because a report had been spread that, at the approach of the duke of Brunswick, the prisons would be thrown open, and that the prisoners would purchase their pardon by serving their king, and turning against the patriots." To regard these massacres as the spontaneous movement of a people infuriated by the approach of a foreign army, is a belief professed by one of the most recent writers on the French Revolution: "A great cry is uttered, 'The enemy is at Verdun.' Then, seized with the fatal idea that liberty is entering upon its agony; that the torch lifted up by France to illuminate the world, is about to be snatched from her, to be extinguished under the hoofs of the Prussian horse; that the Revolution has no quarter

to expect ; that justice is dying, that justice is dead—the spirits of men yield to a black delirium, which formalizes itself, O eternal grief, in these three words of blood, ‘To the Prisons.’” * Another eloquent Frenchman,—as experienced as he from whom we have quoted in the immediate causes of revolutionary action,—thus speaks of the September massacres : “ After having for a long time cast the blame upon a sudden and irresistible movement of the people, attempts have been made to confine the crime to the smallest possible number of actors. History has no such complaisance : the idea belongs to Marat, the acceptance and responsibility to Danton, the execution to the council of surveillance, accompliceship to many, and dastardly tolerance to almost all. . . . In Marat it was a thirst for blood, the last remedy of a society which he wished to destroy, in order to resuscitate it according to his dream. In the mind of Danton it was a master-stroke of policy ; he consented to become the phenomenon of the revolutionary movement. He believed that his deeds, purified by the intention, and by time, would lose their character of ferocity ; that his name would become greater when he had quitted the stage ; and that he would be regarded as the colossus of the Revolution. It has since been said that he saved his country and the Revolution by these murders, and that our victories are their excuses. But those who assert this are deceived, as he was. A people who need to be intoxicated with blood to urge them to defend their country, is a nation of villains, and not a nation of heroes. Heroism is the reverse of assassination ; and as for the Revolution its *prestige* was in its justice and morality ; and this massacre sullied it in the eyes of all Europe.” †

The massacres of September produced a signal change in the feelings of the British nation towards the French. “ How,” says Romilly, “ could we ever be so deceived in the character of the French nation as to think them capable of liberty ? wretches who, after all their professions and boasts about liberty, and patriotism, and courage, and dying, and after taking oath after oath, in the very moment when their country is invaded and an enemy is marching through it unresisted, employ whole days in murdering women, and priests, and prisoners ! . . . We might as well think of establishing a republic of tigers in some forest of Africa as of maintaining a free government among such monsters.” ‡ Those who had conceived the greatest hopes of the French Revolution—

* Louis Blanc—“ Histoire de la Révolution,” tome x. p. 4.

† Lamartine—“ Girondins,” liv. xxiv. c. 22.

‡ “ Memoirs ”—Letter to Dumont, Sept. 10.

whose confidence in its chief agents had been little diminished by the previous excesses of the mobs of Paris—shrank appalled from the contemplation of the incidents of the 2nd of September. Fox writes to lord Holland, “ I had just made up my mind to the events of the 10th of August, when the horrid accounts of the 2nd of this month arrived ; and I really considered the horrors of that day and night as the most heart-breaking event that ever happened to those who, like me, are fundamentally and unalterably attached to the true cause.” * These fearful scenes had, however, their apologists in some of the extreme admirers of revolutionary principles. Writing to his son, Burke adverts to “ the abominable palliation of these horrors in our abominable newspaper.” † He regards the scenes of September as a fresh argument to reprove the government for their apparent indifference to these momentous occurrences : “ I know it is the opinion of his majesty’s ministers, that the new principles may be encouraged, and even triumph over every interior and exterior resistance, and may even overturn other states as they have that of France, without any sort of danger of their extending, in their consequences to this kingdom.” ‡ Thus he writes to lord Grenville on the 19th of September, “ talking and reasoning as if a perpetual and organized anarchy had been a possible thing.” § In this September the English ministry were not moved by the admonitions of Burke, or the terrors of the possessors of property, to think of departing from their safe course of neutrality, even though they had recalled the ambassador to the king of France. But, having a strong conviction how the domination of the Jacobins would end, they resolved that the accustomed English hospitality to political fugitives should not be granted to regicides. Lord Grenville’s letter to his brother, of the 20th of September, is interesting : ¶ “ The detail of the late events at Paris is so horrible, that I do not like to let my mind dwell upon them ; and yet I fear that scene of shocking and savage barbarity is very far from its close. I deliver this day to the Imperial and Neapolitan Ministers a note, with the formal assurance that in case of the murder of the king or queen, the persons guilty of that crime shall not be allowed any asylum in the king’s dominions. Opinions are a little doubtful about the best means of giving effect to this promise, should the case arise. Our lawyers seem clear,

* “ Correspondence of Fox,” vol. ii. p. 370.

† This newspaper was probably the “ Morning Chronicle,” then the property of James Perry.

‡ “ Correspondence of Burke,” vol. iv. p. 7.

§ Coleridge—“ Friend,” Essay L.

¶ “ Court &c., of George III.,” vol. ii. p. 217.

and Blackstone expressly asserts, that the king may prevent any alien from coming into the kingdom, or remaining there. But this power has so rarely been used, that it may, perhaps, be better to have a special Act of Parliament applying to this case. This, however, relates only to the mode. I imagine everybody will think the thing itself right, and some people seem to hope it may prevent the commission of the crime in question. In this hope I am not very sanguine."

CHAPTER XXIX.

Opening of the French National Convention.—The Prussian Army enters France.—Battle of Valmy.—Retreat of the Prussians.—Battle of Jemappes.—Opening of the British Parliament.—Disposition of the British Government.—Aggressive Decrees of the French Convention.—Mr. Pitt's continued desire for non-intervention.—Louis XVI. and his family prisoners in the Temple.—Louis brought to the bar of the Convention.—Anxiety for his fate in the British Parliament.—Political manœuvres of lord Loughborough.—The Whig party broken up, and Loughborough made Chancellor.—Influence of this negotiation on Mr. Pitt's policy.—State of public opinion in England.—Trial of Thomas Paine for libel, as the author of the "Rights of Man."—The Alien Bill.—Correspondence with Chauvelin.—Trial of the king of France.—Votes of the Convention.—Execution of the king.—Proceedings of the British Parliament.—Note on the Dagger-Scene.

THE National Convention held its first sitting on the 22nd of September. This body, which had been elected throughout France amidst the excitement of a foreign invasion, and chiefly under the influence of the Jacobins and Girondins, was not likely to number many men of those moderate opinions which had been denominated "constitutional." It comprised—with many who were mere provincial adventurers—some of the more distinguished of the two former assemblies; new men of repute in science and letters; magistrates; lawyers;—an assembly not wanting in capacity for judicious legislation, if the violent members had not been certain to overpower the peaceable. The leading Jacobins ruled the Convention through the mobs of Paris. They were a contemptible minority; but they usurped the power of a majority in consequence of the pusillanimity of those who shrank with horror from their atrocities, but who were afraid to endanger their own popularity by checking the ferocity of the people. Such were the Girondins. Opposed to bloodshed, they tolerated the massacres of September. They had dreams of a pure republican form of government to arise out of this whirlwind of anarchy; and they suffered the Jacobins, who cared only to destroy, to dominate in the Convention. The system of the terrorists, such as Marat, was that of inspiring fear in the quiet and industrious portions of the community, and they especially sought to strike terror into all who clung, however doubtfully, to monarchical institutions. The first act of the Convention was to decree the abolition of roy-

alty. The proposition was a surprise to the Girondins, but they accepted it, not to be behind the Jacobins. On the 22nd of September France was declared to be a Republic.

On this day, when the final blow was given to that power which for centuries in France had been deemed identical with the State, the Convention received the news of a conflict at Valmy, where the old troops of the monarchy, mixed with the raw levies of the Revolution, came into conflict with the trained veterans of a military despotism, and stopped the advance of the invaders. The Prussians had met with little impediment in their march towards Paris. They entered France on the 30th of July. Longwy had been taken at the end of August; and Verdun capitulated on the 2nd of September. There was now no fortified place to arrest their advance to the capital. But there was ground through which the Prussians must march, which would form a strong point of defence—the wooded ridge of the Argonne forest. Dumouriez put his finger on this spot on the map, and exclaimed, “This is the Thermopylæ of France.” He out-generalled the duke of Brunswick. On the 4th of September, by a rapid movement in the very face of the enemy, the bold and adroit Frenchman had occupied the main passes of the forest, and had taken up a station of great strength at Grandpré. The weather was extremely wet. The country was flooded. The invading army was without food, and the peasantry were hostile. Nevertheless, Dumouriez had his own troubles; and not the least was that some of his troops shrunk from facing the legions that Frederick the Great had led to victory. But by exhortation and menace he inspired the timid with some ardour, and his recruits were rallied at the cry of “*Vive la patrie!*” For many days there was a constant struggle to force these passes. The French held their ground. At length, on the 19th, Kellermann, who had seen service, and who attained high command in the wars of Napoleon, arrived with fifteen thousand men, and on the 20th fought that battle known as the Cannonade of Valmy. This was the first battle of the Revolution, and it was of sufficient importance to confer upon Kellermann his title of Duc de Valmy after he had fought many battles of the Empire. In that conflict Goethe was serving in the German army, with the contingent of Weimar. There also, on the side of the revolutionists, was the son of the duke of Orleans, who will be king of the French long after his father has lost his head as the despised Egalité. The battle lasted twelve hours. After this event, some extraordinary negotiations went on between the French and Prussian head-quarters; and on the 30th of September the duke of Brunswick broke up his camp, and com-

menced a retreat. It is now known that a secret agreement was concluded between the duke and Dumouriez; by which it was determined that the Prussians, having giving up Longwy and Verdun, should retreat unmolested, assurances having been required that the royal family of France should be saved, and an effort be made to restore the constitutional monarchy. Danton was a party to this negotiation. He desired to free France from the Prussian invaders; but he was powerless, certainly unwilling, to perform the conditions for which the king of Prussia had in decency stipulated. Dumouriez was cautious not to promise too much, but simply to raise hopes that he had no ability to fulfil. The loss of the invaders by disease was very great. Their disgrace was irreparable.

The army which had entered France was composed of thirty-four thousand Prussians, ten thousand Austrians, and eight thousand French emigrants. This force appeared to the European powers more than sufficient to march to Paris and restore the monarchy. The British government was entirely in ignorance of the true cause which produced the retreat. Lord Grenville writes on the 11th of October to the marquis of Buckingham, "We are all much disappointed with the result of the great expectations that had been formed from the duke of Brunswick's campaign. According to the best accounts I can get of a business involved in almost inextricable mystery, the flux, which had got into his camp, was the true cause of his retreat."* The extravagance of "the great expectations that had been formed," may be collected from a letter of Addington: "Verdun is taken—that we are sure of; and the duke of Brunswick will soon strike a stroke which, as lord Chatham said, will resound through the universe." The sanguine Speaker then quotes some lines, beginning "France shall perish;" and holds, with Burke, that "the bulk of the nation will, like madmen, be cured when they have been subdued."† The resolution of the English government not to join the coalition against France, has been ascribed as a reason for the king of Prussia not following up the bold resolves of the duke of Brunswick's proclamation. Another reason has been alleged; that the disappointment of the hope of a rapid march to Paris determined the rapacious Prussian monarch to return home, that he might look after a proper share in the partition of Poland. The predominant selfishness and jealousies of the two heads of the coalition were at this time a sufficient reason for the ministry of Mr. Pitt

* "Court, &c. of George III." vol. ii. p. 219.

† "Life of Lord Sidmouth," vol. i. p. 95.

taking no part in their policy. "I bless God," says Lord Grenville, "that we had the wit to keep ourselves out of the glorious enterprise of the combined armies; and that we were not tempted by the hope of sharing the spoils in the division of France, nor by the prospect of crushing all democratical principles all over the world at one blow."* Burke was, of course, indignant at this result of a French invasion: "The united military glory of Europe has suffered a stain never to be effaced."† Fox, as might have been expected, was in raptures: "No public event, not excepting Saratoga and York Town, ever happened that gave me so much delight. . . . The defeat of great armies of invaders always gives me the greatest satisfaction in reading history, from Xerxes' time downwards."‡

Whilst the armies of the coalition were retreating from the Meuse, the Austrian army, under the archduke Albert, was besieging Lille. On the 29th of September the trenches were opened against the ramparted city, which had so stoutly resisted the assaults of Marlborough and Eugene. For a week was Lille bombarded. There was a garrison of ten thousand ardent republicans and a population that was not terrified whilst their poor dwellings were in flames. Lille holds out. Dumouriez is approaching. The Austrians raise the siege on the 7th of October; and France sings another song of triumph. The French then become the invaders. A hundred thousand men, of whom Dumouriez has the chief command, enter Flanders. On the 6th of November was fought the battle of Jemappes. The cannonade of Valmy, as the name expresses, was scarcely to be called a battle, for the armies cannonaded each other from opposite heights divided by a river, and never came to close action. Jemappes was the scene of a terrific struggle. Of the composition of the French army there are discordant accounts. Lamartine represents the cavalry as consisting of old soldiers, but says that the mass was composed of volunteers, inexperienced in manœuvre. Bonaparte at St. Helena said that the Republic was not saved by the recruits and volunteers, but by the old troops of the monarchy. At any rate, there was enthusiasm opposed to disciplined steadiness, and novel tactics were matched against established routine. The Austrians were beaten, although the loss on the side of the French was more severe than that of their enemy. In this battle Louis Philippe gained those laurels which were still fresh when he was chosen to

* "Court, &c. of George III." p. 222.

† "Correspondence of Burke," vol. iv. p. 20.

‡ "Correspondence of Fox," vol. ii. p. 372.

fill the throne from which the other branch of the Bourbons was ejected. Dumouriez was soon in possession of all the important fortresses of the Low Countries, the Austrians retreating before him. On the 30th of November he was in Antwerp. The consequence of this occupation was the opening of the Scheldt to the ships of all nations, in defiance of the treaty of Münster, by which the navigation of that river was closed against the people of the Low Countries. The French armies were equally successful against the Sardinian government, and Savoy was then annexed to the French republic as the department of Mont Blanc.

The Session of Parliament was opened by proclamation on the 13th of December. The term fixed for the opening had been anticipated by three weeks. In the king's speech it was stated that the industry employed to excite discontent on various pretexts has appeared to proceed from a design for the subversion of all order and government; "and this design has evidently been pursued in connection and concert with persons in foreign countries." His majesty went on to say, that he had observed a strict neutrality in the present war on the continent, and had uniformly abstained from any interference with regard to the internal affairs of France; but that the indications of an intention to excite disturbances in other countries, to disregard the rights of neutral nations, and to pursue views of conquest and aggrandizement, had rendered it necessary to look to means of internal defence, and to take steps for augmenting the naval and military forces. "These exertions are necessary in the present state of affairs, and are best calculated both to maintain internal tranquillity, and to render a firm and temperate conduct effectual for preserving the blessings of peace." There was an animated debate on the Address; but Mr. Pitt was not present, having accepted the office of Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, and waiting his re-election. It has been assumed by some, although the word "peace" was mentioned in the royal speech, that immediate war was the only thought of the government, as it was clearly the principle upon which Burke would have acted. But the proximate cause of the outbreak of that tremendous war with France which, with a very brief interval, lasted from 1793 to 1815, is a matter of historical interest, upon which opinions are still divided. The action of the English government may, however, be traced step by step. Five weeks before the meeting of parliament, lord Grenville wrote to his brother, with reference to the position of the states of Europe as regarded France; "we shall do nothing;" and he even looks to "the repeal of taxes," as one of the surest means of "keeping the country quiet."* On the 13th

* "Court, &c., of George III.," vol. ii. p. 224.

of November, Mr. Pitt, writing to the marquis of Stafford, says, "Perhaps some opening may arise which may enable us to contribute to the termination of the war between different powers in Europe, leaving France, which I believe is the best way, to arrange its own internal affairs as it can."* Of seditious movements Grenville, in the middle of November, is of opinion as to what his brother mentions "of overt acts," that "those things are all much exaggerated, where they are not wholly groundless. It is not unnatural, nor is it an unfavourable symptom, that people who are thoroughly frightened, as the body of landed gentlemen in this country are, should exaggerate these stories as they pass from one mouth to another." † The alarm of others as well as the landed gentlemen, who were "thoroughly frightened" at the existence of violent democratic opinions in our own country, however exaggerated was the supposed prevalence of these opinions, left the government a very insufficient freedom of will for the maintenance of that idea of neutrality which Mr. Pitt clung to, almost against hope. It has been most truly said, "he was a lover of peace and freedom, driven by a stress against which it was hardly possible for any will or intellect to struggle, out of the course to which his inclinations pointed, and for which his abilities and acquirements fitted him, and forced into a policy repugnant to his feelings and unsuited to his talents." ‡

The proceedings of the French Convention with regard to other governments were almost sufficient to have diverted any British minister from his policy of neutrality, at the time when Pitt was still of opinion that it was best to leave France "to arrange its own internal affairs as it can." On the 19th of November, the National Convention, immediately on the excitement produced by the victory of Jemappes, passed a decree, in the name of the French nation, declaring that they would grant succour and fraternity to every people who desire to obtain liberty. Mr. Pitt, looking back in 1800 upon the events which had led to the war, adverting to this decree of the republicans, says, "they had, by all their language, as well as by their examples, shown what they understood to be freedom. They had sealed their principles by the deposition of their sovereign; they had applied them to England by inviting and encouraging the addresses of seditious and traitorous societies." § At the end of November, delegates

* "Diaries, &c., of George Rose," p. 115.

† "Court of George III." vol. ii. p. 228.

‡ Macaulay— "Biography of Pitt."

§ "Parliamentary History," vol. xxxiv. col. 1307.

from the English "Society for Constitutional Information" appeared at the bar of the French Convention, and said, "after the example given by France, Revolutions will become easy." The President of the Convention replied in a style of grandiloquence: "The shades of Hampden and Sydney hover over your heads; and the moment without doubt approaches when the French will bring congratulations to the National Convention of Great Britain. Generous Republicans! your appearance among us prepares a subject for history." In the subsequent correspondence between M. Chauvelin and lord Grenville, it was affirmed that "the French nation absolutely reject the idea of that false interpretation of the decree of the 19th of November, by which it might be supposed that the French Republic should favour insurrections, or excite disturbance in any neutral or friendly country whatever." But the acts of the French Convention were opposed to its professions. They had unquestionably the notion of extending their principles by force. On the 15th of December, 1792, they issued a decree which required the French generals to proclaim, wherever they marched, the abolition of all existing feudal and manorial rights; to declare the sovereignty of the people, and the suppression of all existing authorities; to convoke the people for the establishment of a provisional government; and to place all public property under the safeguard of the French Republic. The French armies were then marching into Holland, a country at peace with France. This outrageous decree proclaimed that those who would not accept liberty and equality, and would attempt to preserve princes or privileged orders, should not be entitled to the distinction which France had justly established between government and people, and ought to be treated according to the rigour of war and conquest. With this disposition to foreign aggression, it is not surprising that lord Grenville, in his correspondence with M. Chauvelin, remonstrates against the opening of the Scheldt, and says, "This government, adhering to the maxims which it has followed for more than a century, will never see with indifference that France shall make herself, either directly or indirectly, sovereign of the Low Countries, or general arbitress of the rights and liberties of Europe. If France is really desirous of maintaining friendship and peace with England, she must show herself disposed to renounce her views of aggression and aggrandizement, and to confine herself within her own territory, without insulting other governments, without disturbing their tranquillity, without violating their rights." * This firm but not hostile language is employed by the

* "Parliamentary History," vol. xxxiv. col. 255.

English Secretary of State, on the 31st of December; but on the 29th of that month—as the world was first apprised by Mr. Pitt himself in 1800,—his views were still eminently pacific. The king of France had been accused at the bar of the Convention; had made his defence by counsel; and Europe was waiting in alarm for the almost inevitable sentence of those who were thirsting for his blood, when the prime minister of this country, in answer to an application from Russia, stated to that power “the line of conduct to be followed previous to the commencement of hostilities, and with a view if possible to avert them.” The answer to Russia was communicated to Prussia. This line of conduct, wholly opposed to a principle of interference, even at this moment of fearful suspense, was thus defined: “It appears on the whole, subject, however, to future consideration and discussion with the other powers, that the most advisable step to be taken would be, that sufficient explanation should be had with the powers at war with France, in order to enable those not hitherto engaged in the war to propose to that country terms of peace. That these terms should be, the withdrawing their armies within the limits of the French territory; the abandoning their conquests; the rescinding any acts injurious to the sovereignty or rights of any other nation; and the giving, in some unequivocal manner, a pledge of their intention no longer to foment troubles, or to excite disturbances against other governments. In return for these stipulations, the different powers of Europe, who should be parties to this measure, might engage to abandon all measures or views of hostility against France, or interference in their internal affairs, and to maintain a correspondence and intercourse of amity with the existing powers in that country, with whom such a treaty may be concluded. If, on the result of this proposal so made by the powers acting in concert, these terms should not be accepted by France, or being accepted should not be satisfactorily performed, the different powers might then engage themselves to each other to enter into active measures for the purpose of obtaining the ends in view; and it may be to be considered, whether, in such case, they might not reasonably look to some indemnity for the expenses and hazards to which they would necessarily be exposed.” * Mr. Pitt, after he had read this document, asked, “whether it is possible to conceive any measure to be adopted in the situation in which we then stood, which could more evidently demonstrate our desire, after repeated provocations, to preserve peace, on any terms consistent with our safety; or whether any sentiment could now be suggested which would have

* “Parliamentary History,” vol. xxxiv. col. 1314.

more plainly marked our moderation, forbearance, and sincerity." Mr. Fox, on that occasion, asked, "whether if this paper had been communicated to Paris at the end of the year 1792, instead of Petersburg, it would not have been productive of most seasonable benefits to mankind; and, informing the French in time of the means by which they might have secured the mediation of Great Britain, have not only avoided the rupture with this country, but have also restored general peace to the continent?" Mr. Wilberforce was aware of the existence of this communication. He writes, in 1801, "I never was so earnest with Mr. Pitt on any other occasion, as I was in my entreaties before the war broke out, that he would declare openly in the House of Commons that he had been, and then was, negotiating this treaty." * We may perhaps be able to discover that there were complications of party at home, which had a material influence on Mr. Pitt's policy, at the precise time when, individually, he was clinging to the principle of non-intervention. But it will be necessary, before touching upon this question, to take a brief retrospect of the progress of the French Revolution from the period of the decree of the 22nd of September, by which France became a Republic.

The king and his family were close prisoners in the Temple from the 13th of August. Their apartments were in the gloomy tower of this ancient house of the Templars. The furniture was scanty; the accommodations mean and wretched. The garden, in which they were allowed to walk at stated times, attended by guards, was rank with vegetation, and not in the trim state represented in French engravings. At first the royal family were not treated very harshly, though they were watched by brutal jailors, and had no communication with the outer world. All the ladies of the court had been dismissed. They had no personal attendants, with the exception of Cléry, who acted as the king's valet. He was a republican, but became touched with pity for the sorrows of the captives, and was a faithful friend to the unhappy monarch. After the Legislative Assembly was dissolved, the Convention permitted the Commune to make the position of the patient Louis and the proud Marie Antoinette as miserable as vulgar tyranny could render it. At the end of September, six municipal officers had entered the tower in which the king and the queen, their two children, and the king's sister, had sipped together, and read an order of the Commune which decreed that the king should have no further intercourse with his family. They were separated in an agony of grief, and the king was told the next morning that he must not expect even to see his

* "Life of Wilberforce," vol. ii p. 3.

children again. That night the queen passed in unavailing lamentation. But she had taken her resolution. She refused all food; declaring that she would perish with hunger if the Commune persisted in separating her from her husband. The order of separation was then partially revoked. Louis and his family were allowed to meet three times a day at their meals; but a municipal guard was always present, and prevented any confidential words from passing between them. They were forbidden to speak low, or in a foreign language. As the crisis approached which was contemplated as the final blow to Royalty, precautions, rendered wholly unnecessary by the religious principles and the calm temper of the king, were taken by the Commune to prevent any attempt at self-destruction. Every cutting instrument was taken away from the prisoners. The queen and princesses could no longer repair the small stock of clothing with which they were provided. They were deprived of pen, ink, and paper. The little boy could no longer be taught to write. Persecuted as they were, the king showed no impatience under his captivity. The queen was not without hope that the pity which she had inspired in two of the officers of the Commune might lead to some measures for the escape of herself and those she loved from the fate which seemed impending over them.

The proceedings of the Convention were regularly published in the newspapers of Paris; whose contents were bawled out by the hawkers under the windows of the Temple. Cléry could thus obtain some vague information, which he communicated to Louis. On the 6th of November, a report was made to the Convention by an extraordinary committee, "on the crimes of the late king." On the 7th a Committee of Legislation also reported on the question whether Louis can be tried for the crimes which he is charged with having committed on the Constitutional throne; and by whom must he be tried. The Report concluded by proposing, as the basis of a decree, that Louis could be tried, and that he should be tried by the National Convention. This question was debated through the month of November, some maintaining the inviolability of the king; others pitying him; but scarcely one daring to defend him; for the belief was general that he was the cause of the invasion of France. It was decreed that the trial should proceed; and on the 6th of December, a Committee was appointed to prepare an act of impeachment against Louis Capet. It was then resolved that he should be brought to the bar of the Convention to hear this document read, and to answer questions which should be put to him by the President. He was then to be remanded; and, after being finally heard, the Convention would pronounce on his fate, by

calling on each member separately for his vote, which should be given openly at the tribune. On the 11th of December the king was brought to the Convention in the carriage of Chambon, the mayor of Paris. He was there allowed a seat. The impeachment was read; the questions, many of them very vague, were answered with precision by the king wherever they were capable of an answer. He was not always candid; but the principle of English law that an accused person should not be called upon to criminate himself will be his justification with us. He asked for counsel, and after some debate the request was granted. There was an interval of fifteen days before the king again appeared at the bar of the Convention. The amount of commiseration which Louis was likely to receive from his judges was sufficiently manifested by a decree of the 15th of December, that he should only see his children, and the children should not see their mother or their aunt, till his final examination. This was to isolate the poor king from all his family, for he would not separate the children from their mother.

Lord Malmesbury enters in his Diary of the 22nd of December, "Fox carried me home; he expressed great horror at the *décret* of the 15th December, issued by the National Convention." The feelings of men of all parties in the British Parliament as to the probable issue of the trial of Louis XVI., had been strongly expressed in proceedings on the 20th of December. On the 15th a motion of Mr. Fox, for an Address to the king to send a minister to Paris to treat with those persons who exercise provisionally the functions of executive government in France, had been rejected without a division, after a debate in which the passions of those who took very different views of the French Revolution had been called forth in a way which showed how unlikely was the question of war or peace to be treated with calmness. But there was little hesitation, five days later, as to the expression of an unanimous opinion of the public sentiment of England on the situation of the king of France and of his family. Mr. Sheridan said "there was not one man of any description or party who did not deprecate, and who would not deplore, the fate of those persecuted and unfortunate victims, should the apprehended catastrophe take place." He desired some expression of opinion that might avert the calamity that seemed impending, by producing an influence on the public mind of France. Mr. Burke held such an expression to be useless. "The king was in the custody of assassins, who were both his accusers and his judges, and his destruction was inevitable." Mr. Fox asked whether some mode could not be proposed for obtaining an unanimous vote of both Houses, conveying the

unanimous opinion of the country? Mr. Pitt moved that there be laid on the table a copy of the instructions of the 17th of August, signifying to earl Gower that he should quit Paris. That document was presented on the 21st, when Mr. Pitt said that he had at first thought that the best mode in which the sense of that House could be expressed would be by a vote, which might reach the whole of Europe, and whose influence might extend to France; but he had since doubted whether a strong and indignant expression of opinion might not hurry on the commission of the very crime which it was the intention of that House to exert their influence to prevent. He thought it would be a better mode simply to allow the paper to remain on the table of the House. That paper, our readers will have seen, expressed an earnest and anxious hope that the royal family would be secure from any acts of violence.* Windham, Fox, Sheridan, and Burke, expressed their concurrence in the proposal; and no one was more hearty than Fox in “condemning, from the beginning to the end, the proceedings against the unfortunate king of France.” But this expression of the unanimous feeling of the British Parliament evinced no determination on the one side, no apprehension on the other, that war would be inevitable if the dreaded event took place,—“that dreadful and final consummation which could not fail to excite universal horror and indignation,”—to use the words in which Mr. Pitt expressed this general opinion. But horror and indignation at acts affecting the domestic condition of another nation are no reasons for going to war. An armament was proposed; but an increase of the navy did not necessarily imply war; and Fox declared that he was not willing that we should negotiate unarmed.

On the 26th of December, an Alien Bill was read a third time in the House of Lords. On that occasion lord Loughborough, who, in February, 1792, was opposed to the ministry of Mr. Pitt, as he had been systematically opposed since the defeat of the Coalition, expressed himself in those terms of extreme violence against the contagion of French principles, which assumed that domestic insurrection, supported by foreign aid, was an evil to be averted even by stronger measures than this Bill for the regulation of Aliens. Lord Loughborough, in May, was ardently labouring to promote an union in administration between Pitt and Fox, in the hope that through this union he might obtain the Great Seal. The negotiation failed.† The intriguing and ambitious lawyer was now labouring, with equal ardour, to reach the same crowning glory of his professional life, by inducing a large number of the

* *Ante*, p. 541.

† *Ante*, p. 526.

Whigs, and other remnants of the Coalition ministry, to separate from Fox, and support the administration of Pitt, assuming that the minister would be induced to depart from his system of non-intervention in the affairs of France, and at once adopt the war policy which Burke had advocated with such persevering vehemence. That policy would involve stringent measures against "the disaffected," under which convenient term the alarmists comprehended all those who advocated Parliamentary Reform, and who did not believe that improvement was identical with revolution. The course of lord Loughborough's political manœuvres has been made tolerably clear by the revelations of recent years. On the 20th of December, we find the duke of Portland, who was regarded as the head of the Whig party, decidedly against lord Loughborough taking the Great Seal.* This was a sufficient intimation that the time was not yet ripe for Loughborough carrying over a large section of the Opposition to the support of the Government. On the 21st, on the second reading of the Alien Bill, the duke of Portland, although supporting that special measure, evinced no intention of giving a general support to the ministry of Mr. Pitt. On the 22nd, it was stated at a meeting of that portion of the Whigs, who had adopted the opinions of Burke, that the duke was of opinion that it was not yet time to break with Fox; but Loughborough said that such conduct, inasmuch as they were considered to belong to the Portland party, involved all in the unpopularity and disgrace attending Fox's principles. Burke said that the duke of Portland was the instrument of Fox's schemes, or rather of Fox's abettors. Burke added, what was clearly a gross injustice to his old friend, that those abettors had made Fox believe that a government like ours was not a proper one for great talents to display themselves in, and that they had thus made him approve the French Revolution.† On the 23rd, Loughborough and his friends looked over the Red Book, and found that they could reckon upon a hundred and seven members of the House of Commons, and upon forty Peers, who would concur in their way of thinking, and unite in a representation to the duke of Portland, which would accomplish the desired separation from Fox and the few Whigs that he continued to influence.‡ Still the duke hesitated to declare himself, "from predilection and tenderness to Fox." On the 27th, Loughborough wrote to Malmesbury a bitter letter of complaint: "The duke of Portland hesitates whether he shall withdraw his countenance from a party formed by lord Lans-

* Malmesbury—"Diaries," &c., vol. ii. p. 447.

† *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 448.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 450.

downe, Fox, and Grey, under the auspices of Chauvelin." * On the 1st of January Loughborough was "eager for a further éclaircissement with the duke, and for laying the whole before the public." Malmesbury urged him to wait till after the recess. On the 10th, Loughborough showed Malmesbury a letter he had received from Dundas, pressing him to decide as to taking the Great Seal, "saying that he and Pitt had abstained renewing the subject for some time past, under the plea that there were still hopes of having the duke of Portland; that this was now considered to be at an end." † The astute politician was still disposed to wait till he could bring over the duke of Portland. On the 14th, Loughborough saw Dundas, and told him that if he then took the seals, he could only expect that forty or fifty members would join the government, and as many, now with the government, would probably go into opposition. On the 20th, Loughborough had an interview of an hour and a half with Pitt; and he reported to Malmesbury that war was a decided measure; that Pitt saw it was inevitable; and that the sooner it was begun the better, that we might possess ourselves of the French islands; that the nation was disposed for war; that we were in much greater forwardness than the French; that he had two millions in hand. ‡ Very shortly after this interview lord Loughborough had secured the adhesion of the duke of Portland; and the reward was the Great Seal, which the king delivered to him on the 28th of January. If it be necessary to seek any other immediate cause for the war, than the conviction of a political necessity arising out of the inevitable circumstances of the time, may we not believe that Mr. Pitt ceased to struggle with his own pacific inclinations, when he saw that a warlike policy would give him a greater majority in Parliament than any minister had previously commanded? On the 14th of January, he had not this assurance in the position which lord Loughborough held with the war party of the Whigs. On the 20th of January, lord Loughborough, in that interview of an hour and a half, was no doubt secure of his position, and came away with the news that "war was a decided measure." That Loughborough influenced the decision can scarcely be doubted. The king had forgiven the shifty lawyer's conduct on the Regency question, when he went further than any man in the advocacy of the absolute right of the Prince of Wales to take the regal authority without restrictions. Loughborough had during a little year turned from

* Malmesbury, vol. ii. p. 457.

† Malmesbury, p. 466. In the history of such transactions, exact dates are important. Lord Campbell gives the 4th as the date when Loughborough showed this letter.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 470.

an admirer of the French National Assembly to be the most zealous of Anti-Jacobins, and had thus made his peace at St. James's.

The vast majority which Pitt acquired by the accession of the Whigs who seceded from Fox was supported by the greater portion of the higher and middle classes, who had an extravagant dread of the possible progress of French principles, and not a sufficient dread of the certain evils of a contest that would entail the most fearful sacrifices upon the humbler classes, and thus produce real discontent in the place of theoretical disaffection. A very short time before this, the English ministers, although sufficiently alive to the danger of extreme democratic opinions, saw their best safety in the improvement of the condition of the mass of the people. Lord Grenville, at no more distant period than the 7th of November, wrote, in fraternal confidence, these remarkable words: "All my ambition is that I may at some time hereafter, when I am freed from all active concern in such a scene as this is, have the inexpressible satisfaction of being able to look back upon it, and to tell myself that I have contributed to keep my own country at least a little longer from sharing in all the evils of every sort that surround us. I am more and more convinced that this can only be done by keeping wholly and entirely aloof, and by watching much at home, but doing very little indeed; endeavouring to nurse up in the country a real determination to stand by the Constitution when it is attacked, as it most infallibly will be if these things go on; and, above all, trying to make the situation of the lower orders among us as good as it can be made."* It must have been perfectly clear to a minister as sagacious and experienced as Mr. Pitt, that the remarkable prosperity which had been built up during a peace of ten years would receive a severe shock from the cost of war,—that "the situation of the lower orders" would be materially deteriorated by the pressure of taxation and the interruption of industry. But Mr. Pitt thought that the contest would be soon decided; that revolutionary France would quickly exhaust her resources for war; that the opinions of the Revolution were only dangerous when they were "armed opinions." In the retrospect of the origin of the war which he took in 1800, when he maintained that he had laboured to the last "to preserve peace on any terms consistent with our safety," he confessed that the government had been too slow in anticipating the danger which was to be apprehended from France: "We might even then have seen, what facts have since but too incontrovertibly proved, that nothing but vigorous and open hostility can afford complete and

* "Court, &c., of George III." vol. ii., p. 224.

adequate security against revolutionary principles, while they retain a proportion of power sufficient to furnish the means of war." It was revolutionary principles in arms for conquest and rapine that statesmen dreaded. The terror of domestic revolution, through the contagion of revolutionary principles extending beyond a small band of obscure republican enthusiasts, was a nightmare that only disturbed the sleep of alarmists—the "thoroughly frightened," who talked as familiarly of "Fire, Famine, and Slaughter," "as maids of thirteen do of puppy-dogs." These mistook "the meetings and idle rant of such sedition as shrank appalled from the sight of a constable, for the dire murmuring and strange consternation which precedes the storm or earthquake of national discord. . . . The panic of property had been struck in the first instance for party purposes; and when it became general, its propagators caught it themselves, and ended in believing their own lie—even as the bulls in Borodale are said sometimes to run mad with the echo of their own bellowing."*

The state of public opinion in England, at the period immediately preceding the commencement of the war, may be traced in the proceedings of "Associations in support of the Constitution," and in counter resolutions of Societies such as those which Burke denounced in 1790. These Clubs, really insignificant in themselves, were raised into importance by the exaggerated alarm of the "friends of established law and peaceable society," and the inopportune enthusiasm of the advocates of parliamentary reform. At a meeting of "Gentlemen at the Crown and Anchor in the Strand, November 20, 1792, John Reeves, Esq., in the chair," the danger was set forth "to which the public peace and order are exposed by the circulation of mischievous opinions, founded upon plausible but false reasoning." This circulation of dangerous doctrines was alleged to be mainly carried on by the industry of Clubs and Societies; and these opinions were held to be conveyed in the terms, "The Rights of Man—Liberty and Equality—No King—No Parliament." On the 29th of November "The London Corresponding Society" published an Address, denouncing "the artifices of a late aristocratic association;" declaring that "whoever shall attribute to us the expressions of No King—No Parliament, or any design of invading the property of other men, is guilty of a wilful, an impudent, and a malicious falsehood;" but adding, "we admit and we declare that we are friends to Civil Liberty, and therefore to Natural Equality, both of which we consider as the Rights of Man." "The Society for Constitutional

* Coleridge—"Friend," Essay I.

Information," on the 14th of December, resolved, that it disclaimed the idea of making any change by violence and public commotion; "but that it trusts to the good sense of the people, when they shall be fully enlightened on the subject, to procure, without disturbing the public tranquillity, an effectual and permanent reform." "The Society of the Friends of the People," at a meeting on the 15th of December, at which Samuel Whitbread took the chair, held themselves bound to persevere in their endeavours to accomplish, through the known channels of the Constitution, an effectual reform in the construction of the House of Commons; but remonstrating against the endeavours "to confound the idea of a reform in parliament with that of disaffection to the established constitution of this kingdom, as if a real representation of the Commons were incompatible with the security of a limited monarchy; as if the Crown were not safe with an honest unbiassed House of Commons; or as if the idea of such reform had been at all times reprobated, as it now is, by those who occupy the highest station of profit and confidence under the Crown."* At this period of political heat the trial of Thomas Paine, upon a prosecution for libel in publishing "The Rights of Man," took place on the 18th of December. "No one," says lord Campbell, "could justly complain of it as an infringement of public liberty." The eloquent defence of Erskine did not influence the decision of the jury, who returned a verdict of Guilty, even without waiting for the Attorney-General to reply. This great advocate maintained as the basis of the liberty of the press, "that every man not intending to mislead, but seeking to enlighten others with what his own reason and conscience, however erroneously, have dictated to him as a truth, may address himself to the universal reason of a whole nation, either upon the subject of government in general or upon that of our own particular country." But the argument was too broad for those excited times. The clamour against the republican had already condemned his book, in some respects very justly.

At the time of this trial Paine was a member of the National Convention of France; and he took occasion to write an insolent letter to the Attorney-General, in which he says, "The duty I am now engaged in is of too much importance to permit me to trouble myself about your prosecution The time, sir, is becoming too serious to play with court prosecutions and sport with national rights. The terrible examples that have taken place here upon men who, less than a year ago, thought themselves as secure as

* For these various Resolutions, &c., see "Annual Register," 1793, pp. *155 to *170.

any prosecuting judge, jury, or Attorney-General can now do in England, ought to have some weight with men in your situation." The Attorney-General read this letter to prove the authorship of the "Rights of Man," therein avowed by Paine; but it was quite clear that language such as this would ensure the conviction of this furious democrat, who thus threatened with the perils of the lamp-post and the guillotine those who were discharging their constitutional functions. Still less would a jury bear the scurrilous allusions to "Mr. Guelph and his profligate sons." The king was at this time almost universally popular. The mistakes of the early years of his reign, when he sought to govern by secret influence and favouritism, had been forgotten. The odium attached to his pertinacity in the American war had been chiefly confined to statesmen, who addressed themselves to the reason and justice of the few rather than to the passions of the many. The coalition had been distasteful to the people; and the young minister chosen by the king had fully vindicated the choice. The example of the court had produced a considerable reformation in the manners of the higher classes; open profligacy was a bar to royal favour. The simple tastes of the king; his domestic piety and decorum; his habitual attention to the best pursuits of a country gentleman in his love of agriculture; his unrestrained intercourse with his subjects on public occasions; even his garrulity and familiar curiosity, made him really an object of affectionate attachment to the great bulk of the people. They did not believe him to be a great king, but they knew him to be a good king, as far as they could judge of royal attributes. His narrow views upon large political questions, such as that of the admission of Roman Catholics to civil offices, were a recommendation to the majority. They probably had no very exalted opinion of his understanding; which, however, was far more acute than it has been the fashion to regard it in very recent years. They laughed at the ribaldry of Peter Pindar; but they were not convinced by it that their king was a simpleton—because he was exhibited at Whitbred's brewery exclaiming, "What's this? hæ, hæ! what's that? what this? what's that?" or, as hunting with "Parson Young," and when a fatal accident occurred to his reverend friend, ejaculating, "What, what? Young dead? Take him up, and put him home to bed;" or learning from the widow of Salthill the way to catch a mouse in a trap baited with toasted cheese; or taking shelter in a farm-kitchen, and making the discovery how the apple got into the dumpling. These were not the things to abate one jot of the king's popularity—perhaps they increased it. The sneer of Paine

at the "capacity of Mr. Guelph" fell harmless. The king had courage and common sense—qualities perhaps more important to a constitutional sovereign than great intellectual refinement. The nation clung to him as representing the principles most antagonistic to French philosophy.

The Alien Bill, which had been read a third time in the House of Lords, was read a second time in the House of Commons on the 28th of December. On that occasion, Burke "mentioned the circumstance of three thousand daggers having been bespoke at Birmingham by an Englishman, of which seventy had been delivered. It was not ascertained how many of these were to be exported, and how many were intended for home consumption." The Parliamentary History then adds, "here Mr. Burke drew out a dagger which he had kept concealed, and with much vehemence of action threw it on the floor." The orator, pointing to the dagger, said, "This is what you are to gain with an alliance with France; wherever their principles are introduced their practice must follow." * The Alien Bill, after much debate, was passed on the 4th of January. On the 7th of that month, M. Chauvelin, styling himself "minister plenipotentiary from the French Republic," addressed a Note to lord Grenville, remonstrating against this Bill as a violation of the Treaty of Commerce, by which the subjects of the two nations had liberty to come and go freely and securely without license or passport. He says, "It is thus that the British government has first chosen to break a treaty to which England owes a great part of its actual prosperity, burthensome to France." Lord Grenville returned the Note, stating that M. Chauvelin had therein assumed a character which is not acknowledged; he being in "no otherwise accredited to the king than in the name of his most Christian Majesty." In a letter of the 9th of January, lord Grenville stated, as he had stated in a private conversation of the 29th of November, that "he would not decline receiving non-official communications, which, without deciding the question either of the acknowledgment of the new government in France, or of receiving a minister accredited by her, might offer the means of removing the misunderstanding which already manifested itself between the two countries." On the 13th M. Chauvelin informed lord Grenville that the Executive Council, "to discard every reproach of having stopped, by the mere want of formality, a negotiation on the success of which the tranquillity of two great nations is depending, have taken the resolution of sending letters of credence to citizen Chauvelin, which would furnish him the

* "Parliamentary History," vol. xxx. col. 189. See Note to this Chapter

means of treating in all the severity of diplomatic forms. He then enters into the various points of difference, and thus concludes : "If the explanations of France appear insufficient, and if we are still obliged to hear a haughty language ; if hostile preparations are continued in the English ports ; after having exhausted every means to preserve peace, we will prepare for war." Lord Grenville, still protesting against the unofficial form of the notifications, answers that "a threat of declaring war against England, because she thinks proper to augment her forces, as well as a declaration of breaking a solemn treaty, because England has adopted, for her own security, precautions of the same nature as those which are already established in France,* could neither of them be considered in any other light than that of new offences, which, while they subsisted, would preclude all negotiations." On the 17th of January, M. Chauvelin required to be informed whether his Britannic majesty would receive his letters of credence ; and on the 20th lord Grenville replied, "I am to inform you, that his majesty does not think fit, under the present circumstances, to receive those letters ;" and he added that, "after what has just passed in France," M. Chauvelin must return, as a private person, to the general mass of foreigners in England. On the 17th of January a majority of the National Convention had pronounced for the death of the king of France. "What had just passed" in France was followed up on the 21st by the execution of Louis ; and on the 24th M. Chauvelin was ordered, by direction of the king in council, to retire from this country within eight days.

We have to take up the thread of a painful narrative, from the time when the king went back to the Temple, after having appeared at the bar of the Convention on the 11th of December. He named two persons as his counsel—Target, and Tronchet. Target had a cowardly dread of accepting the offer, and his place was taken by the venerable Malesherbes, who volunteered his services to the President of the Convention, saying, that he had been twice called to the councils of Louis, when to serve him was an object of ambition ; and that he owed him the same service when it might be considered dangerous. With Malesherbes and Tronchet, Desèze was associated. There was no impediment offered to their free consultations with the king ; and a fortnight was spent in preparations for the defence. On the 26th of December, the king again appeared at the bar of the Convention. Desèze conducted the defence. His arguments were logical, but

* The system of passports, introduced during the Revolution, was rigidly applied to British subjects, in contravention of the treaty of commerce.

he was unequal to the task of moving an assembly that was swayed more by passion and sentiment than by reason. He said, "History will sit in judgment on your judgment, and the judgment of history will be the judgment of ages." His Will, which the suffering king made before this conclusion of a pretended trial the issue of which was pre-determined, is sufficient to fix the judgment of History as to the personal character of this kind-hearted king. In this solemn document, written on the 25th of December, he says, "I recommend my son, if he has the misfortune to become king, to remember that he owes himself to the happiness of his fellow-citizens; to forget all hatred and resentment, and especially that which relates to the misfortunes and sorrows I now undergo." It was with perfect consistency that Louis declared, in the few words that he addressed to the Convention after his counsel had spoken, that his greatest grief was that he should have been accused of wishing to shed the blood of his people—"I, who have exposed myself in order to avert the shedding of one drop of their blood." For many days there were stormy discussions in the Convention, on propositions made by those who were afraid to declare Louis not guilty, but who wished to save him without compromising themselves. One proposed that the Convention should decide on the guilt of Louis, but refer to the primary assemblies the question of his death or his exile. The principal Girondins, speaking through their great orator, Vergniaud, proposed that the judgment which should be pronounced upon Louis, whether that of Guilty or Not Guilty, should be submitted to the ratification of the people. It was at length decided that three questions should be determined by the vote at the tribune of each member, on the *appel nominal*,—the call by name. Upon the first question, put on the 15th of January, "Is Louis Capet guilty of conspiracy against the liberty of the nation, and of attempts against the general security of the state," six hundred and eighty-three members replied, "Yes, Louis is guilty." On the second question, "Shall the decision of the Convention be submitted to the ratification of the people," two hundred and eighty-one voted for the appeal; four hundred and twenty-three against it. The third question, "What shall be the sentence," was to be decided on the morrow. The Convention during the whole of that day had been occupied with various preliminary discussions, especially upon a proposition that two-thirds of the votes should be necessary to constitute a majority. This proposition was rejected. It was eight o'clock in the evening before the voting commenced. The fearful ceremony which every



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member had to go through in the presence of a blood-thirsty audience in the galleries, and a furious mob without doors, was continued through the night, and was renewed the next day. The greater number of the Girondins, including Vergniaud, joined the Mountain, in voting for the sentence of Death. The one Prince of the blood, who had laid down his title to become a member of the Convention, voted for Death.* The one Englishman who had been elected a deputy, Thomas Paine, voted for imprisonment, and banishment at the peace. It was late at night before the votes were counted. Three hundred and eighty-seven were for death without any condition; three hundred and thirty-four were for imprisonment on conditional death. Vergniaud, as President, declared the sentence. On the 19th the question was put, "Shall the execution of the sentence of Louis Capet be deferred?" For the suspension of the sentence there were three hundred and ten members; for its immediate execution there were three hundred and eighty. On the 20th of January, the decision of the Convention was officially communicated to Louis. He requested a delay of three days to prepare himself to appear before his Maker; he requested that he should have a priest, whose name he wrote down; he requested to see his family without witnesses, and that they might be allowed to leave France. The Convention refused the respite. They granted the priest, and the permission to see his family, which permission the brutal Commune refused to have carried out, causing them to be watched through a glass-door. They "authorized the Executive Council to reply to Louis, that the nation, always magnanimous and always just, would consider the situation of his family." We spare our readers the heart-rending details of the parting of the king with his wife, his son and daughter, and his sister. The priest that Louis had chosen was the Abbé Edgeworth. He attended the king to the scaffold; and as the knife of the guillotine was about to fall, exclaimed, "Son of St.

* There are some interesting details of this crowning infamy of Egalité, in the Journal of her Life during the Revolution, by Mrs. Elliott, who had the misfortune of being the mistress of two of the most profligate men of Europe, the prince of Wales and the duke of Orleans. When this lady urged the duke to vote for the deliverance of his cousin, the king, he said sneeringly, "Certainly, and for my own death." He subsequently said, "he thought the king had been guilty by forfeiting his word to the nation, yet nothing should induce him to vote against him" on the final question of his sentence. After the execution of Louis, Mrs Elliott said to the duke, "You, monseigneur, will die, like the poor king, on the scaffold." The duke replied, "The king has been tried, and he is no more. I could not prevent his death. . . . I could not avoid doing what I have done. I am, perhaps, more to be pitied than you can form an idea of. I am more a slave of faction than anybody in France. But from this instant let us drop the subject."—p.

Louis, ascend to heaven." This tragedy was completed at ten o'clock of the morning of the 21st of January.

On the 28th of January a message was delivered to parliament, in which the king stated the indispensable necessity of a further augmentation of force by sea and land, the correspondence between lord Grenville and M. Chauvelin having been at the same time presented. Mr. Pitt moved an Address of thanks, of which the following passages appear to have shut the door to any further negotiation with the existing government of France :—

“ To offer to his Majesty our heartfelt condolence on the atrocious act lately perpetrated at Paris, which must be viewed by every nation in Europe as an outrage on religion, justice, and humanity ; and as a striking and dreadful example of the effect of principles which lead to the violation of the most sacred duties, and are utterly subversive of the peace and order of all civil society.

“ To assure his Majesty, that it is impossible for us not to be sensible of the views of aggrandizement and ambition, which, in violation of repeated and solemn professions, have been openly manifested on the part of France, and which are connected with the propagation of principles incompatible with the existence of all just and regular government : that, under the present circumstances, we consider a vigorous and effectual opposition to these views as essential to the security of everything which is most dear and valuable to us as a nation, and to the future tranquillity and safety of all other countries ! ”

NOTE ON THE DAGGER-SCENE IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Lord Eldon, then Sir John Scott, in a letter to his brother of the 17th January, says, "You would hear of the dagger which Burke exhibited in the House of Commons. I have got the pattern specimen of that order, which I shall keep as a great curiosity." In a note to Twiss's *Life of Lord Eldon*, the inheritor of his title says, "On Lord Chancellor Eldon's death I found with his papers the dagger which, from conversations with him in the latter years of his life, I had understood to be the one thrown down by Burke in the House of Commons." But it appears that there were two specimens of this Birmingham manufacture, one of which was in the possession of Sir Charles Montolieu Lamb, the son of Sir James Bland Burgess, who was at that period Under-Secretary of State for the Foreign Department. The dagger-scene was the subject of a famous caricature by Gillray; and so characteristic a likeness of Burke was never produced as in this sketch.

This dagger-scene was in some respects a matter-of-fact affair—elevated into an approach to sublimity by the imagination of the orator, and, like many other sublime actions, treading close upon the ridiculous. It certainly, upon the face of the thing, does appear a proper subject for caricature, when the man upon whom the eyes of all Europe were fixed—who at that moment exercised more influence over public opinion than any speaker or writer who ever existed,—a grave man well-stricken in years,—should draw out a dagger from his pocket, and cast it upon the floor of the House of Commons. The occurrence has been called "a stroke of oratorical acting;" but it appears, from the circumstantial account by Sir Charles Lamb, that Burke's possession of the dagger was an accidental occurrence, and that the "acting" was at any rate unpremeditated. This dagger, "a foot long in the blade, and about five inches in the handle, of coarse workmanship, and might serve either as a dagger or a pike-head," according to Sir Charles Lamb, "was sent to a manufacturer at Birmingham, as a pattern, with an order to make a large quantity like it. At that time the order seemed so suspicious, that, instead of executing it, he came to London and called on my father at the Secretary of State's office, to inform him of it, and ask him his advice; and he left the pattern with him. Just after, Mr. Burke called, on his way to the House of Commons; and upon my father mentioning the thing to him, borrowed the dagger, to show in the House. They walked down to the House together; and when Mr. Burke had made his speech, my father took the dagger again, and kept it as a curiosity."

CHAPTER XXX.

Retrospect of Indian Affairs from 1785.—Lord Cornwallis Governor-General.—Declaratory Bill.—War with Tippoo.—Retreat of Cornwallis in 1790.—Capture of Seringapatam in 1791.—Peace with Tippoo.—The French West India Islands.—Retrospect of Discoveries in the Pacific.—Otaheite.—New Zealand.—New South Wales.—Canada.—Military and Naval Establishments of Great Britain.—France declares War.

IT is desirable at this point, when our country was about to enter upon a war which developed events of unexampled interest, to take a brief view of some circumstances which may explain her position, without interruption to the progress of the general narrative of her history.

Let us first take up the thread of Indian affairs at the point at which we left them at the close of the administration of Hastings in 1785.

The India bill of Mr. Pitt, while it gave the Governor-General of Calcutta supreme authority over the other two Presidencies, restricted him from commencing hostilities against any native prince, or from taking certain proceedings likely to lead to hostilities, without the express permission of the Court of Directors. In 1786 lord Cornwallis was appointed Governor-General; and he having objected that the limited powers of that officer prevented his efficiency, a measure was carried which gave greater authority to the Governor-General to act, in cases of emergency, without the concurrence of the Supreme Council of Calcutta. For the first year and a-half of lord Cornwallis's administration, he was enabled to give his uninterrupted attention to administrative improvements in matters of finance especially. At the end of 1787, his tranquillity was somewhat disturbed. He writes, "The great warlike preparations of Tippoo, and the reports transmitted me by sir Arch. Campbell that he meditated an attack upon me, and that he would be assisted by the French, made me tremble for my plans of economy and reform. The storm is, however, blown over."* At this period the Governor-General was not very well prepared for warlike operations. The appearance of the native troops, he said, gave him the greatest satisfaction; but "the Company's European

* Cornwallis's "Correspondence," vol. i. p. 316.

troops are such miserable wretches that I am ashamed to acknowledge them for countrymen: out of the six battalions I do not think that I could complete one that would be fit for service." In the temporary apprehension of a war with France in 1787, the British government desired to send four regiments to India in the Company's ships. The alarm soon came to an end; but the government at home did not think it safe to leave the defence of India solely to sepoy and to the Company's inefficient European troops. The Board of Control resolved, therefore, to send out four regiments at the charge of the Company for transport and maintenance; and the Company as stoutly refused to bear the charge. Mr. Pitt, on the 25th of February, 1788, brought in a Bill "for removing any doubt respecting the power of the commissioners for the affairs of India, to direct that the expense of raising, transporting, and maintaining such troops as may be judged necessary for the security of the British territories and possessions of the East Indies, should be defrayed out of the revenues arising from the said territories and possessions." This proposition gave rise to animated debates in both Houses. It was contended that there would be an end to the East India Company and all their property if such a Bill were passed. Mr. Fox declared that the Declaratory Bill was "an insidious attempt to assume the same powers that his Bill would have given to his Board of Commissioners, but in a manner less open and much more dangerous to the Constitution." The real bearing of the question was expressed in a pleasantry of sir James Johnstone: "The present dispute was a matrimonial quarrel between lord Control and lady Leadenhall. He considered himself as a justice of peace before whom the parties had come to make up their differences: he was always disposed to side against power, and should give in favour of the lady. He saw no reason why lord Control should be allowed to rob lady Leadenhall of her pin-money."* The Bill was passed.

At the beginning of February, 1790, earl Cornwallis wrote to his brother, the bishop of Lichfield and Coventry,—“The unprovoked attack which Tippoo has made upon our ally the Rajah of Travancore has, much against my inclination, forced us into a war. . . . It is a melancholy task to write this, and to see all the effects of my economy, and the regulation of the finances which cost me so much labour, destroyed in a few months.”† On the 29th of December, 1789, Tippoo had stormed the lines of our ally. No one of the native princes was so formidable as Tippoo. His

* "Parliamentary History," vol. xxvii. col. 109.

† "Correspondence," vol. i. p. 494.

dominions of Mysore were very extensive, and were fully populated by Hindoos and Mohammedans. Many places were strongly fortified. His cavalry were those that had swept the Carnatic in 1780, as "a whirlwind;" his artillery was formidable, consisting of heavy ordnance drawn by elephants. To assist in carrying on the contest against this unscrupulous despot, Cornwallis concluded alliances with the Peishwa of the Mahrattas, and the Nizam of the Deccan. General Meadows commanded the British army in the Carnatic, and general Abercrombie the army formed in the presidency of Bengal. Tippoo was compelled to return to his capital of Seringapatam; but nothing decisive against his power was effected in 1790. On the 29th of January, 1791, lord Cornwallis assumed the command of the army, and moved from Vellout towards Vellore, with the intention of penetrating to the heart of Tippoo's dominions. On the 5th of March he invested Bangalore, about two hundred miles from Madras. On the march thither, some shameful acts of pillage had been committed, which, in a General Order, lord Cornwallis described as "shocking and disgraceful outrages"—as "scenes of horror, which, if they should be suffered to continue, must defeat all our hopes of success, and blast the British name with infamy." They were repressed by prompt measures of severity towards the marauders. Bangalore was taken by storm on the 21st of March. The army then moved forward; and on the 13th of May took up a position at Arikera on the banks of the Caveri, within nine miles of Seringapatam. Having crossed the river, Cornwallis attacked Tippoo on the 15th, and obtained a victory, driving the Mysoreans to seek refuge under the guns of their capital. The city was within view; but Cornwallis was not strong enough to besiege it. The expected contingent of the Mahrattas had not arrived. Abercrombie was at Periapatam, with ample stores of provisions; whilst the army of Cornwallis was suffering severe privations. They could not effect a junction, although Cornwallis, in the hope of doing so, had moved up the Caveri to Caniambaddy. In a private letter to his brother, the Governor-General describes the causes of the retreat which he was now compelled to make: "I wish to tell you that my health has not suffered, although my spirits are almost worn out, and that if I cannot soon overcome Tippoo, I think the plagues and the mortifications of this most difficult war will overcome me. You will have heard that after beating Tippoo's army, and driving him into the island of Seringapatam, I was obliged,—by the famine which prevailed amongst our followers, and especially the bullock-drivers, by the sudden and astonishing mortality amongst our

cattle, owing to the scarcity of forage and a contagious distemper which unhappily attacked them when they were too weak to resist it, and by the unexpected obstacles to my forming a junction with general Abercrombie, in time to attempt the enterprize before the rising of the river,—to destroy my battering guns and to relinquish the attack of Seringapatam until the conclusion of the rains. Had the numerous Mahratta army, which joined me on the 26th of May unexpectedly and without my having received the smallest previous notice, arrived a fortnight sooner, our success would have been complete, and that event which Mr. Francis and Mr. Hipplesley seem so much to apprehend—the destruction of Tippoo's power—would have actually taken place. It is, however, much crippled; and if he should not propose during the present rains such terms as the Allies can reasonably accept, I trust we shall take such precautions as will render our next move to Seringapatam effectual.”*

The next move to Seringapatam was effectual. Reinforcements had been sent out from England; and during the autumn all the lines of communication for another march upon the capital of Tippoo had been opened. Some of the strong hill forts, especially Severndroog and Octradroog, had been stormed and taken by the troops under general Meadows. On the 25th of January, Cornwallis, with 22,000 men, had united his force to the troops of the Nizam and the Mahrattas, and commenced his march from Severndroog. On the 5th of February he encamped about six miles northward of Seringapatam. The Mysorean army was encamped under its walls. It amounted to 5000 horse and 40,000 foot. The city was defended by three strong lines of works and redoubts, in which 300 pieces of artillery were planted. Cornwallis reconnoitred these lines on the morning of the 6th, and determined to storm them that night, with his own army, without communicating his plan to his allies. At eight o'clock the British moved in three columns to the attack, one column being led by Cornwallis himself. The moon was shining brilliantly; but the sun of the next day was declining before the firing ceased, and the whole line of forts to the north of the Caveri were in possession of the British forces. Tippoo retired within the walls of his capital. Preparations for the siege went vigorously on; but negotiations for peace were at the same time proceeding. The British commander, assured of his triumph, demanded that Tippoo should cede the half of his dominions; should pay a sum amounting to £3,000,000; should release all his prisoners; and should deliver his two sons as hostages. The sultan as-

* Cornwallis's "Correspondence," vol. ii. p. 98.

sembled his officers in the great mosque, and adjured them, by the sacred contents of the koran, whether he should accept these hard terms. They all held that no reliance could be placed upon the troops, and that submission was inevitable. On the 23rd of February the preliminaries of peace were signed; and on the 25th the two sons of Tippoo were surrendered to lord Cornwallis. Mr. Ross, the editor of the Cornwallis Correspondence, says that he often heard the details of the scene from his father, general Ross, who was present: "The coolness and self-possession of the two boys, the eldest only ten years old, were most striking; and the more than paternal kindness of lord Cornwallis not only impressed his own European and native attendants with admiration, but produced in the minds of Tippoo's Vakeels, and the other Mysorean spectators, feelings of regard which were never effaced." The definitive treaty of peace was signed on the 19th of March. The ceded territories were divided in equal portions between the Company, the Nizam, and the Mahrattas. On the 4th of May, Cornwallis wrote to his brother, "Our peace will no doubt be very popular in England. I see every day more reason to be satisfied with it. No termination of the war could, in my opinion, have been attended with more solid advantages to our interest; and the deference which was paid to us on the occasion, both by friends and enemies, has placed the British name and consequence in a light never before known in India." *

The subjection of Tippoo was most opportune. In all probability Cornwallis, who was blamed by some for not insisting upon harder terms, anticipated the probability that the French Revolution would involve England in war, and therefore he made peace whilst it was in his power. When the war broke out he hurried to Madras. But his presence was unnecessary. Pondicherry had already been taken by sir John Brathwaite; and the French had no longer a footing in India. The agents of the republic were nevertheless active; but they were unable, for several years, to move "Citizen Tippoo" into a course of open hostility.

In the decisive interview with lord Loughborough, on the 20th of January, 1793, Mr. Pitt said that the sooner the war was begun the better,—“that we might possess ourselves of the French islands.” The French islands offered a paltry prize to be gained by such a tremendous risk. The west India islands in the possession of the French since the peace of 1783, were Tobago, a small territory with an unhealthy climate; St. Lucia, even more unhealthy; Martinique, an important possession; and Guadaloupe

* "Correspondence," vol. ii. p. 166.

and its dependencies. The great island of Hispaniola, or San Domingo, partly French and partly Spanish, was not a colony with which any nation would have been glad to meddle in its then disturbed condition. The imports into the island from France are stated to have amounted in 1789 to three millions sterling, and its exports to six millions, this commerce employing three hundred thousand tons of shipping, and thirty thousand seamen.* An insurrection of the slaves took place in 1791, the seeds of which were sown by the French Revolution. The French planters and Creoles had talked of Liberty and Equality, and put on the tri-coloured cockade. They scorned the Mulattoes, who, in 1790, engaged in a fruitless revolt. The negroes rose against their masters in August, 1791. This fair country went through scenes of bloody insurrection, and was plunged into a terrible anarchy, which worked itself, in course of time, under the leadership of remarkable men of the despised race, into a Black republic. The massacres of 1791 were the impulses of vengeance for long suffering. They were urged in the British Parliament as a reason for maintaining the Slave Trade; and the insurrection, which had become more formidable as it proceeded, created alarm even amongst the English abolitionists. †

At this time, when the approaching war with France led the government of Mr. Pitt to look to the necessity of defending our own colonial possessions, and to the hope of adding to their number by naval enterprizes, there was little solicitude about those vast regions in the Pacific, which the Spaniards and Portuguese had left undiscovered, but on which the standard of England was planted early in the reign of George III. The results of the Voyages of Discovery of Byron, Wallis, Carteret, and Cook, were feebly and imperfectly followed up. Any system of colonization that could be permanently useful was not thought of. In most cases no system was attempted. The regions of unbounded extent and inexhaustible wealth which were nominally attached to the British crown, derived small advantage from British civilization. The condition of the Australian possessions, seventy years ago, as contrasted with their present greatness, is one of the marvels of our history, which it is impossible to contemplate without patriotic emotion—without a feeling of the mighty destinies that were involved in the Divine protection of the Anglo-Saxon race—in the growth of a community which, having built up its own civilization

* Speech of Mr. Ballie, "Parliamentary History," vol. xxix. col. 1073.

† "Wilberforce Correspondence," vol. i. p. 89.

upon principles of rational liberty, went forth "to make new nations" of freemen, who would have ties of consanguinity; speaking the same language, and bound together by the same principles of government as the parent state. Continents and islands, compared with which, in extent of territory, Britain is but a speck in the ocean, have thus been conquered in the noblest of victories, the victories of peace. But the last generation little understood the value of the great nations they were founding. They had a dim sense of some material advantage that might be derived from the displacement of aborigines of the lowest type of savage life, but a dread of the ferocity of higher races, that in their fierce barbarism appeared incapable of being amalgamated with European habits and modes of thought.

The discoveries which have been attended with political and social consequences of which it is difficult to speak without apparent exaggeration, were originally impelled by the pure ardour of scientific inquiry. In August, 1768, Lieutenant James Cook was sent out in the ship *Endeavour*, by order of the British government, and at the request of the Royal Society, to find an appropriate spot in the South Seas, to make observations upon the expected transit of Venus over the sun's disc, in June, 1769. Otaheite, the chief island of the Pacific, had been discovered by Wallis in 1767, and had been called "King George the Third's Island." Bougainville, a French navigator, had visited it before the time when Cook established an observatory for the transit on the northern cape of the island. The observations were made; and during a residence of three months the naturalists who had accompanied the expedition investigated the productions of the country, rich with the cocoa-nut, the sugar-cane, and the banana, and especially with the bread-fruit tree—that wonderful gift of heaven to a fertile climate, which might enable a happy race to subsist without all the manifold labours that are requisite to produce bread from corn. The natives, it was said, laughed when they were told of our tedious processes of ploughing, sowing, harrowing, reaping, threshing, grinding, and baking.* Cook, when he left Otaheite, discovered the group which he called "Society Islands," in honour of the learned body at whose instance he was sent out. But in that, his first voyage, he explored the coasts of a country which had been discovered by Tasman, a Dutch navigator, in 1642. From that time to 1769, no one had landed upon those two islands, now so familiar to us as New Zealand. Long

* Boswell's Johnson, May 7, 1773.

neglected, this fine country had no regular settlement till 1840 when it became an accredited colony of the British government—a land henceforth to be inhabited by a great off-shoot of the Anglo-Saxon stock, with all the manifold blessings of the religion, the knowledge, the industry, of our own nation, whose process of civilization, under Roman colonizers, was far less rapid. The New Zealander himself, thirty years ago a clever cannibal, has already been absorbed into British citizenship, by the all-dominant superiority of higher intellect and purer morals. But this great good has been accomplished by treating the New Zealander as an accountable being, with rights not to be taken from him by the rapacity of the conquest. He has been dealt with as the proprietor of the soil; and the territory of the settlers has been purchased and not seized. The New Zealanders, by far the highest in capacity of the barbarous tribes, have, in their brief colonization of twenty years, manifested the possibility of raising a native race to an appreciation of the value of what constitutes civilization, by imparting to them the blessings on which we pride ourselves as Christians and freemen.

The Dutchmen had discovered New Holland; but they left it unexplored. Cook minutely surveyed the Eastern Coast, which he called New South Wales. The naturalists of the expedition, Mr. Joseph Banks and Dr. Solander, found many curious plants in an inlet of this coast, which they denominated "Botany Bay." What a word of terror was "Botany Bay," when, in 1792, there were only sixty-seven free settlers in New South Wales. When the American colonies became independent, and even before their independence, they refused to receive "those unfortunate individuals who were convicted of such smaller felonies as are too frequent in a country where, from the freedom of the government, no strict police can be established."* There was a very summary remedy for the higher offences, such as stealing in a dwelling-house above the value of five shillings—death. The capital punishment system grew somewhat odious, and the system of the hulks was more generally adopted. At last it was recollected that Captain Cook had found a convenient place to which criminals, not worthy of Tyburn, might be banished; and so, from 1787 to 1792, about five thousand convicts had been sent to New South Wales and Norfolk Island. In the first years of the colony these wretched creatures were literally slaves—employed in clearing woods to gain a spot for cultivation; half-starved—with no hope of escape, with the sea before them, and a boundless waste behind. The "Botany Bay

* Sinclair, "History of the Revenue," vol. ii. p. 102.

Eclogues" of Southey, written in 1794, open with this lament of a female convict:—

"Once more to daily toil, once more to wear
The livery of shame, once more to search
With miserable task this savage shore."

Contrast the felon of Sydney Cove with the prosperous merchants and artisans of Sydney;—contrast the miserable outcast flying for his life to the deserts of the kangaroo, with the flock master reckoning his thousands of sheep on the fertile plains which he calls his own;—contrast England paying millions for the transport of convicts, with England receiving new impulses to her industry from the Australian gold fields. The most extravagant dreams in 1793 of the believers in the probable results of commercial and colonizing enterprize, never could picture any change approaching that gradual result of British energy, "which converted a transmarine gaol into one of the greatest communities of free men on the earth." *

The very remote possibility of founding a great empire in Australia when the flag of England was first hoisted on the shores of Sydney Cove in 1788, could offer no prospect of compensation for the loss of our American colonies. Canada, at the time when war with France was imminent, was not wholly to be relied upon for loyalty to her conquerors, with her mixed French population; and with her proximity to the United States, whose people, if not her government, were rather too much enamoured of the ideal liberty of the French Republic to open their eyes to its aggressions. Britain must rely upon herself alone. She would persist in submitting to hard bargains with mercenary despotisms to make them fight for their own existence; but she would mainly have to depend upon her own right arm. Her military establishment was not equal to any sudden emergency. "It certainly was impolitic," says Sir John Sinclair, "reducing the peace establishment of this country so low as it was in 1793, when from the state of France it was evident that all Europe was likely to get into a convulsed state." † The military expenditure of that year was under two millions. The expected rupture with Spain in 1790, and with Russia in 1791, had occasioned great activity in the English dockyards; and an improved plan of providing imperishable stores in the magazines had enabled ships to be quickly equipped for service. The British fleet, at the commencement of 1793, included 115 ships of the line, car-

* "Quarterly Review," vol. cvii. p. 1.

† "History of the Revenue," vol. ii. p. 195.

rying 8718 guns. The ships of the French line were 76, carrying 6002 guns.* The British navy, at the commencement of 1793, comprised 411 vessels of all rates, of which only 135 were in commission.† “At no previous period had France possessed so powerful a navy,” says Mr. James. The English fleet was not so readily manned as the French fleet. The appeals to republican enthusiasm to fit out privateers were more stimulating than the sober addresses to the loyalty of our mercantile classes. On the 31st of December the French Minister of Marine addressed a letter to the friends of liberty in the sea-ports:—“The government of England is arming. . . . The king and his parliament intend to make war against us. Will the English republicans suffer it? Already these free men show their discontent, and the repugnance which they have to bear arms against their brothers the French. Well! we will fly to their succour; we will make a descent on the island; we will lodge there fifty thousand caps of liberty; we will plant there the sacred tree; and we will stretch out our arms to our republican brethren. The tyranny of their government shall soon be destroyed.” M. Chauvelin returned to Paris with the same wild notions of the amount of disaffection. He judged, as foreigners are too apt to judge, that our freedom of writing and speaking—the safety-valves of the political machine—indicated violence and revolt. The war was probably inevitable; but the French Convention took the initiative in declaring war. On the 11th of February, a message from the king was delivered to the two Houses, in which it was stated that “the Assembly now exercising the powers of government in France have, without previous notice, directed acts of hostility to be committed against the persons and property of his majesty’s subjects, in breach of the law of nations, and of the most positive stipulations of treaty; and have since, on the most groundless pretensions, declared war against his majesty and the United Provinces.”

* James’s “Naval History,” vol. i. p. 91.

† See Tables to James’s “History,” No. 1.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Resolutions proposed by Mr. Fox against war with France.—Commercial distress.—Parliamentary Reform opposed by Mr. Pitt.—Traitorous Correspondence Bill.—Pitt, Burke, Fox,—the diversity of their views of England's policy.—Sanguine expectations of warlike success.—Dumouriez in Holland.—Battle of Neerwinden.—Defection of Dumouriez.—Measures of the Jacobins.—Revolutionary Tribunal.—Committee of Public Salvation.—Excessive prices of Commodities in Paris.—Produced by the depreciation of Assignats.—Plunder of the Shops.—Law of Maximum.—Forced Levy of troops.—La Vendée in insurrection.—Mr. Fox's motion for Peace.—Insurrection against the Girondin Deputies.—Their arrest and flight.—Assassination of Marat by Charlotte Corday.—Note on the French Revolutionary Kalendar.

THE opposition of Mr. Fox to the war with France, supported as he was by only a small band of his friends, was consistent and unremitting. He moved an amendment to the Address on the King's Message respecting the Déclaration of War, and was defeated without a division. He proposed, a week after this royal Message had been delivered, a series of Resolutions, the object of which was to declare, that it was not for the honour or interest of Great Britain to make war upon France, on account of the internal circumstances of that country; that the complaints against the conduct of the French Government were not sufficient to justify war in the first instance without having attempted to obtain redress by negotiation; that the pretended grounds of the war with France, the security of Europe, and the rights of independent nations, had been disregarded in the case of Poland; that no engagements ought to be entered into with other powers which might prevent Great Britain making a separate peace. After an acrimonious debate, Mr. Fox's motion was rejected by an overwhelming majority, only forty-four members supporting the Resolutions. Again, and again, Fox advocated negotiations for peace with those, whoever they were, who had the government of France in their hands. "Why," he said, "was every man in England to be a sufferer because the people of France were in confusion? . . . Let them ask every man in the kingdom who had any commercial dealings, whether the accounts he received from all parts of the kingdom did not call for a conclusion to this war."* The embarrassments in trade had been so serious, from whatever cause, that Parliament

* "Parliamentary History," vol. xxx.—Debate of the 18th June.

had sanctioned an issue of five millions in exchequer bills, to be advanced by commissioners, in loans to commercial firms who could give security for repayment. The demand for peace, upon the plea that war produced distress and privation to the bulk of the people, was thus met by Burke, in one of his most virulent personal attacks upon Fox:—"The ground of a political war is, of all things, that which the poor labourer and manufacturer are the least capable of conceiving. This sort of people know in general that they must suffer by war. It is a matter to which they are sufficiently competent, because it is a matter of feeling. The *causes* of a war are not matters of feeling, but of reason and foresight, and often of remote considerations, and of a very great combination of circumstances, which *they* are utterly incapable of comprehending; and, indeed, it is not every man in the higher classes who is altogether equal to it." * According to this doctrine, the war with the French republican government was "a political war," of the justice or expediency of which only the initiated in the mysteries of statesmanship were competent to form an opinion. The bulk of the people might feel the consequences of such a war, but they had no capacity for the investigation of its causes, and had therefore only to confide and suffer. Pitt, proud and confident as he was, made no attempt to measure this war by the calculating foresight only of official wisdom. He was driven into the war, undoubtedly against his wishes, by the violence of popular opinion rather than by the calculations of his own statesmanship. He did not claim an infallibility which regarded with contempt the general tone of public feeling. He carried the greater portion of the industrial community with him in his resistance to extreme democratic principles, by describing with a rhetoric that could not exaggerate the reality, the cruelties and oppressions perpetrated in France under the names of Liberty and Equality. He defended his own abandonment of the cause of Parliamentary Reform by dwelling upon the consequences of extended suffrage in France. In the great debate on Mr. Grey's motion for Reform, previous to which petitions had been read praying for Universal Suffrage, Mr. Pitt said, "In what is called the government of the multitude, they are not the many who govern the few, but the few who govern the many. It is a species of tyranny which adds insult to the wretchedness of its subjects, by styling its own arbitrary decrees the voice of the people, and sanctioning its acts of oppression and cruelty under the pretence of the national will. . . . The question is, whether you will abide by your Constitution, or hazard a change,

* "Conduct of the Minority."

with all that dreadful train of consequences with which we have seen it attended in a neighbouring kingdom?" * The fanaticism of the republicans who ruled France has been compared to that of the Mussulmans, "who with the Koran in one hand, and the sword in the other, went forth conquering and converting." The fiery zeal of the higher and middle classes of England has been compared to that of the Crusaders, "who raised the cry of *Deus vult* at Clermont." † The watchword of "King and Constitution" was, on one side of the Channel, as potent as the war-whoop of "Liberty and Equality" on the other side. There was no great "reason and foresight" required to plunge each nation into a conflict of twenty years.

The passions that were involved in this political war impelled the alarmists to call for such stringent measures of precaution and coercion as Great Britain had not witnessed since the days of the exiled Stuarts. The Chancellor, lord Loughborough, was ready with a "Traitorous Correspondence Bill," drawn by the Attorney-General, sir John Scott, and introduced by him to the House of Commons on the 15th of March. They considered the law of Edward III. against adhering to the king's enemies as insufficient to prevent the French being supplied with arms and stores, and they made it high treason even to enter into an agreement for supplying them. They called for the penalties of treason against those who should invest capital in the French funds or in the purchase of lands in France. Forfeiture and corruption of blood were not to follow a conviction; but, on the other hand, the evidence of two witnesses, and the further protections secured to the accused by the statutes of William and Anne, were to be set aside. The arbitrary tendencies of the Lord Chancellor and his Attorney-General could not be more strongly exhibited than in the proposition that a man might be hanged, drawn, and quartered, upon the evidence of one witness, without being furnished with a copy of the indictment against him; and without the privilege of being defended by counsel. The Bill passed the House of Commons in spite of the opposition of Fox, Sheridan, and Erskine; but in the House of Lords this attempt to take from the accused the means of defence, under the appearance of lenity, was modified. The penalties of the law of treason, and its protections, remained as before. This definition of treasonable acts was very widely extended. The minister who had never sanctioned any act of the executive, or any proposal of the legislature, of an unconstitutional

* "Parliamentary History," vol. xxx. col. 902—Debate of May 7.

† Macaulay—"Life of Pitt."

or arbitrary tendency, was now to become identified with measures such as Englishmen regarded as belonging to past generations of oppression. The minister who had built his reputation upon his financial prudence was to lay a load of debt upon his country that even now seems fabulous.

Mr. Pitt began this tremendous contest by undervaluing the power of a nation whose government, if government it could be called, was one of factions without a common head, each contending for supremacy; of a nation that had lost every ordinary source of strength,—settled laws, established property, natural leaders, public credit. Obscure men, such as Jourdan, who had carried a pack from fair to fair, were commanding the French armies. Men taken from the ranks, it was held, could know nothing of strategy, and could have no authority over their fellows. In despising their origin and training, it was forgotten that the passion for Equality gave them a more powerful influence in the French armies than was ever wielded by the titled Marshals of the old monarchy. The English minister sent the king's second son, whose military experience had been limited to a field-day in Hyde-Park, to terrify the raw levies of the republic with two regiments of Guards; and with a contingent of Hanoverians and Hessians, all disciplined upon the most approved principles of "the bookish theorick." Mr. Pitt knew that Austria and Prussia hated each other—would act upon no common agreement for large and disinterested purposes in the conduct of the French war. He knew that Russia and Prussia were intent upon aggressions as hateful and as dangerous as the pretensions of the French republicans; that not until they were gorged with the spoils of Poland would they seriously direct their thoughts to the common dangers of established governments; but that meanwhile they would let the war take the languid course of a Coalition without a presiding mind to direct it to salutary ends, or to arrest the selfish schemes which some indulged of territorial aggrandizement. And yet Mr. Pitt had no doubt that the expedition which he sent to Holland in March under the duke of York, and his armaments against the West India islands, constituted that vigorous prosecution of the war which he promised when he brought forward his Budget; and he could not comprehend why Mr. Fox had no confidence in numerous foreign alliances, saying, that "he dreaded our being led into dangerous engagements for the prosecution of the most unjustifiable purposes." It soon became manifest that the war was not carried on with that vigour on the part of the Allies which alone could ensure success; that purposes wholly unjustifiable interfered with that unanimity which justice

and disinterestedness alone could inspire. In a very few months it was found out that there was a new element in this contest, in dealing with which historical experience was no guide. In October, 1793, Burke acknowledged that a state of things had arisen, "of which, in its totality if History furnishes any examples at all, they are very remote and feeble." Who, he says, could have imagined knew and unlooked-for combinations and modifications of political matters, in which property should, through the whole of a vast kingdom, lose all its importance and even its influence;—who could have thought that a formidable revolution in a great empire should have been made by men of letters who would become the sovereign rulers;—that atheism could produce one of the most violently operative principles of fanaticism;—that administrative bodies in a state of the utmost confusion, and of but a momentary duration, should be able to govern the country and its armies with an authority which the most settled senates, and the most respected monarchs, scarcely had in the same degree? "This, for one, I confess I did not foresee," says Burke, and he gives the reason of his own short-sightedness as the apology for others: "I believe very few were able to enter into the effects of mere *terror* For four years we have seen loans made, treasuries supplied, and armies levied and maintained, more numerous than France ever showed in the field, by *the effects of fear alone.*"* The experience had come, in less than a year of warfare, which was to be more instructive than "History or books of speculation," but not for encouragement or warning, till the passions had cooled down which prevented its instruction teaching us what to do and what to forbear doing.

Nevertheless, in this condition of "new and unlooked-for combinations and modifications of political matters," it would be presumptuous to affirm that either of the extreme principles advocated on the one hand by Burke, and on the other hand by Fox, would have led eventually to happier results than the middle policy pursued by Pitt. The French Revolution was permitted by the Supreme Arbiter of human affairs to run its course of savage crime, of wild anarchy, of crushing despotism, of insatiate ambition, of aspirations for universal empire, to be arrested at last in its mad career, by the necessity of all nations combining for their common safety. They might have successfully combined at an earlier period to prevent the aggressions of the Republic, had they possessed the wisdom to have left France to choose what form of Government it pleased. They roused the Republicans of every faction to almost superhuman

* "Policy of the Allies." The words in Italics are so in the original.

efforts of resistance, when they believed that a king would be again forced on them ; that their noblesse would be brought back with all their privileges and immunities ; that the confiscated properties would return to their old possessors ; that France itself would be dismembered of some of its fairest provinces. It was the day-dream of Burke to do all these impossible things, except to partition France. He would restore the monarchy—he would restore the Church—he would restore the Aristocracy—he would have no peace with the Regicides—he would have “a long war” to bring back the France before 1789. To him the Constitutionalists were as odious as the Jacobins ; La Fayette and Marat were equal in villainy. These desires were not fulfilled ; the Revolution brought its tardy wisdom as well as its instant terror. Europe had not to groan for another century under the leaden sway of unmitigated Absolutism ; England had not to rush upon untried theories to supersede her constitutional freedom. Pitt had no monarchical enthusiasm to oppose to Republican fanaticism. He would treat with any Government in France that he considered stable ; he would fight those whom lord Auckland, in his Memorial to the States-General, denounced as “*miserables*,” in the belief that their reign would be very short ; that exhausted France would soon lie at his feet ; that a solid peace would be concluded with some responsible form of power when the revolutionary conflagration had burnt out. The Jacobins dreaded the policy of Pitt more than the idealities of Burke. They called Burke “a madman”—they called Pitt “a monster.” The style in which “that Orestes of the British Parliament, the madman Burke ; that insolent lord Grenville ; or that plotter Pitt,” were spoken of in the French Convention was this : “They have misrepresented the independence of the French nation. They have invariably represented us as robbers and cannibals. Soon shall they be laid prostrate before the statue of Liberty, from which they shall rise only to mount the scaffold that awaits them, and to expiate by their death the evils in which they have involved the human race.”* Fox, on the contrary, from his original sympathy with the new order of things during the existence of the States-General, from his exultation upon the repulse of the Allies from the French frontier, from his constant abhorrence of the war in which Great Britain was engaged, was in France held to be wedded to the whole course of the Revolution as firmly as Paine was wedded. There is a curious anecdote illustrative of this French feeling in the Journal of Mrs. Elliott. She was arrested,

* Quoted by Burke, from the speech of citizen Lasource, in the *Moniteur* of 17th March.—“Parliamentary History,” vol. xxx., col. 614.

and carried before the Comité de Surveillance ; a letter addressed to Mr. Fox having been found in her possession. At that sitting Vergniaud interposed in her behalf. " I don't see why this woman should have been arrested because a letter directed to Mr. Fox was found in her house. Had it been directed to the monster Pitt you could have done no more. Mr. Fox is our friend ; he is the friend of a free nation, he loves our Revolution, and we have it under his own hand-writing." Fox carried his party feeling too far, but he did good service to his country by his dogged resistance to the measures of Pitt. He, with a few others, saved us from the full swing of rampant Toryism, in those days when fear was hardening the hearts of men in these isles, and driving them into measures which, without some check such as Fox, Grey, Sheridan, Erskine, interposed, might have resulted in despotism or civil war. Madame de Staël has said, with an impartiality which history should endeavour to emulate, " However advantageous it might have been to England, that Mr. Pitt should have been the head of the State in the most dangerous crisis in which that country ever found itself, it was not the less so that a mind as enlarged as that of Mr. Fox should have maintained principles in spite of circumstances, and have known how to preserve the household gods of the friends of liberty in the midst of the conflagration." *

A wise political teacher has justly described the delusion under which the majority in Parliament and in the country laboured at the beginning of 1793 : " It is a memorable example of the intoxication of men, and of their Governors, that at the commencement of this war, the bare idea of the possibility of its failure would have been rejected with indignation and scorn." † With the exception of the brilliant successes of our own navy, we shall have to pursue a narrative of a series of disasters which culminated at Austerlitz, and which carried Pitt, broken-hearted, to his grave. The sanguine views of those who expected that a volcano could be extinguished by a fire engine, were never more strongly exhibited than in a speech of lord Loughborough, at a period when the English Guards, having landed in Holland, assisted in the relief of Williamstadt, and thus in some degree influenced the movements of Dumouriez, which we shall presently relate. On the third reading of the Traitorous Correspondence Bill, on the 22nd of April, lord Lauderdale had expressed a doubt whether nineteen hundred men,

* " Considérations sur les principaux événements de la Révolution Française," 1818.

† Mackintosh—" Reasons against the French War"—Miscellaneous Works, vol. iii., p. 180.

sent out under the command of the duke of York, had saved Holland, or driven the French from the Austrian Netherlands. Lord Loughborough, in his reply, was extravagant in his appreciation of the consequences which had already attended the warlike operations of the British Government. "To the promptitude in sending out those few troops under the able command of an illustrious personage was to be ascribed that Holland was saved ; that the French were defeated and driven back ; that all Europe, from Petersburg to Naples, was delivered from the plunder, the confiscation, the rapine, the murder, the destruction of order, morality, and religion, with which it was threatened by the prevalence of French arms and French principles." *

Dumouriez had entered Antwerp in triumph on the 30th of November, 1792. He moved with his army on the 17th of February, 1793, to carry the war into Holland. During his occupation of Belgium, the French Convention had sent Commissioners into that country, of whose tyrannical conduct Dumouriez bitterly complained in a letter which he addressed to the President of the Convention on the 12th of March: "We have oppressed the Belgians by every species of vexation ; have violated the sacred rights of their liberty, and have imprudently insulted their religious opinions." He exposed the pretended union of several parts of Belgium to France. "The union of Hainault to the Republic was effected by sabres and muskets ; and that of Brussels by a handful of men who could exist in trouble only, and by a few sanguinary men assembled to intimidate the citizens." Marat denounced the moderation and equity of Dumouriez as "crimes against the Revolution ;" and he was accused of aspiring to the title of duke of Brabant, or to the Stadtholdership. The victor at Jemappes was hated by the party of the Mountain, and he knew that if they gained the ascendancy his destruction was inevitable. Danton, however, was his friend, and the Jacobins suspended their avowal of hostility till a more convenient season. Dumouriez marched into Holland, and soon obtained possession of Breda, Klundert, and

* "Parliamentary History," vol. xxx. col. 739.—The "*few troops*" become a great army in the narrative of Sir A. Alison. Under the date of April 20, 1793, he says, "A corps, consisting of twenty thousand English, was embarked, and landed in Holland, under the command of the Duke of York. According to the statements of the Secretary at War, the total number of the effective forces of the kingdom at the commencement of hostilities was 22,000 ; and, deducting those employed in foreign settlements, the land forces did not amount to more than 9,000 effective men. During the first year of the campaign 10,000 additional men had been raised. This enabled the government gradually to send reinforcements to the duke of York ; but with 9,000 disposable troops in the early part of 1793, Mr. Pitt would have had some difficulty in embarking 20,000 for Holland in April.—(See "Parliamentary History," vol. xxx. col. 1248, and. col. 1330.)

Gertruydenburg. But he was brought to a stand at Williamstadt, which was occupied by a Dutch garrison who had not been corrupted, and by the English detachment of Guards. The generals who were second in command to Dumouriez had sustained severe reverses whilst he had marched into Holland. In a Proclamation to the French nation he says, "I made myself master of three strong places, and was ready to penetrate into the middle of Holland, when I learned the disaster of Aix-la-Chapelle, the raising of the siege of Maestricht, and the sad retreat of the army. By this army I was loudly summoned: I abandoned my conquests to fly to its succour." On the 16th of March the prince of Cobourg, commanding the Imperialists, was in position at Neerwinden; and upon the arrival of Dumouriez the small river of the Geete only separated the two armies. The river was crossed by the French on the 18th. In their attack upon the Austrians they were defeated with a loss of four thousand men; and were compelled to return to their former position. The hour of misfortune had now arrived; and with the French Convention the certain remedy for defeat was the guillotine for the unhappy commander—*pour encourager les autres*. Dumouriez knew what was in reserve for him when, on the 2nd of April, six Commissioners arrived in his camp to summon him to the bar of the Convention. He refused to obey, and ordered his Germans to take the Commissioners as their prisoners, but to do them no harm. They were sent to Tournay, to be kept as hostages for the safety of the royal family. Dumouriez had been in secret communication with the Austrian general Mack; and an agreement had been come to, that the French army should evacuate Belgium; that the Allied armies should not invade France; but that Dumouriez should march upon Paris, to overthrow the Jacobins and to restore the Constitutional Monarchy. On the day when the French Commissioners had failed in their arrest of Dumouriez, he addressed a Proclamation to the French nation, in which he said, "Frenchmen! we have a rallying point which can stifle the monster of anarchy: 'tis the Constitution we swore to maintain in 1789, '90, and '91: it is the work of a free people, and we shall remain free." On the 4th he was to complete his arrangements with the Prince of Cobourg, near Condé. Although in great danger of being seized by some volunteers, he accomplished his purpose; and a Proclamation of the Prince was agreed upon, and published, in which the alliance with the French general for the purpose of establishing a constitutional king was avowed. When Dumouriez returned to his army on the 5th, escorted by a body of imperial cavalry, he learned that his artillery had left the camp,

and that large bodies of troops had marched to general Dampierre at Valenciennes. The chances of restoring France to any system which should combine order with liberty was at an end for one generation. Dumouriez lived an exile in England till 1823. In the Proclamation of the prince of Cobourg, issued on the 5th of April, he stated that he was seconding the beneficent intentions of general Dumouriez to restore to France its constitutional monarch, with the means of rectifying such experienced abuses as may exist; and he declared, on his word of honour, that he should enter the French territory without any view of making conquests, and that if any strong place should fall into his hands he should regard it as a sacred deposit. After the failure of Dumouriez's project a Congress was held at Antwerp, attended by the representatives of Austria, Prussia, and Great Britain; and then the prince of Cobourg issued a second Proclamation, in which he revoked his former declaration, and announced that he should prosecute the war with the utmost vigour. The Jacobins, now almost supreme, had for three weeks or more been preparing to resist any invasion of the French territory—or any attempt to give France back a king, constitutional or absolute—with a terrible energy of which the world had seen no previous example, in its daring or its atrocity. "The utmost vigour" of the prince of Cobourg was that of a rocket in comparison with a thunderbolt.

On the 10th of March, the Convention passed a decree for the establishment of an extraordinary Criminal Tribunal, without appeal, for the trial of all traitors, conspirators, and counter-revolutionists. This was the terrible Revolutionary Tribunal, composed of five judges who were to be bound by no forms of procedure, and of a permanent jury. These jurymen were to satisfy themselves as to facts in any way that they could, and to vote audibly in the presence of a Paris mob. To direct the proceedings of this awful tribunal, from whose decrees there was no appeal, a Public Accuser was appointed. Fouquier Tinville filled this office with an excess of zeal that permitted none of the ordinary weaknesses of humanity in judge or jury to interfere with the sacred duty of giving to the guillotine its daily food. He had only one remedy for the cure of lukewarmness towards the Revolution—Death. He was in so great a hurry to do his work, that identity of person was sometimes unnecessary when an accused stood before him. Two women of the same name having been arrested, he settled the accounts of both, for fear of a mistake. You are idle, he would say, to his officers—I want two or three hundred every decade.* Over

* See Note on the Revolutionary Calendar.

the Revolutionary Tribunal presided the *Comité de Salut Public*, which was instituted at the end of March. Consisting only of nine members, it will have all those appliances of despotism at its command which cannot be so well managed by that discordant body the Convention, of which Assembly a very large party, the Girondins, are utterly sick of the system which has been growing into irresistible strength, since they winked at the September massacres, and equivocated with the murder of the king. If the *Comité de Salut Public* has its centralizing functions, extending to all matters civil and military, the local agencies for carrying on the system of terror are not less efficient. In every township of France there is a *Comité Révolutionnaire*, each consisting of twelve staunch patriots, chosen by universal suffrage; and of these committees there are forty-four thousand, all busy in making domiciliary visits, arresting and examining the suspected, giving certificates of good citizenship—*Cartes de Civisme*—and filling the prisons with victims for the Moloch of Liberty. There is much to do in this mad world of France in which all the ordinary relations of social life are overthrown. The whole state machinery is out of gear, and nevertheless it must work. Oiling the wheels and cranks will be useless, so they must be moved by main strength. "The effects of fear alone" will do a great deal. But fear will not give the people food, when the interruption of commercial dealings, by the utter want of confidence between seller and buyer, keeps food out of the markets. In 1792 Paris had been provisioned with grain and flour, not in the ordinary course of demand and supply, but by the municipality. The loss to the government upon this year's transactions was enormous. In February, 1793, it was reported to the Convention that the price of bread must either be raised by the municipality, or an extraordinary tax must be levied, to keep down the price of bread. The Convention granted the tax, to be levied upon an ascending scale upon property, moveable and immoveable. The municipality, however, could not keep down prices, even by buying in the dearest market and selling in the cheapest. The farmers kept their grain in their barns; the merchants kept their sugar in their warehouses; the soap-boilers made no stock to supply the retailers. They did not like the coin in which they were to be paid in exchange for their commodities. When the National Assembly and the National Convention had declared the domains of the church and the estates of the emigrants to be public property, they put into circulation a new species of Paper-Money, estimated upon the supposed value of that property, denominated *Assignats*, the holders of them be-

ing assignees of so much of the property thus represented. Lands and houses might be bought, and were largely bought, by the holders of assignats, but they were not otherwise convertible. As a necessary consequence the value of this paper-money fluctuated according to the belief in the permanency of the Revolution; and in the same way the purchasers of the confiscated property became fewer and fewer when the hope of a constitutional monarchy had passed away, and France was governed in a great degree by the Jacobin Clubs. But the more decided was the depreciation of the Assignats the more unlimited was their issue by the Convention. As an inevitable consequence the nominal price of every article of subsistence and household necessity was prodigiously increased. Sugar, coffee, candles, soap, were doubled in price. The wages of labour remained stationary; for there was a superabundance of labour through the general interruption to production and exchange. The washerwomen of Paris go to the Convention to say that soap is so dear that their trade will be at an end. We want soap and bread, cry the poor *blanchisseuses* of the Seine. Commissioners of the Sections superintend the distribution of loaves to those who can pay. Furious women surround the grocers' shops, demanding sugar. The terrified grocers roll their sugar-hogsheads into the streets, and the citizenesses weigh it out at twenty-two sous a pound. Some paid; some helped themselves without paying; and the pallid shopkeepers helplessly looked on; for had not Marat, the friend of the people, said in his journal of the 25th of February that there would be an end of high prices if a few shops were pillaged, and a few shopkeepers hanged at their own doors? The shopkeepers, however, brought out their stores when their price was tendered in metallic currency. The Convention had its strong remedy against the unpatriotic *bourgeoisie*. It decreed that whoever exchanged gold or silver for a higher amount in assignats than their nominal value, and whoever stipulated for a different price of commodities if paid in paper or in specie, should be subjected to six years' imprisonment. The final step in this direction was to fix a maximum of price upon all agricultural produce and upon all merchandize. The system was extended from Paris to the departments, with the certain results of the ruin and misery which follow every violation of economical laws. And yet amidst this total derangement of the ordinary principles of social intercourse, the people lost no faith in their Republic. They were stirred up to the belief that their miseries were not the result of natural causes, but were produced by the intrigues of the aristocrats, aided by the gold of Pitt. Marat, who had excited the

plunder of the shops, was in vain denounced by a small majority in the Convention, who foresaw the quick approach of the reign of anarchy and bloodshed. The Mountain was gradually deriving new strength from the hunger and violence of the populace. "The people can do no wrong," said Robespierre. Danton, who had manifested many indications of disgust at the proceedings of the extreme democratic faction, was carried away by their ascendancy, and supported the establishment of the Revolutionary Tribunal. Its scaffolds were quickly set up. Sansculottism soon became supreme. Misery fell upon all classes, and especially upon those who depended upon the wages of industry. But every Parisian, rich or poor, trembled and obeyed; and the provinces, for the greater part, did the same, for Paris ruled France. Most Frenchmen were ready to defend their country against the foreigner, and to maintain any form of revolutionary government, however oppressive, in preference to the restoration of the ancient order of things which had been destroyed. Their fanaticism was stimulated by arts not wholly unlike the delusion practised upon the Kaffir tribes in 1857, who were persuaded by their chief to destroy their cattle and corn, that, rendered desperate by want, they might rush to a war which would sweep the British colonists from the land. The Assignats and the Law of Maximum produced the same desperation in France. The Jacobin leaders knew perfectly well what would be the consequences of their insane decrees. They traded on the despair of the people.

"The Jacobin Revolution," wrote Burke, "is carried on by men of no rank, of no consideration; of wild savage minds, full of levity, arrogance, and presumption; without morals, without probity, without prudence. What have they then to supply their innumerable defects, and to make them terrible even to the firmest minds? One thing, and one thing only—but that thing is worth a thousand—they have energy." * This energy was put forth in the formation of Revolutionary Committees, which were to reject all the ordinary principles of justice and mercy; and in desperate conflicts with those natural laws by which the exchanges of mankind are regulated. But the greater the domestic miseries of France, the readier were its population to turn from peaceful pursuits to the excitement of war. The Convention, on the 10th of March, decreed a forced levy of three hundred thousand men. This decree few dared to disobey, and many submitted to it without reluctance, and even with patriotic ardour. There was a remarkable exception in the district of La Vendée, in which singular country an insurrec-

* "Policy of the Allies."

tionary spirit was developed in the population, when their priests were ejected and the king had perished on the scaffold. When the peasantry were about to be dragged from their homes to serve in the armies of the Revolution, this spirit broke out into open violence against the republican authorities. In La Vendée the zeal of Loyalty and Religion came into open conflict with the passions excited under the names of the Rights of Man and the Age of Reason.

In the British Parliament, on the 17th of June, Mr. Fox proposed an elaborate Address to the Crown, the object of which was to make it the most earnest and solemn request of the Commons, that his majesty would employ the earliest measures for the re-establishment of peace with France. The proposition was rejected by the very large majority that the ministry now commanded. In the course of his speech Mr. Fox contended, in answer to the question which had been often asked, "whether we were to treat with France in its present state," that we ought to treat, and ultimately must treat, with whoever had the government in their hands, with him or them, be he or they whom they might. "Good God," cried the orator, "what was there in their proceedings that made us look for an established government among them? Let them suffer the penalties of their own injustice;—let them suffer the miseries arising from their own confusion. Why were the people of England to suffer because the people of France were unjust?" The reply of Mr. Pitt was not easy to controvert, "Where is our security for the performance of a treaty, where we have neither the good faith of a nation, nor the responsibility of a monarch? The moment that the mob of Paris becomes under the influence of a new leader, mature deliberations are reversed, the most solemn engagements are retracted, our free will is altogether controlled by force Should we treat with Marat, before we had finished the negotiation he might again have descended to the dregs of the people from whom he sprung, and have given place to a more desperate villain." * At this precise point of time it was no figure of speech for Mr. Pitt to refer to Marat as the representative of the executive power in France. "Let us consider," said Mr. Burke in the same debate, "the possibility of negotiation." The minister Le Brun is in gaol. The minister Clavière is not to be found. "Would you have recourse to Roland? Why, he is not only in gaol, but also his wife along with him, who is said to be the real minister Brissot is likewise in gaol, bearing a repetition of that sort of misfortune to which it is hoped that habit may

* "Parliamentary History," vol. xxx. col. 994—1018.

reconcile him. Pay your addresses to Egalité, and you will find him in his dungeon at Marseilles. There then only remains my celebrated friend, the mild and merciful Marat."

The Girondins, on whose authority in the Convention rested the only hope of a stable government in France,—a government not founded upon the supremacy of the rabble,—had fallen, never to rise again, on the 2nd of June. They then became wanderers in the provinces, or prisoners in the dungeons of Paris. They had relied upon their patriotic eloquence and their republican virtue. They would hold no communion with the movers of insurrection and massacre; and they found the terrible earnestness of ignorant ruffianism too strong for respectable philosophy. Their majority in the Convention availed them nothing; for that Assembly had come into open conflict with the physical force of Paris, hounded on by the Jacobin Club, when the idol of the populace, Marat, was sent for trial before the Revolutionary Tribunal. As more prudent men than the Girondins might have expected, the sanguinary demagogue was acquitted; and he was carried,—as a successful candidate was formerly chaired in England—upon the shoulders of the mob, to the hall of the Convention, amidst the cry of "Death to the Girondins." Robespierre, between whom and Marat there was mutual hatred, saw that in giving his support to this "friend of the people," whose mode of testifying his friendship was to excite to plunder and butchery, he was using an instrument for the destruction of the only party that had the confidence of the middle classes. He denounced the Girondins in the Convention as men who had wished to save the tyrant Louis, and had conspired with the traitor Dumouriez. The Commune of Paris had obtained a power which was opposed to all steady government, and the Girondins tried to bring them under the control of a Commission of Twelve appointed by the Convention. The mob was roused to that fury which never waits to inquire and to reflect, when victims are pointed out for its vengeance. On the 31st of May the mob declared itself in a state of permanent insurrection—a phrase which indicated that the ordinary operations of justice were suspended, in the same way that martial law supersedes the accustomed course of legal authority. On the 2nd of June, the Convention was surrounded by an armed force, whose decrees were to be pronounced by a hundred pieces of artillery. Resistance was in vain. Twenty-two of the Girondin leaders were conducted to prison. Many of their friends escaped to the provinces. Some who had fled from the guillotine died by their own hands. The political existence of the party was at an end.

For the most odious of the assassins of the anarchical republic there was the vengeance of assassination also in store. The story of Charlotte Corday has been told by Lamartine with a power of picturesque narrative which few have equalled. The naked facts can only be related by ourselves. In the city of Caen resided, in 1793, a grand-daughter of the great tragic poet, Corneille. She was an enthusiast, devoted to those ideas of the new philosophy which she had derived from her father, and from the secret study of Rousseau in the convent in which she had passed her girlhood. Some of the proscribed Girondins had come to reside in Normandy; and from their eloquent invectives against the terrorists who were degrading the cause of the revolution by their crimes, she derived, in common with her neighbours, a hatred of Marat as the personification of all that was atrocious in the rulers of the populace. Pétion, Barbaroux, with many others of the fugitive deputies, called up this disgust towards the ruling faction of Paris, by their oratory and their proclamations. Formidable bands of young men enrolled themselves to march to Paris, in order to rescue liberty from the assaults of anarchy. Amongst the number of these volunteers was one who aspired to Charlotte's love, but with a timid reserve. Her enthusiasm suggested that she had a higher call of duty than the indulgence of a feeling suited to more tranquil times. She felt that if the ferocity which now guided the Revolution was not arrested, her province, and the neighbouring districts now in insurrection, would become the scene of the most terrible carnage. She took her resolution. If Marat should fall there might be hope for the Republic. She travelled to Paris, which she entered on the 11th of July. With some difficulty she obtained admission to the mean lodging of Marat, on the evening of the 13th. She found him in a bath; and there she slew him. When examined, she said that she saw civil war ready to devastate France; that she deemed Marat to be the chief cause of the public calamities; and that she sacrificed her life, in taking his, to save her country. Her execution quickly followed. The wretch whom she had murdered was decreed a public funeral in the Pantheon. Danton pronounced his eulogy as "the divine Marat."

NOTE ON THE FRENCH REVOLUTIONARY KALENDAR.

IN reading the French historians of the period from the declaration of the Republic in 1792 to the end of 1805, we find the dates of events not given according to the common kalendar, but according to the most puzzling of all systems of chronology, the Republican Kalendar adopted by the Convention. In our own history we give the dates, thus found in French writers, according to the Gregorian Kalendar; but it may be useful here to present a complete view of the Revolutionary Kalendar; which view we adopt, with some abridgment, from "The English Cyclopædia of Arts and Sciences."

The Convention decreed, on the 24th of November, 1793, that the common era should be abolished in all civil affairs: that the new French era should commence from the foundation of the republic, namely on the 22nd of September, 1792, on the day of the true autumnal equinox, when the sun entered Libra at 9^h 18^m 30^s in the morning, according to the meridian of Paris; that each year should begin at the midnight of the day on which the true autumnal equinox falls; and that the first year of the French republic had begun on the midnight of the 22nd of September, and terminated on the midnight between the 21st and 22nd of September, 1793. To produce a correspondence between the seasons and the civil year, it was decreed, that the fourth year of the republic should be the first sextile, or leap year; that a sixth complementary day should be added to it, and that it should terminate the first Franciade; that the sextile or leap-year, which they called an olympic year, should take place every four years, and should mark the close of each Franciade: that the first, second, and third centurial years, namely 100, 200, and 300 of the republic should be common, and that the fourth centurial year, namely, 400, should be sextile; and that this should be the case every fourth century until the 40th, which should terminate with a common year. The year was divided into twelve months of thirty days each, with five additional days at the end, which were celebrated as festivals, and which obtained the name of "Sansculottides." Instead of the months being divided into weeks, they consisted of three parts, called Decades, of ten days each. It is however to be observed that the French republicans rarely adopted the decades in dating their letters, or in conversation, but used the number of the day of each month of their kalendar. The republican kalendar was first used on the 26th of November, 1793, and was discontinued on the 31st of December, 1805, when the Gregorian was resumed.

The decrees of the National Convention, which fixed the new mode of reckoning, were both vague and insufficient. A French work, "Concordance des Calendriers Républicain et Grégorien," par L. Rondonneau, puts every day of every year opposite to its day of the Gregorian kalendar. It is to actual usage that we must appeal to know what the decrees do not prescribe—namely, the position of the leap-years. The following list, made from the work above mentioned, must be used as a correction of the usual accounts, in which the position of the leap-years is not sufficiently regarded.

		Sept.			Sept.
An I.	begins	22, 1792	Sext. IX.	begins	23, 1800
II.	"	22, 1793	X.	"	23, 1801
Sext. III.	"	22, 1794	Sext. XI.	"	23, 1802
IV.	"	23, 1795	An XII.	"	24, 1803
V.	"	22, 1796	XIII.	"	23, 1804
VI.	"	22, 1797	XIV.	"	23, 1805
Sext. VII.	"	22, 1798			
VIII.	"	23, 1799			
				ended 31 December,	1805.

When the Gregorian year is not leap-year, the beginnings of the months are as follows, according as the republican year begins on September 22, 23, or 24:—

1 Vendémiaire	is	Sept.	22, 23, 24	1 Jan.	is	Niv.	12, 11, 10
1 Brumaire	is	Oct.	22, 23, 24	1 Feb.	is	Pluv.	13, 12, 11
1 Frimaire	is	Nov.	21, 22, 23	1 March	is	Vent.	11, 10, 9
1 Nivose	is	Dec.	21, 22, 23	1 April	is	Germ.	12, 11, 10
1 Pluviose	is	Jan.	20, 21, 22	1 May	is	Flor.	12, 11, 10
1 Ventose	is	Feb.	19, 20, 21	1 June	is	Prair.	13, 12, 11
1 Germinal	is	March	21, 22, 23	1 July	is	Messid.	13, 12, 11
1 Floréal	is	April	20, 21, 22	1 Aug.	is	Thermid.	14, 13, 12
1 Prairial	is	May	20, 21, 22	1 Sept.	is	Fructid.	15, 14, 13
1 Messidor	is	June	19, 20, 21	1 Oct.	is	Vendém.	10, 9, 8
1 Thermidor	is	July	19, 20, 21	1 Nov.	is	Brum.	11, 10, 9
1 Fructidor	is	Aug.	18, 19, 20	1 Dec.	is	Frim.	11, 10, 9

But when the Gregorian year is leap-year the beginnings of the months are as follows, according as the republican year begins on September 22, 23, or 24:—

1 Vendém.	is	Sept.	22, 23, 24	1 Jan.	is	Niv.	12, 11, 10
1 Brum.	is	Oct.	22, 23, 24	1 Feb.	is	Vent.	13, 12, 11
1 Frim.	is	Nov.	21, 22, 23	1 March	is	Pluv.	12, 11, 10
1 Niv.	is	Dec.	21, 22, 23	1 April	is	Germ.	13, 12, 11
1 Pluv.	is	Jan.	20, 21, 22	1 May	is	Flor.	13, 12, 11
1 Vent.	is	Feb.	19, 20, 21	1 June	is	Prair.	14, 13, 12
1 Germ.	is	March	20, 21, 22	1 July	is	Messid.	14, 13, 12
1 Flor.	is	April	19, 20, 21	1 Aug.	is	Thermid.	15, 14, 13
1 Prair.	is	May	19, 20, 21	1 Sept.	is	Fructid.	16, 15, 14
1 Messid.	is	June	18, 19, 20	1 Oct.	is	Vendém.	11, 10, 9
1 Thermid.	is	July	18, 19, 20	1 Nov.	is	Brum.	12, 11, 10
1 Fructid.	is	Aug.	17, 18, 19	1 Dec.	is	Frim.	12, 11, 10

For instance, what is 14 Floréal, An XII.? The republican year begins Sept. 24, 1803, so Floréal falls in 1804, which is Gregorian leap-year. Look at the third table, and when the year begins Sept. 24, the 1st of Floréal is April 21; consequently the 14th is May 4, 1804. Again, what is June 17, 1800, in the French kalendar? The year is not Gregorian leap-year; and An VIII. contains it, which begins Sept. 23. Look in the second table, and in such a year it appears that June 1 is the 12th of Prairial; therefore June 17 is Prairial 28.

GREAT BRITAIN.		FRANCE.	GERMANY.	PRUSSIA.	SWEDEN.	RUSSIA.	SPAIN.
1745	George II.	Louis XV.	Francis I. and Maria Teresa.	Frederic the Great.	Frederic.	Elizabeth.	Philip V.
1751	—	—	—	—	Adolphus Frederic.	Ferdinand VI.	—
1758	—	—	—	—	—	Charles III.	—
1759	George III.	—	—	—	—	{ Peter III.	—
1760	—	—	—	—	—	{ Catherine II.	—
1762	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1765	—	—	Joseph II.	—	Gustavus III.	—	—
1771	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1774	—	Louis XVI.	—	—	—	—	—
1786	—	—	—	Frederic William II.	—	—	—
1788	—	—	—	—	—	—	Charles IV.
GREAT BRITAIN.		DENMARK.	POLAND.	PORTUGAL.	PAPAL STATES.	NAPLES.	SARDINIA.
1746	George II.	Frederic V.	Augustus II.	John V.	Benedict XIV.	Charles II.	Charles Emanuel III.
1750	—	—	—	Joseph Emanuel.	—	—	—
1758	—	—	—	—	Clement XIII.	—	—
1759	—	—	—	—	—	Ferdinand IV.	—
1760	George III.	—	—	—	—	—	—
1764	—	—	Stanislaus.	—	—	—	—
1766	—	Christian VII.	—	—	—	—	—
1769	—	—	First Partition.	—	Clement XIV.	—	—
1772	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1773	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1775	—	—	—	—	Pius VI.	—	—
1777	—	—	—	Maria.	—	—	—
1788	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF TREATIES.

(Continued from Vol. p. 502.)

- 1750 October 5: Treaty between England and Spain, by which England renounced the *Assiento contract* for the supply of slaves, included in the peace of Utrecht, in 1713.
- 1755 June 8: Commencement of war by the English, by the attack on two French frigates in America.
- 1756 January 16: Treaty of alliance between Prussia and England. Hanover put under the safeguard of the King of Prussia.
- 1756 May 1: Alliance between Austria and France, concluded at Versailles.
- 1756 June 9: War formally declared by France against England.
- 1756 August 17: Saxony invaded by Prussia. Beginning of the Seven Years' War.
- 1756 September 30: War between Austria and Prussia.
- 1757 July 17: War between Great Britain and Austria.
- 1757 August 24: Hostilities commenced between Sweden and Prussia.
- 1757 September 10: *Convention of Closterseven.*
- 1757 October 22: Treaty of peace concluded between the province of Pennsylvania, and the Delaware and the Shawanee Indians.
- 1761 August 15: *The Family Compact* between the different branches of the House of Bourbon, signed at Paris.
- 1762 January 23: War declared by England against Spain, in consequence of the Family Compact.
- 1762 May 1: The Spanish and French invade Portugal, and an army sent from England to assist the Portuguese.
- 1762 May 5: *Peace of Petersburg*, between Russia and Prussia. Russia restored all her conquests to Prussia.
- 1762 May 22: *Peace of Hamburg*, between Sweden and Prussia.
- 1762 May 23: War declared by Portugal against Spain.
- 1762 November 3: Preliminaries of Peace signed at Fontainebleau, between France and England.
- 1763 February 10: *Peace of Paris* concluded between France, Spain, Portugal, and Great Britain. Cession of Canada by France, and of Florida by Spain.
- 1763 February 15: *Peace of Hubertsberg*, between Prussia, Austria, and Saxony. End of the Seven Years' War.
- 1765 March 22: American Stamp Act.
- 1768 February 24: *Treaty of Warsaw*, between Russia and Poland.
- 1768 October: War between Russia and Turkey.
- 1771 January 22: A treaty concluded between Great Britain and Spain, confirming the possession of the Falkland Islands to the former.
- 1772 February 17: Secret convention for the partition of Poland by Russia and Prussia.
- 1772 August 5: *Treaty of Petersburg* for the same object, between Austria, Russia, and Prussia.
- 1773 December 21: The disturbances in America began with the destruction of the tea on board three sloops at Boston.
- 1774 July 21: *Peace of Kutchuk kainarji*, between Russia and Turkey. Crimea declared independent, Azoph ceded to Russia, and freedom of commerce and navigation of the Black Sea granted.
- 1774 December 5: Congress opened at Philadelphia.
- 1775 April 19: Hostilities commenced at Lexington, North America, between Great Britain and the Colonists.

- 1775 May 20: The American provinces sign articles of union and alliance.
- 1776 July 4: American declaration of independence.
- 1778 February 6: A treaty ratified with the states of America, by France, who acknowledged their independence.
- 1778 March 13: War between England and France.
- 1779 May 13: *Peace of Teschen* ratified between Austria, Saxony, and Prussia.
- 1779 July 13; Spain joins the war against England.
- 1780 December 20: War declared by Great Britain against Holland.
- 1780 July 9 and August 1: First conventions for the armed neutrality, between Russia, Denmark, and Sweden. December 24, the States-General acceded.
- 1781 May 8: King of Prussia accedes to the armed neutrality.
- 1781 October 9: The Emperor of Germany joins the armed neutrality.
- 1782 November 30: The independence of America acknowledged by England, and preliminaries of peace signed at Paris between the British and American Commissioners.
- 1783 January 20: Preliminary articles of peace signed at Versailles, between Great Britain, Spain, and France.
- 1783 January 20: Crimea passes under the dominion of Russia.
- 1783 September 2: Preliminaries of peace between Great Britain and Holland, signed at Paris.
- 1783 September 3; *Definitive treaty of peace* between Great Britain and America, signed at Paris; when the latter power was admitted to be a sovereign and independent State. On the same day, the definitive treaty was signed at Versailles between Great Britain, France, and Spain.
- 1784 June 20: *Definitive treaty of peace* between Great Britain and Holland, signed at Paris.

PRINCIPAL OFFICERS OF STATE FROM THE ADMINISTRATION OF LORD NORTH, 1770,
TO THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE EARL OF SHELburne, 1783.—(See page 139.)

LORD CHANCELLOR.	FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY.	CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER.	PRINCIPAL SECRETARIES OF STATE.
1771. Henry, lord Apsley (created earl Bathurst in 1775).	1770. Frederick, lord North -	1770. Frederick, lord North.	1768. Earl of Rochford. Earl of Hillsborough (Colonies).
1772. "	"	1771. "	1771. (June 12). Earl of Suffolk (<i>vice</i> earl of Sandwich).
1773. "	"	1772. "	1772. (Aug. 14). Earl of Dartmouth (Colonies). "
1774. "	"	1773. "	1773. "
1775. "	"	1774. "	1774. "
1775. "	"	1775. "	1775. (Nov. 10). Viscount Weymouth (<i>vice</i> earl of Rochford).
1776. "	"	1776. "	— Lord George Sackville Germaine (<i>vice</i> lord Dartmouth) (Colonies). "
1777. "	"	1777. "	1776. "
1778. (June 2), Edward, lord Thurlow.	"	1778. "	1777. "
1779. "	"	1779. "	1778. "
1780. "	"	1780. "	1779. (Oct. 27). Viscount Stormont (<i>vice</i> earl of Suffolk).
1781. "	"	1781. "	— (Nov. 24). Earl of Hillsborough (<i>vice</i> viscount Weymouth).
1782. "	"	1782. "	1780. "
—	"	—	1781. "
—	"	—	1782. (Feb. 24). Welbore Ellis, esq. (<i>vice</i> lord George Germaine) (Colonies).
—	"	—	— (March 27). William, earl of Shelburne (<i>vice</i> lord Stormont).
—	"	—	— Hon. Charles James Fox (<i>vice</i> lord Hillsborough).
—	"	—	— (July 13). Thomas Townshend, esq. (<i>vice</i> Mr. Fox).
—	"	—	— Thomas, lord Grantham (<i>vice</i> earl of Shelburne).

GROWTH OF THE NATIONAL DEBT.

THE present Funded Debt may be considered to have its root in the iniquitous measure of shutting up the Exchequer in 1672, when the revenue pledged for the payment of loans, amounting to £1,328,000, was appropriated to other purposes, and that principal sum was never redeemed. Interest was duly paid till 1684, and was then withheld. But an Act of Parliament was passed in 1699, by which, after 1705, the creditors were to receive interest at 3 per cent. upon the original amount, to be redeemed whenever the Government should pay a moiety thereof. That unredeemed moiety of £660,263 is a part of the present debt; and at the Revolution there was about £400,000 outstanding debt in the shape of loans and arrears.

A General Abstract of the Funded and Unfunded Capital of the National Debt of Great Britain and Ireland, and of the charge for Interest and Management, has been recently printed by order of the House of Commons. It must be borne in mind, that although we speak of Capital and Interest, the Public Debt consists not in Capital but in Annuities—that the State, having borrowed a principal sum from time to time, guarantees certain payments in the shape of perpetual or terminable annuities, without any engagement to replace the principal represented by such a General Abstract of the National Debt. We give the results of this abstract, separating the Return into periods concurrent with marked eras of history; and distinguishing the years of war and the years of peace. In the progress of our historical narrative, we have noticed how the amount of Interest has been reduced, by the judicious measures of sir Robert Walpole, and by those of Mr. Pelham in 1749.

WILLIAM AND MARY; WILLIAM III.; ANNE.

			Unredeemed Capital.	Interest and Annuities.	
			£	£	
War.....	W. & M.	3 & 4	1691	3,130,000	232,000
".....		4 & 5	1692	2,310,547	230,000
".....		5 & 6	1693	5,902,839	507,101
".....		6 & 7	1694	6,734,297	818,298
".....	William III.	7 & 8	1695	8,436,846	887,192
".....		8 & 9	1696	11,579,178	1,086,971
War.....		9 & 10	1697	14,522,925	1,322,519
Peace.....		10 & 11	1698	15,445,416	1,468,511
".....	Anne.	11 & 12	1699	13,799,355	1,423,539
".....		12 & 13	1700	12,607,080	1,252,147
".....		13	1701	12,552,486	1,219,080
Peace.....		I	1702	12,767,225	1,215,324
War.....	Anne.	1 & 2	1703	12,325,779	1,158,460
".....		2 & 3	1704	12,363,474	1,234,010
".....		3 & 4	1705	12,135,351	1,210,051
".....		4 & 5	1706	12,388,030	1,443,568
".....		5 & 6	1707	15,244,299	1,590,630
".....		6 & 7	1708	15,518,406	1,722,472
".....		7 & 8	1709	18,933,339	1,921,477
".....		8 & 9	1710	21,335,645	2,064,829
".....		9 & 10	1711	22,398,425	2,274,377
".....		10 & 11	1712	34,922,688	3,034,078
War.....		11 & 12	1713	34,699,847	3,004,287
Peace.....		12 & 13	1714	36,175,460	3,063,135

GEORGE I. AND II.—From the Peace of Utrecht to the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle.

			Unredeemed Capital.		Interest and Annuities.	
			£	£	£	£
Peace.....	George I.	1 & 2	1715	37,423,234	3,114,625	
".....		2 & 3	1716	37,918,468	3,167,616	
".....		3 & 4	1717	40,308,257	3,144,293	
Peace.....		4 & 5	1718	40,379,684	2,965,889	
".....		5 & 6	1719	41,872,241	2,822,370	
".....		6 & 7	1720	53,979,708	2,846,434	
War.....		7 & 8	1721	54,405,108	2,855,380	
Peace.....		8 & 9	1722	54,202,366	2,807,584	
".....		9 & 10	1723	52,996,990	2,728,080	
".....		10 & 11	1724	53,323,570	2,727,317	
".....		11 & 12	1725	52,239,077	2,717,589	
".....		12 & 13	1726	52,850,797	2,739,628	
".....		George II.	13	1727	52,523,923	2,360,934
".....	1					
".....	1 & 2		1728	51,960,576	2,306,462	
".....	2 & 3		1729	51,541,220	2,292,150	
".....	3 & 4		1730	50,830,310	2,227,127	
".....	4 & 5		1731	50,738,786	2,219,886	
".....	5 & 6		1732	49,836,638	2,189,391	
".....	6 & 7		1733	48,728,097	2,153,405	
".....	7 & 8		1734	48,821,416	2,136,147	
".....	8 & 9		1735	48,948,089	2,141,600	
".....	9 & 10		1736	50,424,651	2,108,793	
".....	10 & 11		1737	47,231,299	2,057,073	
".....	11 & 12		1738	46,497,500	2,025,898	
Peace.....	12 & 13	1739	46,613,883	2,030,884		
War.....	13 & 14	1740	47,122,579	2,051,572		
".....	14 & 15	1741	48,382,439	2,099,950		
".....	15 & 16	1742	51,347,323	2,157,136		
".....	16 & 17	1743	53,200,989	2,181,586		
".....	17 & 18	1744	56,742,418	2,293,302		
".....	18 & 19	1745	59,717,817	2,428,329		
".....	19 & 20	1746	64,617,844	2,650,231		
".....	20 & 21	1747	69,115,414	2,882,528		
War.....	21 & 22	1748	75,812,132	3,165,765		
Peace.....						

GEORGE II. AND III.—From the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle to the Peace of Paris.

			Unredeemed Capital.		Interest and Annuities.	
			£	£	£	£
Peace.....	George II.	22 & 23	1749	77,488,940	3,204,858	
".....		23 & 24	1750	76,859,810	2,789,351	
".....		24 & 25	1751	77,197,026	2,760,484	
".....		25 & 26	1752	76,431,683	2,735,312	
".....		26 & 27	1753	75,034,815	2,694,038	
".....		27 & 28	1754	72,128,282	2,648,452	
".....		28 & 29	1755	72,505,572	2,650,041	
Peace.....		29 & 30	1756	74,575,025	2,753,566	
War.....		30 & 31	1757	77,825,397	2,736,254	
".....		31 & 32	1758	83,128,009	2,918,707	
".....		32 & 33	1759	91,273,459	3,181,895	
".....		33 & 34	1760	102,014,018	3,576,275	
".....		1				
".....	1 & 2	1761	114,294,987	4,148,999		
".....	2 & 3	1762	126,794,937	4,747,849		
War.....	Geo. III.	3 & 4	1763	132,716,049	5,032,733	
Peace.....						

GEORGE III.—From the Peace of Paris to the War of the French Revolution.

			Unredeemed Capital.		Interest and Annuities.	
			£	£	£	£
Peace	George III.	4 & 5	1764	133,287,940	5,002,865	
"		5 & 6	1765	131,816,173	4,028,250	
"		6 & 7	1766	131,636,931	4,887,346	
"		7 & 8	1767	132,110,822	4,875,558	
"		8 & 9	1768	132,587,404	4,870,163	
"		9 & 10	1769	130,313,280	4,786,941	
"		10 & 11	1770	129,197,633	4,712,079	
"		11 & 12	1771	128,986,012	4,733,694	
"		12 & 13	1772	128,036,533	4,706,326	
"		13 & 14	1773	128,874,497	4,749,567	
Peace		War	14 & 15	1774	127,162,413	4,698,313
"			15 & 16	1775	126,842,811	4,703,519
"			16 & 17	1776	131,237,283	4,870,534
"			17 & 18	1777	136,776,637	5,112,344
"			18 & 19	1778	143,052,634	5,487,323
"			19 & 20	1779	153,574,350	6,100,060
"			20 & 21	1780	167,400,982	6,934,739
"			21 & 22	1781	189,258,681	7,451,052
"			22 & 23	1782	214,729,586	8,413,441
War			Peace	23 & 24	1783	231,843,631
"		24 & 25		1784	243,063,145	9,541,256
"		25 & 26		1785	245,586,470	9,678,942
"		26 & 27		1786	245,466,855	9,664,541
"		27 & 28		1787	244,279,225	9,595,379
"		28 & 29		1788	243,637,416	9,572,217
"		29 & 30		1789	242,752,911	9,567,359
"		30 & 31		1790	242,461,580	9,585,712
"		31 & 32		1791	241,675,999	9,513,507
"		32 & 33		1792	239,663,421	9,432,179

ABSTRACT.

Period.	Debt.	Interest.	Years of War.	Increase of Debt in Years of War.
	£	£		£
1691	3,130,000	332,000		
1701	12,552,486	1,219,147	1691—1697	11,392,925
1714	36,175,460	3,063,135	1702—1713	21,932,622
1748	75,812,132	3,165,765	{ 1718—1721	14,025,324
1763	132,716,049	5,032,733	{ 1740—1745	22,531,551
1792	239,663,421	9,432,179	{ 1756—1763	58,141,024
			1774—1783	104,681,213
				£232,704,759



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