

is roared out on all sides. Robespierre and his brother Augustin, Couthon, St. Just, Lebas—are decreed. But the struggle is not yet over. The Municipality will resist the Convention. The accused are sent off to prison; but the gaolers have orders not to admit any brought in custody. They are taken to the town hall. Paris is in tumult through the afternoon and night. The convention have decreed Robespierre and his adherents out of law. They have given the command of troops to Barras, who goes forth to encounter the troops of the Municipality under Henriot. They stand face to face in the Place du Greve. "Hear the decree of the Convention," is the voice on one side—"Robespierre and all rebels out of law." The lighted matches are not applied to the loaded cannon. The armed men of each party unite to uphold the decree. Henriot rushes into the Hôtel de Ville to say all is lost. Robespierre puts a pistol in his mouth, and blows off his under jaw. Henriot and Augustin Robespierre throw themselves out of the window. St. Just, Couthon, Lebas, think of suicide, but attempt it not, or fail in the attempt. At four in the afternoon of the 28th of July, Robespierre, his jaw bound up, his mangled brother lying beside him, with Henriot in the same wretched condition, are carried on a tumbril to the guillotine, other tumbrils following with other condemned. From the time when the Dictator attempted self-destruction he spake no word. He opens his eyes as he is lifted upon the scaffold, and looks for an instant on the bloody knife. The executioner's work is done, and Paris sends forth its universal shout of joy.

The character of Robespierre is one of the unsolved problems of history. His crimes are upon the surface; his motives are not so manifest. Coleridge, in 1795, anticipated the substance of a great deal that has been written about him: "Robespierre possessed a glowing ardour that still remembered the end, and a cool ferocity that never either overlooked or scrupled the means. What that end was is not known; that it was a wicked one has by no means been proved."\* Most persons—however some may be bewildered by the manifold speculations afloat in the world as to the objects which he proposed to himself in his difficult career—will agree that, if "he was, beyond most men that ever lived, hateful, selfish, unprincipled, cruel, unscrupulous," it may also be affirmed "that he was not the worst of the Jacobin group."†

The vicissitudes of parties in France were no interruption to the success of the French armies. After the fall of Robespierre, lord Cornwallis very justly described this remarkable state of

\* "The Friend," Essay xii.

† Lord Brougham, "Statesmen"—Robespierre.

things:—"The French, although they have neither security of person or property, although the streets of Paris and all their principal towns are daily streaming with blood, and their government, if such it can be called, is the most tyrannical and cruel that ever existed, still carry on the war with a vigour and energy that is scarcely to be conceived; and when one set of butchers are themselves slaughtered at Paris, the army pays the same deference to their murderers as they had before done to the villains whose heads they had cut off."\* To understand this apparent anomaly, it must not be forgotten that the French army was directed by one prevailing mind, that of Carnot; and that it had one great idea to fight for, the liberty and independence of the country. The armies of the Coalition were distracted by the rivalries and jealousies of sovereigns and generals. The incapacity of the leaders was as notorious as the selfishness of the crowned heads who appointed them.

Before the close of 1793, the rottenness of the Coalition against France was understood by the English government—understood, but still sought to be remedied by golden props. Lord Malmesbury is sent upon a special mission to Berlin. It was in vain that lord Grenville desired the ambassador to say to his Prussian majesty that the king of England "never will submit to purchase by a subsidy that assistance to which he is entitled by treaty."† It was in vain that he was instructed "that the utmost jealousy prevails between the two courts of Vienna and Berlin." The English Cabinet was divided in opinion. Loughborough was "for giving a large subsidy to the king of Prussia, but Pitt and Grenville think otherwise."‡ Lord Malmesbury at Berlin found that "the necessity of pecuniary relief was still the constant theme of the Prussian ministers." And so at last a treaty was signed, by which his Prussian majesty agreed, upon 300,000*l.* being paid as a subsidy, to furnish an army of sixty-two thousand men, under a Prussian commander-in-chief, at the further rate of 50,000*l.* per month; 1*l.* 12*s.* per head for bread and forage each month during the term of its service; and 100,000*l.* when the army was to return home. The despatches of lord Malmesbury detail, at wearisome length, the progress of these pitiful bargains. The same system was pursued by Austria. Mr. Thomas Grenville is negotiating with the Court of Vienna. They had required, "as indispensable conditions, that their loan must be completely satisfied in England to enable them to answer the demands of this year, and that they must receive from England

\* "Cornwallis Correspondence," vol. ii. p. 267.

† "Diaries, &c. of the earl of Malmesbury," vol. ii. p. 3.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

a considerable subsidy for next campaign, if it is expected that they should act vigorously in the prosecution of the war."\* Mr. Grenville wrote that it was his confident belief that if the English Cabinet expected to purchase energy and activity at this dear rate from the government of the emperor, the experiment would fail. "There is no soul in the bodies of these men." He was perfectly right. We want no key beyond the rapacity and heartlessness of the Prussian and Austrian governments to explain the series of calamities which befel the Allied armies in the campaign of 1794. The military details have little interest for the general reader of the present day. The duke of York defeated Pichegru on the 10th of May. Charleroi, besieged by the French, had been relieved by the hereditary prince of Orange on the 14th of May, after a severe battle, when the enemy was driven across the Sambre. Jourdan, having given some offence to the Committee of Public Safety, had left the army, and was again a shopkeeper at Limoges. He was summoned from his obscurity to take the command of the army of the Moselle. The choice of Carnot was amply justified. After defeating the Austrian general at Arlon, he captured Charleroi on the 25th of June; and on the 29th won the battle of Fleurus,—the greatest victory of the revolutionary arms before the career of Napoleon. This battle decided the fate of the Netherlands. His operations were a succession of triumphs over the Austrians; and led to the necessity of the duke of York retreating from Tournay and Oudenarde upon Antwerp. There was little chance now of preserving Holland. Confident supporters of Mr. Pitt's policy began to despair. One of these supporters, lord Mornington, saw very clearly what would be the probable result. In a letter to Mr. Addington, on the 27th of July, he says,—“I am full of despondency upon the subject of the war. I think it is too probable Holland will fall.” Then, he thought that the resources of France would receive an enormous accession from this conquest; that the fleets of Denmark and Sweden would join hers; that she would add the plunder of the Netherlands and of all the countries on the banks of the Rhine; that Switzerland and Italy would be at her mercy. “I expect,” he says, “to see the whole of this realized, having, after a good deal of reflection, entirely renounced all confidence in our allies, and all hopes of any internal convulsion in France.”† The successes of the French may also in a great degree be attributed to the extraordinary military capacity of the men who were leaders of her troops, even in that early period of the

\* “Court, &c. of George III.” vol. ii. p. 262.

† “Life of Lord Sidmouth,” vol. i. p. 123.

great war. In the army under Jourdan were serving Moreau, Bernadotte, Kleber, Ney, and Soult. They had one purpose,—to make the Republic victorious. They had the certainty that the humblest in the army might rise to the highest command if he successfully performed his duty,—for success was a test of merit, however imperfect and occasionally unjust was the criterion. The British army, with some exceptions, presented a deplorable contrast; and there was no cordiality between the British commander-in-chief and the Austrian generals. Lord Cornwallis was sent out to arrange a system of co-operation that might remove these jealousies. It was thought by the British government not unlikely that the Austrian government might entrust the general command to one so experienced as Cornwallis himself; and that the duke of York might be persuaded to retire from a post for which he was manifestly incompetent. The letters of lord Cornwallis show the progress of these negotiations, which were utterly fruitless. Mr. Windham went out to smooth the difficulties in the way of the duke of York's resignation, to which difficulties he appears too readily to have yielded. These might have ultimately been overcome; but nothing could counteract what Windham describes as “the dreadful duplicity of the Austrians, and the unfeeling and unprincipled indifference with which they sacrifice the greatest public interests to their private emoluments and animosities.”\* The king, however, stood in the way of the desire of his Cabinet that lord Cornwallis should have the command of the allied armies. He objected to the supercession of his son by an English man. He would not object to the command being entrusted to general Clairfait.† Cornwallis was unwilling to be placed in a position of such delicacy; but he saw the necessity of a change by which the public good might be consulted instead of private feelings, even those of royalty. At last the necessity became so obvious that, although there was an end to the notion of appointing Cornwallis to the command, Mr. Dundas informed him on the 27th of November that, “Mr. Pitt wrote a very long and dutiful letter, but at the same time a very honest and firm one, to the king, stating the necessity of putting an end to the duke of York's command of the army on the continent.” His royal highness was on that day requested to return home.‡

The previous disasters of the army under the command of the duke had been very serious. When Windham was at the British head-quarters, at Bois-le-Duc, on the 13th of September, he saw

\* “Cornwallis Correspondence,” vol. ii. p. 234.

† *Ibid.*, p. 276.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 243.

that the army of 30,000 British, Hessians, and Hanoverians, was left to act alone, without any hope of co-operation, against an enemy who menaced an immediate attack with an army of 50,000. He blamed himself for not having pressed the resignation of the duke with greater pertinacity; for he could not but wish, "when strong immediate interest forces away every other consideration, that a person of more experience and authority had the command, first to decide whether the battle ought to be fought, and then to conduct the fighting it."\* Bois-le-Duc was surrendered by the Dutch after a brief siege. The duke of York then moved to cover Nimeguen, the possession of which by the French would facilitate their advance into Holland. He was attacked on the 19th of October, and again on the 27th, and compelled to withdraw. Nimeguen was surrendered very shortly after this retreat. Maestrich also surrendered to Kleber. The road into Holland was open to the Republicans. The command of the army, now wretchedly reduced in number, was left to a Hanoverian nobleman, count Walmoden. The winter had set in with severity. The Hanoverian general appears to have believed that in winter an army could do nothing but rest in its quarters. Pichegru, the French commander, thought otherwise. He crossed the river Waal on the ice in the middle of December. Then the British troops, 8000 in number, who were commanded by general Dundas under Walmoden, made a desperate attack upon the French, and drove them back over the Waal. But the bravery of our troops was exerted in vain. They were suffering great privations from a wretchedly managed commissariat; and when Pichegru again crossed the Waal with an immense army, there was no chance but that of a speedy retreat to save the remnant of the British. After terrible losses from a pursuing enemy, and from the inclement weather, two or three thousand of our countrymen fought their way to the mouth of the Elbe, and embarked at Bremen for England. Holland was lost.

"Wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together." France was alive, and dangerous. Poland was prostrate—"the sick man" of that time; and the eagles were at hand to hasten the death, and divide the carcass. But there was an awakening before the death. When Poland, in 1792, saw her liberal Constitution put down by the armies of Russia, and had called in vain upon Prussia to support her in a resistance to aggression,† the national spirit of independence was embodied under prince Poniatowski, and Kosciusko showed his countrymen that a great leader would not be wanting if the prospect of deliverance was

\* "Cornwallis Correspondence," vol. ii. p. 268.

† *Ante*, p. 529.

sufficiently clear for a protracted conflict. The oppressors were too powerful. Russia appropriated a large share of the sick man's possessions and chucked a smaller share to Prussia. Poniatowski, Kosciusko, and many others who had fought against Russia, left their country. In 1794 the time appeared favourable for another attempt at independence. In the north of Poland there was an insurrection. An army was quickly organized. Kosciusko returned to Poland, and was appointed the leader of his countrymen. He published a manifesto against the Russians; and obtained a signal victory on the fourth of April. The people at Warsaw then rose, and expelled the Russians from their city. Aid from all sides came to the patriotic cause. Kosciusko was advancing to meet the Russian intruders; when Frederick William of Prussia, having received his pay from England for effectual assistance in the war against France, turned his thoughts to a more advantageous prospect than a hearty and honest fulfilment of his engagements would have afforded. He advanced into Poland at the head of forty thousand men; and was boldly met by Kosciusko with a force not one third of that number. Kosciusko was obliged to retreat towards Warsaw; but he effectually covered that capital for two months. Austria now considered it expedient to take a hand in this royal game, which promised great gains to those who made their stakes in time. Whilst she was bargaining for loans and subsidies with England, and leaving the duke of York to bear the brunt of the French attacks in the Netherlands, she marched an army into Little Poland. On the 10th of October, in an unsuccessful battle against the Russians under Suwaroff, Kosciusko was wounded. As he fell, he exclaimed "*Finis Polonia.*" The struggle was continued for a little while, and then Warsaw capitulated; after Suwaroff had put to the sword twenty thousand wretched inhabitants of the suburb of Praga, a massacre as horrid as that of Ismail, which, four years before, had signalized the triumph of this semi-barbarian.

There was one achievement of this year, memorable as an example of British daring; though it was a success without any permanent advantages. At the commencement of the French Revolution, the island of Corsica had been recognized as a department of France. But Paoli, who had been many years an exile from his country, returned; and finally organized a revolt against the French authorities. He entered into communication with lord Hood after the evacuation of Toulon; and it was determined that the republican occupiers of Fiorenza should be besieged. Troops were landed; and the French, being unable to maintain the post,

concentrated their forces at Bastia. The British general, Dundas, thought the place too strong to be taken, without a reinforcement. Horatio Nelson, one of lord Hood's captains, said he would be ready to attack it with five hundred men, and the crew of his own ship, the Agamemnon. With his usual firm reliance upon the bravery and endurance of his sailors, and unbounded confidence in his own powers, Nelson effected for his admiral the reduction of this strong place without the help of general Dundas, taking the command of the soldiers, seamen, and marines. Four thousand troops capitulated to a force not exceeding twelve hundred men. Corsica, for a short period, was annexed to Great Britain. The people had a free constitution offered to them; and they testified their desire to be under British protection. It was an union of very short duration, for it had no natural principles of cohesion. Corsica very soon came again under the dominion of France; and certainly this island, with its fierce and ignorant population, was not a possession that would have been easy to retain under a system of regulated liberty, even if it had been worth retaining for any higher object than the assertion of national pride.

## CHAPTER III.

Accessions to the Ministry.—Opening of the Session.—Mr. Canning.—Opposition to the Address by Mr. Wilberforce.—Acquittal of Warren Hastings.—Marriage of the Prince of Wales.—Session closed.—Expedition to Quiberon.—Insurrections in Paris.—Revolt of the Sections suppressed by Bonaparte.—Opening of Parliament.—Attack upon the king.—Coercive policy of the Government.—Dread of Mr. Fox of approaching absolutism.—Bonaparte chief of the army of Italy.—Territorial divisions of Italy.—Bonaparte's first Italian Campaign.—Austrian successes in Germany.—Lord Malmesbury negotiates for peace, at Paris.—Death of the Empress Catherine II.—Retirement of Washington.—French fleet in Bantry Bay.

BEFORE the meeting of parliament on the 30th of December, 1794, the ministry of Mr. Pitt had received some important accessions from that section of the Whig party which had already given him their support in debates and in divisions. The duke of Portland was appointed third Secretary of State; Mr. Windham, Secretary at War; and earl Spencer First Lord of the Admiralty. Earl Fitzwilliam went to Ireland as Lord Lieutenant, in December; but he was recalled in the following March.

Whatever was the amount of national gloom at the prospect of the war, there was one man who never lost heart or hope. The royal speech on the 30th of December was the anticipation of the sentiments, which William Pitt would again and again utter in majestic periods, to which his disciples would listen with unfeigned admiration. Disappointments and reverses were acknowledged, but security was only to be found in firmness and perseverance. Everything showed the rapid decay of the enemy's resources, and the instability of every part of their system. The United Provinces had entered into negotiations for peace, but no established government could derive real security from such negotiations. Forces were to be augmented; large additional burdens were to be imposed; and operations for another campaign were to be concerted with such of the powers of Europe as were impressed with the same sense of the necessity for vigour and exertion.

In the House of Commons, on that 30th of December, the speeches of two of the members excited more attention than even the stately harangue of the prime minister himself. George Canning, who had taken his seat in the previous session, seconded the motion for the Address. He had spoken three times during