

was an able and honest politician; but one whose alliance was as dangerous as his hostility. He brought odium upon the government by the discouragement he gave to that national feeling which the alarm of 1803 had called forth; and in his contempt of four hundred thousand citizens embodied for the defence of their country. Wilberforce writes, "I hear from Lascelles that administration is highly unpopular on account of Windham's treatment of the Volunteers."\*

The trial of lord Melville, during this Session, upon the impeachment of the Commons in 1805, excited little interest in the public mind. On the 10th of May, Romilly, as one of the managers for the Commons, summed up the evidence for the impeachment. It was his first public appearance as a political leader; and, says Horner, "his success was as great as his friends predicted." The result of the trial gave to many opponents of the Tory party, as it gave to Horner, "much disgust and despondency with respect to public affairs." They considered the verdict—not guilty—"contrary to plain, strong, accumulated evidence." Nevertheless, there was no marked expression of dissatisfaction at his acquittal by the Peers on the 12th of June, after a proceeding which had lasted sixteen days. Nor did the people take more interest in the protracted debates upon the charges against marquis Wellesley. There was one subject which did excite them—the rumors of a solemn inquiry into the conduct of the Princess of Wales, by virtue of a commission from the king to the Chancellor, lord Grenville, lord Spencer, and lord Ellenborough. The servants of the princess were examined, Romilly, as Solicitor-General, was engaged in these examinations; and, in his opinion, the principal charge against the princess, which arose out of her adoption of a child, was completely disproved. He said that "the evidence of all the servants as to the general conduct of the princess was very favourable to her."† During six months this inquiry furnished ample scope for the exercise of curiosity. It terminated by the king referring the whole matter to his Cabinet; and, by their advice, his majesty sent a written message to the princess, saying that there was no foundation for the graver charges against her, but that he saw with serious concern, in the depositions of the witnesses, and even in her royal highness's own letter to him written by way of defence, evidence of a deportment unbecoming her station.‡ The hateful question of this unseemly deportment in its extent and

\* Wilberforce—"Life," vol. iii. p. 267.

† Diary in Romilly's "Memoirs," June 7, 1806.

‡ *Ibid.*, February 29, 1807.

consequences was long a source of prurient excitement, and of consequent injury to public morals.

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs was the member of the government upon whose influence all looked with anxiety—some with extravagant hope; some with causeless alarm. Would the king long agree with Mr. Fox, whom he hated, was the first question? The king not only tolerated Mr. Fox, but he soon came to like him. In a memorandum of the late princess Augusta, it is recorded that after Mr. Fox's return to power a gloom appeared to hang over the spirits of the king; but that after their first interview the cloud was evidently removed. The king said to his new minister, "Mr. Fox, I little thought that you and I should ever meet again in this place. But I have no desire to look back upon old grievances, and you may rest assured I never shall remind you of them." Mr. Fox replied, "My deeds, and not my words, shall commend me to your majesty."\* A base motive has been imputed to George III., in his ready consent to admit Mr. Fox into the cabinet in 1806, as contrasted with the time when he would rather have hazarded the greatest of all evils than have allowed him to be a colleague of Mr. Pitt. "The king is said to have had early intelligence of Mr. Fox's days being numbered."† We are unable to trace, in any of the Correspondence and Diaries which have appeared since this sentence was written, any apprehension amongst the colleagues of Fox, or amongst any other public men, as expressed earlier than two months after his appointment to office, that he was in ill-health; or that a fear was entertained that he would soon be likely to be laid at rest by the side of his great rival. On the 5th of March, Wilberforce enters in his Diary, that consulting with Fox on the question of Abolition he found him "quite rampant and playful, as he was twenty-two years ago, when not under any awe of his opponents."‡ But the Speaker records that on the 31st of March Mr. Fox was taken ill at the House of Commons, and that Mr. Cline, the eminent surgeon, entertained a very bad opinion of his case, general symptoms appearing of a dropsical habit.§ Three days after, Fox spoke for an hour in the House of Commons on Windham's military plans. At the end of April the same diarist records that Mr. Fox was "advised to retire for a time from his unceasing attention to business; which he positively refuses to do at this period." He had, indeed, no com-

\* "Quarterly Review," vol. cv. p. 482.

† Lord Brougham—"Statesmen," vol. iii. p. 313.

‡ Wilberforce—"Life," vol. iii. p. 259.

§ Colchester's "Diary," vol. ii. p. 48.

mon work in hand which required the exercise of his vast ability, his energy, and his discretion. He died on the 13th of September, having been engaged to the last in consultation with his colleagues on two great points of national policy. In the House of Commons, in January, 1807, lord Howick thus described the leading aspirations of Mr. Fox in the last conversation of the two friends on the 7th of September: "On that occasion he told me, that the ardent wishes of his mind were, to consummate before he died, two great works on which he had set his heart, and these were, the restoration of a solid and honourable peace, and the abolition of the slave-trade."\* In the one object, he did not live to see the unsuccessful issue of a negotiation with France which was begun soon after his entrance into office. In the other object he had the happiness of being partially successful; but the final success was reserved for his colleagues, as the one great measure of permanent good which they accomplished during their brief tenure of power.

The history of the Abolition of the Slave-Trade is a history of individual efforts, carried on, through many years, with unexampled zeal and perseverance; and taken up, again and again, by the British Legislature, amid slight hopes of success against an opposition resolute to defend a traffic, of which the enormity of the evil was reconciled to many minds by the magnitude of the profits. Truly, for the few enthusiasts who entered into a contest with the great merchants of Bristol and Liverpool, whose ships carried every year fifty thousand captive negroes from the African coast to the West India Islands—truly, for such as Thomas Clarkson, "it was an obstinate hill to climb."† In looking back to the growth of public opinion on the subject of African slavery, some may believe that the triumphant exclamation of Cowper, "Slaves cannot live in England," had reference to an earlier time than that of lord North's administration. It was through the exertions of Mr. Granville Sharp, that it was solemnly declared "that a slave, the moment he lands in England, falls under the protection of the laws, and becomes a free man." We quote the words of Blackstone, who refers to the great case of the negro Somerset, as reported in the State Trials. That case was not decided till 1772. To the Society of Friends in England belongs the honour of the first united efforts to prevent the continuance of the Slave-Trade, against which they petitioned parliament in 1783. Clarkson was a graduate of St. John's College, Cambridge, when the vice-chancellor of the University announced as the subject of a Latin Prize Essay, "Is it right to make slaves of others against their will?" Clark-

\* "Hansard," vol. viii. col. 324.

† Wordsworth's "Sonnet to Clarkson."

son obtained the prize. He has recorded that after having read his Essay in the Senate House, on returning to London on horseback, he sat down disconsolate on the turf by the roadside, asking himself if the horrible facts stated in his own composition could be true? "Here a thought came into my mind that, if the contents of my Essay were true, it was time some person should see these calamities to their end." Timidly he asked himself, a young man of twenty-four, if the business of his life lay in that direction? He was intended for the Church. He thought that there were few labourers in the vast field which was always present to his agitated imagination; and that in that field he would work in his "great task-master's eye," better than in the field where the labourers were many. He translated his Essay into English, with additional facts. He became known to some zealous Quakers. He obtained introductions to Wilberforce, Pitt, and Fox. Henceforth the cause was in the hands of men whose voices would go through the world, and would speak trumpet-tongued to the justice of mankind. From this time to 1788, Clarkson pursued his great object in the most practical manner—by the collection of a vast body of details, totally new to the English people, which he published in 1788. These facts he gathered together by incessant labour; by obtaining evidence, often at his personal peril, amongst the seafaring population of the great commercial ports. The difficulty of finding a disinterested witness was almost insurmountable. He searched fifty-seven vessels to find one sailor who had been serving in the Canterbury slave-ship, and had gone up the river Calabar, with the canoes of the natives, when they seized all the inhabitants of a village, and carried them off, men, women, and children. Narratives such as these roused the feelings of the country; the feelings, we mean, of families who pondered over those horrors, as dangers from without, and dangers from within, gathered around the land, and who thought that God would not bless their nation whilst it tolerated such crimes. It was a time when in this, as in every other instance, men were afraid to touch any foul ulcer of the commonwealth lest the vital parts should be endangered by the attempts to cure. Slaves were property, some said; destroy slavery and you render all property insecure. We have matters of more consequence to attend to than what you term negro wrongs, said others. The interests, so called, of the West Indies were for a long time paramount, amidst the sophistries and indifference of either party in Parliament. At length Wilberforce came, with his persuasive eloquence and his influence over Pitt, and the cause of the Abolition gradually grew into shape.

In 1788, Wilberforce being seriously ill, Pitt carried a Resolution binding the House of Commons to consider the circumstances of the Slave Trade early in the ensuing Session. From that time the Abolition of the Slave Trade was never suffered to pass wholly out of the view of the English Parliament. Wilberforce and his immediate friends, who looked upon the Abolition as a great religious question, were indefatigable. Pitt, who had to deal with the matter as a statesman, was often held, perhaps unjustly, to be lukewarm. The motions of the Abolitionists were uniformly defeated in the House of Lords. In the House of Commons they were carried twice—in 1792 and in 1796—by small majorities. In 1804, Wilberforce carried his Bill by a majority of 75. Although lost in the Upper House, he was now sanguine of its ultimate success. It was, however, lost in the Commons in 1805. In 1806, under the ministry of lord Grenville and Mr. Fox, a Bill introduced to the Peers by the First Lord of the Treasury, prohibiting British subjects from engaging in the trade for supplying foreign settlements or the conquered colonies, was carried. This almost unexpected success called for new efforts. On the 10th of June, Mr. Fox proposed a Resolution "that this house, conceiving the African Slave Trade to be contrary to the principles of justice, humanity, and sound policy, will, with all practical expedition, proceed to take effectual measures for abolishing the said trade, in such manner, and at such period, as may be deemed advisable." The motion was carried by 114 against 15. In moving his Resolution Mr. Fox used these touching words: "So fully am I impressed with the vast importance and necessity of attaining what will be the object of my motion this day, that if, during the forty years that I have now had the honour of a seat in Parliament, I had been so fortunate as to accomplish that, and that only, I should think I had done enough, and could retire from public life with comfort, and conscious satisfaction that I had done my duty." On the 19th of June, Mr. Fox spoke, for the last time, in the House of Commons. There is a pleasant reminiscence of this, his last attendance in parliament, in the Diary of lord Colchester. In the room behind the Chair he drank tea with the Speaker, whilst the evidence upon the Oude charge against lord Wellesley was being discussed in Committee. They gossiped pleasantly upon a variety of subjects;—upon dark ages, which Fox denied to be as dark as we were apt to represent them; upon Livy's history, which he looked upon as a beautiful romance; upon the Greek historians; upon political economy, and his little faith in Adam Smith, and in the other economists, whose reasons were so plausible but so inconclusive; on

the eminence of the Greeks in arts and arms, which he chiefly attributed to their abandonment of pursuits, such as those of commerce and manufactures, which engaged modern nations. "In this desultory talk he was extremely pleasant, and appeared to please himself." \* A week later, Wilberforce records in his Diary, that William Smith, after he left the House, was talking of Fox constrainedly; "when at last, overcome by his feelings, he burst out, with a real divulging of his danger—dropsy. Poor fellow! how melancholy his case! he has not one religious friend, or one who knows anything about it. How wonderful God's Providence! How poor a master the world! No sooner grasps his long sought object than it shews itself a bubble, and he is forced to give it up." †

The second great point upon which Mr. Fox had set his heart when he accepted office, was the conclusion of a sound and honourable peace. He had not received the seals as Foreign Secretary longer than ten or twelve days, when he had occasion to address M. Talleyrand upon a very singular occurrence; which he felt it his duty, "as an honest man," to communicate to the French minister. A person informed Mr. Fox that he had lately returned from Paris, and had something to impart which would give him satisfaction; "I received him," says Fox, "alone in my closet; when, after some unimportant conversation, this villain had the audacity to tell me, that it was necessary for the tranquillity of all crowned heads to put to death the ruler of France; and that for this purpose a house had been hired at Passy, from which this detestable project could be carried into effect with certainty, and without risk." Mr. Fox caused the man to be detained, and wrote, to Talleyrand, in continuation of this statement, that he could not, according to our laws, detain him long; but that the wretch should not be sent away till full time had been gained to avert any danger. The letter was laid before Bonaparte, who upon reading it said, "I recognize here the principles of honour and of virtue by which Mr. Fox has ever been actuated." On the 5th Talleyrand sent to Fox a copy of the emperor's speech to the Legislative Body. It contained these words: "I desire peace with England. On my part I shall never delay it for a moment. I shall always be ready to conclude it, taking for its basis the stipulations of the treaty of Amiens." On the 26th of March the Secretary for Foreign Affairs wrote a long despatch to the French minister, in which he stated that he had submitted the private letter

\* Lord Colchester's "Diary," vol. ii. p. 70.

† "Life of Wilberforce," vol. iii. p. 268.

to the king; that his majesty's wishes were uniformly pacific, but that a safe and lasting peace was what the king had in view, and not an uncertain truce; that the stipulations of the treaty of Amiens had been variously interpreted; but that the true basis of a negotiation would be the reciprocal recognition of the following principle: "That the object of both parties should be a peace honourable for both, and for their respective allies; and, at the same time, of a nature to secure, as far as is in their power, the future tranquillity of Europe." Many were the letters that passed between Fox and Talleyrand; in which the simple and straight-forward style of the Englishman contrasts in a striking manner with the involved sentences, well adapted to conceal his thoughts, of the subtle Frenchman. Fox set out by assuming that the negotiation was to be conducted as by "two great powers, equally despising every idea of chicane." This correspondence went on up to the 14th June, the British minister insisting that the negotiation should be conducted with reference to the British alliance with Russia, and the French minister as constantly refusing to treat upon that principle. The negotiation then took another shape. Lord Yarmouth was amongst the Englishmen detained in France at the commencement of the war. Talleyrand induced him to be the medium of a communication with the Court of St. James's, of a private and confidential conversation, in which Talleyrand would explain the sentiments and views of France. At a second interview, Talleyrand told lord Yarmouth that the restoration of Hanover should be no difficulty; that the restoration of Naples to the king of Sicily should be no difficulty. Full powers were then sent to lord Yarmouth to negotiate; which he properly held back till he had seen more clearly what was really meant. Talleyrand had gone from his former propositions with regard to Sicily. At the end of June lord Yarmouth communicated to Mr. Fox that a separate treaty had been concluded between Russia and France. This was a great discouragement to the successful termination of the negotiation. But Fox still persevered in his endeavours for peace; and directed the earl of Lauderdale to proceed to Paris as a plenipotentiary, although he feared that no peace could be concluded upon terms which would be admissible. The negotiations were begun upon the principle of the *uti possidetis*—the principle of retaining what each party possessed. The French government shifted from that position. Meanwhile the emperor of Russia repudiated the treaty which a rash if not treacherous agent had concluded. This fact was known in England on the 4th of September. Mr. Fox died on the 13th. The diplomatic inter-

course was prolonged till the 1st of October, when lord Howick wrote to lord Lauderdale, that after six months of negotiation, there could be no reason why France should not give a plain and decisive answer upon points which had been so long under consideration. In the last note of Talleyrand which preceded the final rupture of the negotiation, he said, "The event will disclose whether a new coalition will be more disadvantageous to France than those which have preceded it. The event will also disclose whether those who complain of the grandeur and ambition of France should not impute to their own hatred and injustice this very grandeur and ambition of which they accuse her." When the papers were laid before Parliament, in January, 1807, lord Howick, who, in common with his party, had maintained that in the negotiations for peace, in the time of Mr. Pitt, the English government was chiefly to be blamed for their failure, now said that in the negotiations of 1806, "there never was any opportunity of procuring such terms as would have been adequate to the just pretensions, and consistent with the honour and interests, of this country." At that time the predictions of Talleyrand as to the issue of a new coalition had been partly accomplished. Lord Howick saw then what all true-hearted Englishmen began to see: "The event is in the hands of Him who giveth the victory. But one thing is clear—the progress of Bonaparte has never yet been stopped by submission, and our only hope, therefore, is in resistance, as far as we can resist his ambitious projects. We have done what our honour and duty called upon us to do. When this instrument of vengeance may be deprived of his terrors, I know not; but we may at least look to the honour and independence of this country as secure against all his attacks, and while this country exists as an honourable and independent nation, there will still remain some hopes of restoring that political balance in Europe which has for the present been overturned."\*

Thus, one of the two great objects upon which Fox had set his heart had utterly failed. More than a month before his death, he had almost ceased to hope for the accomplishment of this object. The failure was not to him a fatal blow, as Austerlitz was to Pitt; but the protracted negotiation wore his spirit, breaking down under disease, and his end came on rapidly. The final despatch from lord Lauderdale was received by him on the 7th of September, the day of his last interview with lord Howick. He died at the duke of Devonshire's villa at Chiswick, being unable to bear the journey from Downing-street to his beloved St. Anne's Hill. He was buried

\* "Hansard," vol. viii. col. 323.

with all public honours on the 10th of October. The grave of Fox in Westminster Abbey is within six yards of the grave of Pitt.

"The mighty chiefs sleep side by side." \*

Most of that generation, who had looked upon the battles of these chiefs during a quarter of a century—fierce battles, but rarely wanting in chivalrous respect each for the other,—most men felt what Francis Horner expressed,—“The giant race is extinct; and we are left in the hands of little ones, whom we know to be diminutive, having measured them against the others.” †

We must turn back to the disreputable contests between the House of Commons and John Wilkes, to see the opening of the career of the great parliamentary advocate of liberty; of the never-failing enemy of oppression; of the constant opponent of war. The young orator of 1769 was not then a tribune of the people. ‡ He soon took his proper position by the side of Burke and Barré, as the greatest master of “argumentative vehemence.” § His acceptance of office as a member of the Coalition ministry, and his ejection from power by Pitt, made them rivals. Their different views of the French Revolution made their rivalry life-long. But what noble rivalry! What a contrast in the very nature of the eloquence of these orators—the sustained majesty of the one; the rapid transitions of the other; the withering sarcasm opposed to the passionate invective; the proud self-assertion checked by the generous tribute of genius to genius. No two statesmen, so dreaded for their mental powers, so hated and suspected by the violence of party, were ever more beloved in private life, or had more devoted friends. They were each loved with an attachment stronger than that of political ties—with the love that the genial nature, more than the towering intellect, endures with constancy, even beyond the grave. ||

Whilst the ministry of Grenville and Fox were negotiating for peace, with all honesty of purpose, Napoleon put himself at the head of the Confederation of the Rhine. This was not an empty title of honour for the emperor of the French. It was a result of the humiliation of the emperor of Germany, and of the terror which France was holding over the head of the king of Prussia. It placed the minor States of Germany under the absolute control of Napoleon; it destroyed all nascent feeling of Germanic unity;

\* Scott—“Introduction to Marmion.”

† “Life,” vol. i. p. 373; Letter of 15th September.

‡ *Ante*, vol. vi. p. 107.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 163.

|| In the “Life of William Pitt,” by Earl Stanhope, there is a parallel between the two Statesmen, written in a candid and impartial spirit—vol. i. p. 238 to 251.

it confined the contest for Germanic independence to Austria and Prussia, always disunited and jealous; and it compelled the greater of these powers to renounce the proud title of the successor of the Cæsars, and to be content with the humbler dignity of emperor of Austria. The treaty for the federal alliance of the States that separated themselves from the empire of Germany, to place themselves under the protection of a new chief of the empire, was signed on the 15th of July. The king of Prussia made no resistance to this confederacy, for he had hoped to form another union of States in the north of Germany of which he should be the head. He was soon taught by Napoleon to have humbler aspirations. He had been bribed by the possession of Hanover into acts of hostility towards Great Britain in the exclusion of British vessels from her ports. The British government retaliated by a blockade of the Ems, the Weser, the Elbe, and the Trave, and also by an embargo upon Prussian vessels in the ports of the United Kingdom. The king of Prussia found that there was danger in quarrelling with the Court of St. James's. France had no hesitation in proposing to take out of the mouth of Prussia the bait which she had greedily snatched at. Hanover was to be restored to George III. The king of Prussia had begun to find that the ties which bound him to France were no silken fetters; that he was despised by his great ally; that his people were becoming indignant at the humiliating position of their sovereign, and impatient of the loss of their commerce in consequence of the British blockade. There was something more to raise the indignation of the Prussian people than the degradation of their sovereign or the loss of their trade. They had a foretaste of the tyranny with which the military slaves of Napoleon's will endeavoured to put down any manifestation of public opinion in opposition to that will. On the frontiers of Prussia was collected a large French army, occupying territories of Austria and of free States, and levying excessive contributions. In the imperial city of Nuremberg, a bookseller, John P. Palm, was arrested by order of the French government; as five other publishers had also been arrested in other towns. Palm was dragged from his house to the fortress of Braunau, and he was there shot by the sentence of a French military commission. He had published a book calculated to rouse a national spirit in Germany, but which his captors described as seditious writings tending to excite the populations to insurrections against the French armies. The merciful tribunal at Braunau offered the publisher his pardon, if he would give up the author of the book. He refused; and he was murdered. A touching letter

which Palm wrote to his widow, a few hours before his execution on the 26th of August, was printed and extensively circulated in Germany. One yell of indignation rose against the foreign tyrant. There was another power rising up against Napoleon than the power of kings and cabinets—the power of opinion. The king of Prussia was compelled to yield to this power; and for a season he was crushed under the iron heel of the conqueror. He was tardily making up his mind to break his chains whilst lord Lauderdale was negotiating at Paris. Before the British envoy had quitted Paris, Napoleon had set off with the determination to cut short the vacillation of Prussia, by one blow which should destroy all the ascendancy which the House of Brandenburg had acquired since the days of Frederic the Great. England was no prompter in the contest for which Prussia was now preparing.

Compared with the mighty warlike operations over Germany during the autumn of 1806, the exertions of the British arms read like trifling episodes of a great epic. In November, 1805, a Prussian and British force had landed in Naples, without opposition by the Neapolitan court, which had professed neutrality whilst the war of the coalition of Austria and Russia against France was in progress. This was an opportunity for Napoleon. From his camp at Schönbrunn, on the 27th of December, 1806, he addressed a proclamation to an army appointed to enter Naples: "The Neapolitan dynasty has ceased to reign. Its existence is incompatible with the tranquillity of Europe and the honour of my crown. Soldiers! march; throw into the waves, if they wait for you, the weak battalions of the tyrant of the seas." His brother Joseph was at the head of this army. Napoleon in a few weeks wrote to this brother, "My will is that the Bourbons shall have ceased to reign at Naples. I intend to seat on that throne a prince of my own house. In the first place you, if it suits you."\* Whether it suited, or not, the command was sufficient; as it was sufficient for brother Louis, who was proclaimed king of Holland in June. Joseph entered the city of Naples on the 15th of February; the king withdrew to Palermo; and Joseph caused himself to be proclaimed king on the 30th of March. In Sicily there was a British army commanded by sir John Stuart. Sir Sidney Smith had the command of a squadron at Palermo. The people of Calabria were discontented under their French masters; and Stuart was urged by the court of Naples to render them assistance. He landed near the northern frontier of Lower Calabria on the 1st of July. The French general Reynier collected his forces, and directed them

\* "Letters of Napoleon to Joseph," vol. i. p. 74.

towards the place of disembarkation. "I wished to march immediately on the English, to throw them into the sea," he writes to king Joseph. The English did not wait upon the beach to be thrown into the sea. They marched to the interior, and on the 4th fought the battle of Maida,—a battle which has given a name to a district of London. It was quickly decided—not by cannon or musketry, but by the bayonet. Reynier has related his defeat with unusual candour. When within half-gun-shot of the English, which remained carrying arms, the drums of the French regiments beat the charge. On they rushed, as the English battalions opened their fire. "But," says Reynier, "when they had only fifteen steps to make in order to reach the enemy's line with the bayonet, and destroy it, the soldiers of the 1st regiment turned their backs and fled. Those of the 42nd perceived the movement; and, though they had only a few more steps to take, began to hesitate, and followed the example of the 1st. As soon as I perceived the flight of the 1st regiment I turned towards the second line, to charge with that, but the Poles were already in flight."\* It was all over. The slaughter of the flying French was terrific. There was an officer in Reynier's army, more known as a man of genius—one of the wittiest of pamphleteers after the Restoration of the Bourbons—Paul Louis Courier, who writes to a friend after this battle,—"the adventure is grievous for poor Reynier. We fought no-where. All eyes are upon us. With our good troops, and forces equal, to be beaten in a few minutes! Such a thing has not been seen since the Revolution."† The victory was decisive; but there were no permanent advantages from the victory. The Calabrian insurgents drove the French out of the province. But they returned after sir John Stuart had left; and there was a protracted and a cruel warfare of soldiery against peasantry, with the usual result of such unequal conflicts.

The news of the battle of Maida which reached London on the 2nd of September made the English pulse beat a little higher; but it did not produce half the excitement of the news of the taking of Buenos Ayres, which news arrived on the 13th. What did it matter to the eager hopes of commercial men that sir Home Popham had accomplished this great adventure without orders from home? He had commanded the naval force at the taking of the Dutch Settlement of the Cape of Good Hope in January—an important conquest, which, whether for good or for evil, we have retained ever since. The Spanish colonies on the Rio de la Plata were

\* Reynier to Joseph, July 5.

† "Œuvres de P. L. Courier," tome iv. p. 113 (Bruxelles, 1828).

considered to be ill-defended; and sir Home Popham determined to make a dash at a region reported to be so rich in treasure and merchandise, and so capable of affording a great opening to British commercial enterprise, that he would be justified in acting upon his own impulse. Having obtained from the general at the Cape the assistance of some troops, he arrived in June at the mouth of La Plata. Buenos Ayres was taken without opposition, with a great booty in the Treasury, and vast stores in the shipping on the river. The triumphant man sent home a circular addressed to the mercantile and manufacturing towns in Great Britain, which drove the speculators wild. Not the Scotch when they colonized Darien sent out such wonderful cargoes of goods as were sent in 1806. When the cargoes arrived Buenos Ayres had again changed masters. Under the command of a French colonel in the Spanish service, an attack was made on the British troops in the city; and after a sanguinary conflict they surrendered as prisoners of war. There was a more fatal termination of the South American enterprises in the following year. Thus it was, and thus it had been, from the commencement of the war in 1793. Year after year the armies of England were engaged in what the greatest of her commanders described as the most ruinous of systems—the carrying on “a little war.” Expeditions were again and again organized, to operate rather as distractions of the enemy than to produce any permanent impression upon the issue of the contest. Whilst Napoleon rapidly directed a great and overwhelming force upon one point, England was attempting enterprises in Europe, in Asia, in Africa, in America, some of which had a temporary success, others a lamentable failure; but in all of which the bravery of her troops amply proved what a large army of such men could do, if fairly brought to grapple even with the veterans of Marengo or Austerlitz. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, and for seven years before, vast as were the sums expended upon small achievements, the government of George III. could never “screw its courage to the sticking-place,” to conduct a war against the aggressions of the Republic and the ambition of Napoleon, upon a scale that might emulate the vigour with which the government of Anne conducted the war against the ambition of Louis the Fourteenth.

## CHAPTER XII.

Napoleon takes the field against Prussia.—Positions of the Prussian and French armies.—Battle of Jena.—The French enter Berlin.—The new Parliament meets.—Bill passed for the Abolition of the Slave Trade.—Proceedings which resulted in a change of Ministry.—A great Constitutional Question.—The new Administration.—Parliament dissolved.—Battle of Eylau.—Cold encouragement of England to the Allies.—Expeditions to various points.—Expedition to the Dardanelles.—Its failure, and that of other Turkish expeditions.—Expedition against Buenos Ayres.—Its lamentable results.—General Whitelock.—Meeting of the new Parliament.—Battle of Friedland.—Peace between Russia and France.—Treaty of Tilsit.—Secret articles of the Treaty become known to the British government.—The Danish fleet.—Expedition to Copenhagen.—Bombardment.—Surrender of the Fleet.

On the night of the 25th of September, Napoleon, accompanied by the empress, and by Talleyrand, left Paris. There was something more important to accomplish than remaining at the Tuileries for the mystification of lord Lauderdale. The French emperor proceeded with his usual rapidity to Mayence; and from Mayence to Wurtzbourg, where German potentates and German generals came to bow before his greatness. Around him was his army of a hundred and fifty thousand men, divided into nine corps. There were three Prussian armies, of which the principal army of fifty-five thousand men was commanded by the king in person, with his nephew, the duke of Brunswick, as his lieutenant-general. This was the famous general who advanced into France at the beginning of the Revolution, and raised a spirit in the people, that, begun in patriotism and a passion for liberty, degenerated into a passion for conquest. The duke was now seventy-one years of age. He had resigned the command of the Prussian and Austrian forces in 1793, and for thirteen years had been looking upon the great contests of Europe without taking any part in the struggle. The issue of one of the most tremendous conflicts of a time when the whole system of military tactics was changed, was now confided to a pupil of Frederick the Great. He was confronted with Napoleon, with Bernadotte, Davoust, Soult, Lannes, Ney, Augereau, Murat, Bessières, Lefebvre,—commanders who were formed in a school of warfare which, utterly disregarding the routine of the parade ground, and the systematic and slow manœuvres of a past time, rapidly concentrated large masses for the attack of an enemy, indifferent to the amount of carnage in their own ranks so that the