

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. 126.

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 Havannah 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 72,595,572*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.