LETTER XXX.

Italian Campaign of 1797—Contest at La Favorita---Fall of Mantua—Popularity of Buonaparte—Proposes Terms to the Pope—Invades the Papal Territories—View of the Situation of the different Italian States—Rome—Naples—Tuscany—Venice—Napoleon compels the Archduke Charles to retreat—Conduct of Venice—Armistice between France and Austria—Treaty of Leoben signed—Buonaparte declares War against Venice, &c.

HOWEVER important might be the victory of Rivoli, with which my last letter concluded, it delivered Buonaparte from only a part of his enemies. Previous to his departure from Verona to Rivoli, he had been informed of the Austrian general Provera's success on the Lower Adige; and while defeating Alvinzi, he had good reason to apprehend that Provera would surmount every obstacle, and succeed in breaking through the blockade of Mantua. This would have accomplished the principal object of the Austrians, and counterbalanced the effect of the battle of Rivoli. To counteract this mischievous result, Buonaparte, without taking any repose himself, or allowing any to his troops, set out on the night of the 14th of January, 1797, to aid the blockade of Mantua, accompanied by part of the troops which had been engaged at Rivoli. He left at that place general Joubert, with orders to attack the Austrians, at Corona, on the following morning. To ensure the success of this enterprise, Joubert sent, during the night, a column which marched round Montebaldo, and which arrived at daybreak on the heights that commanded La Corona. It was posted there before the whole of the Austrian army arrived: it then attacked them with success, during its march, and took them in flank, while Joubert advanced directly against them. The Austrians, overpowered by fatigue, weakened by their losses, and discouraged by their disasters, opposed no very vigorous resistance. They were defeated, and lost a great number of prisoners. The rest continued their retreat, and took shelter in the defiles of the Tyrol.

Buonaparte arived at Roverbella, within twelve miles of Mantua, on the night of the 15th of January, with the reinforcements which he brought from the Upper Adige, and to his surprise learned that Provera had already sat down before the lines of the blockade of Mantua. The rapidity, however, with which the latter had prosecuted his march had subjected his army to many losses, so that when he arrived before St. George, he had not more than five thousand men under his command. He nevertheless communicated with the garrison of Mantua across the lake, and concerted with Wurmser measures for its relief. The latter, at an appointed time, marched out of the citadel before break of day, with nearly all the troops which he had in the garrison; he attacked and carried the post of St. Antonio, then proceeded to La Favorita, exerting all his energies to force the intrenchments and the enemy opposed to him. But the latter, reinforced by six thousand men under Massena, and now having an army of seventeen thousand strong, shut up within its lines, and protected by the fire of its works, repulsed Wurmser, prevented his farther advance, and compelled him, at the bayonet's point, to re-enter the besieged city of Mantua. In the mean time, general Miollis, who commanded at St. George, sallied out, and attacked Provera in front, while others attacked him in the rear, and though he defended himself for a long time with great skill and bravery, putting to death a great number of the French, his troops were at last overcome by fatigue, and compelled to capitulate. Thus one division of the Austrian army which had commenced the campaign on the 7th of January, had surrendered to Buonaparte before ten days had elapsed. Nor had the larger army under Alvinzi any better fortune. They were closely pursued from the ensanguined plains of Rivoli, and never permitted to draw breath or recover their disordered state. Large bodies were intercepted and compelled to surrender, a practice now become so familiar to the Austrians that it almost ceased to be

disgraceful. The crowning consequence of the victories of Rivoli and La Favorita was the surrender of Mantua itself, that prize which had cost so much blood, and had been defended with so much obstinacy.

For several days after the decisive actions which left him without a shadow of hope of relief, Wurmser continued the defence of the place in a sullen yet honourable despair, natural to the feelings of a gallant veteran, who, to the last, hesitated between the desire to resist, and the sense that, his means of subsistence being almost totally expended, resistance was absolutely hopeless. At length he sent his aid-de-camp, Klenau (afterward a name of celebrity), to the head-quarters of Serrurier, who commanded the blockade, to treat of a surrender. Klenau used the customary language on such occasions. He expatiated on the means which he said Mantua still possessed of holding out, but said, that as Wurmser doubted whether the place could be relieved in time, he would regulate his conduct as to immediate submission or farther defence, according to the conditions of surrender to which the French generals were willing to admit him.

A French officer of distinction was present, muffled in his cloak, and remaining apart from the two officers, but within hearing of what had passed. When their discussion was finished, this unknown person stepped forward, and taking a pen, wrote down the conditions of surrender to which Wurmser was to be admitted—conditions more honourable and favourable by far than what his extremity could have exacted. "These," said the unknown officer to Klenau, "are the terms which Wurmser may accept at present, and which will be equally tendered to him at any period when he finds farther resistance impossible. We are aware he is too much a man of honour to give up the fortress and city, so long and honourably defended, while the means of resistance remain in his power. If he delays accepting the conditions for a week, for a month, for two months, they shall be equally his when he chooses to accept them. To-morrow I pass the Po, and march upon Rome." Klenau, perceiving that he spoke to the French commander-in-chief, frankly admitted that the garrison could not longer delay to surrender, having scarce three days' provisions unconsumed.

This trait of generosity towards a gallant but unfortunate enemy was highly honourable to Buonaparte. The taste which dictated the stage-effect of the cloak may indeed be questioned; but the real current of his feeling towards the venerable object of his respect, and at the same time compassion, is ascertained otherwise. He wrote to the directory on the subject, that he had afforded to Wurmser such conditions of surrender as became the generosity of the French nation towards an enemy, who, having lost his army by misfortune, was so little desirous to secure his personal safety, that he threw himself into Mantua, cutting his way through the blockading army; thus voluntarily undertaking the privations of a siege, which his gallantry protracted until almost the last morsel of provisions was exhausted.

But the young victor paid a still more delicate and noble-minded compliment, in declining to be personally present when the veteran Wurmser had the mortification to surrender his sword, with his garrison of twenty thousand men, ten thousand of whom were fit for service. This self-denial did Napoleon as much credit nearly as his victory, and must not be omitted in a narrative, which, often called to stigmatize his ambition and its consequences, should not be the less ready to observe marks of dignified and honourable feeling. The history of this remarkable man more frequently reminds us of the romantic and improbable victories imputed to the heroes of the romantic ages, than of the spirit of chivalry attributed to them; but in this instance, Napoleon's conduct towards Wurmser may be justly compared to that of the Black Prince to his royal prisoner, king John of France. Serrurier, who had conducted the leaguer, had the honour to receive the surrender of Wurmser, after the siege of Mantua had continued for six months, during which the garrison is said by Napoleon to have lost twenty-seven thousand men by disease, and in the various numerous and bloody sallies which took place. This decisive event put an end to the war in Italy. The contest with Austria

long been the subject of ridicule, against the victorious conqueror of five Austrian armies, reminds us of Priam, when, in extremity of years and despair, he buckled on his rusty armour, to oppose age and decrepitude to the youthful strength of Pyrrhus. Yet the measures of Sextus indicated considerable energy. He brought back to Rome an instalment of sixteen millions of stipulated tribute, which was on the road to Buonaparte's military chest—took every measure to increase his army, and by the voluntary exertions of the noble families at Rome, he actually raised it to forty thousand men, and placed at its head the same general, Colli, who had commanded with credit the troops of Sardinia during the campaign on the Alps. The utmost pains were taken by the clergy, both regular and secular, to give the expected war the character of a crusade, and to excite the fierce spirit of those peasantry who inhabit the Apennines, and were doubly disposed to be hostile to the French, as foreigners and as heretics. The pope also endeavoured to form a close alliance with the king of the Two Sicilies, who promised in secret to cover Rome with an army of thirty thousand men. Little reliance was indeed to be placed in the good faith of the court of Naples; but the pope was compared, by the French envoy, to a man who, in the act of falling, would grasp for support at a hook of red-hot iron.

While the court of Rome showed this hostile disposition, Napoleon reproached the French government for having broken off the negotiation, which they ought to have protracted till the event of Alvinzi's march into Italy was known; at all events, until their general had obtained possession of the sixteen millions, so much wanted to pay his forces. In reply to his remonstrances, he received permission to renew the negotiations upon modified terms. But the pope had gone too far to recede. Even the French victory of Arcola, and the instant threats of Buonaparte to march against him at the head of a flying column, were unable to move his resolution. "Let the French general march upon Rome," said the papal minister; "the pope, if necessary, will quit his capital. The farther the French are drawn from the Adige, the nearer they are to their ultimate destruction." Napoleon was sensible on receiving a hostile answer, that the pope still relied on the last preparations which were made for the relief of Mantua, and it was not safe to attempt his chastisement until Alvinzi and Provera should be disposed of. But the decisive battles of Rivoli and La Favorita having ruined these armies, Napoleon was at leisure to execute his purpose of crushing the power, such as it was, of the holy see. For this purpose he despatched Victor with a French division of four thousand men, and an Italian army of nearly the same force supplied by Lombardy and the Transpadane republic, to invade the territories of the church on the eastern side of Italy, by the route of Imola. Meantime, the utmost exertions had been made by the clergy of Romagna, to raise the peasants in a mass, and a great many obeyed the sound of the tocsin. But an insurrectionary force is more calculated to embarrass the movements of a regular army, by alarms on their flanks and rear, by cutting off their communications and destroying their supplies, defending passes, and skirmishing in advantageous positions, than by opposing them in the open field. The papal army, consisting of about seven or eight thousand men, were encamped on the river Senio, which runs on the southward of the town of Imola, to dispute the passage. The banks were defended with cannon; but the river being unusually low, the French crossed about a league and a half higher up than the position of the Roman army, which, taken in the rear, fled in every direction, after a short resistance. A few hundreds were killed, among whom were several monks, who, holding the crucifix in their hand, had placed themselves in the ranks to encourage the soldiers. Faenza held out, and was taken by storm; but the soldiers were withheld from pillage by the generosity or prudence of Napoleon, and he dismissed the prisoners of war to carry into the interior of the country the news of their own defeat, of the irresistible superiority of the French army, and the clemency of their general. Next day, three thousand of the papal troops, occupying an advantageous position in front of Ancona, and commanded by Colli, were made prisoners

without firing a shot; and Ancona was taken after slight resistance, though a place of some strength. A curious piece of priestcraft had been played off in this town, to encourage the people to resistance. A miraculous image was seen to shed tears, and the French artists could not discover the mode in which the trick was managed until the image was brought to head-quarters, when a glass shrine, by which the illusion was managed, was removed. The Madonna was sent back to the church which owned her, but apparently had become reconciled to the foreign visiters, and dried her tears in consequence of an interview with Buonaparte.

On the 10th of February, the French, moving with great celerity, entered Loretta, where the celebrated Santa Cava is the subject of the Catholic's devotional triumph, or secret scorn, according as his faith or his doubts predominate. The wealth which this celebrated shrine is once supposed to have possessed by gifts of the faithful, had been removed by Colli—if, indeed, it had not been transported to Rome long before the period of which we treat; yet precious metals and gems to the amount of a million of livres fell into possession of the French, whose capture was also enriched by the holy image of our lady of Loretto, with the sacred porringer, and a bed-gown of dark-coloured camlet, warranted to have belonged to the blessed virgin. The image said to be of celestial workmanship, was sent to Paris, but was restored to the pope in 1802. We are not informed that any of the treasures were given back along with the Madonna, to whom they had been devoted.

As the French army advanced upon the Roman territory, there was a menace of the interference of the king of Naples, worthy to be mentioned, both as expressing the character of that court, and showing Napoleon's readiness in anticipating and defeating the arts of indirect diplomacy. The prince of Belmonte-Pignatelli, who attended Buonaparte's head-quarters, in the capacity perhaps of an observer, as much as of ambassador for Naples, came to the French general in secrecy, to show him, under strict confidence, a letter of the queen of the Two Sicilies, proposing to march an army of thirty thousand men towards Rome. "Your confidence shall be repaid," said Buonaparte, who at once saw through the spirit of the communication—"You shall know what I have long since settled to do in case of such an event taking place." He called for the port-folio containing the papers respecting Naples, and presented to the disconcerted prince the copy of a despatch written in November preceding, which contained this passage:—"The approach of Alvinzi would not prevent my sending six thousand men to chastise the court of Rome; but as the Neapolitan army might march to their assistance, I will postpone this movement till after the surrender of Mantua; in which case, if the king of Naples should interfere, I shall be able to spare twenty-five thousand men to march against his capital, and drive him over to Sicily." Prince Pignatelli was quite satisfied with the result of this mutual confidence, and there was no more said of Neapolitan armed interference.

From Ancona, the division commanded by Victor turned westward to Foligno, to unite itself with another column of French which penetrated into the territories of the church by Perugia, which they easily accomplished. Resistance seemed now unavailing. The pope in vain solicited his subjects to rise against the second Alaric, who was approaching the holy city. They remained deaf to his exhortations, though made in the names of the blessed virgin, and of the apostles Peter and Paul, who had of old been the visible protectors of the metropolis of the Christian world in a similar emergency. All was dismay and confusion in the patrimony of Saint Peter's, which was now the sole territory remaining in possession of his representative. But there was an unhappy class of persons, who had found shelter in Rome, rather than disown whose allegiance they had left their homes, and resigned their means of living. These were the recusant French clergy, who had refused to take the constitutional oath, and who now, recollecting the scenes which they witnessed in France, expected little else, than that, on the

approach of the republican troops, they would, like the Israelitish captain, be slain between the horns of the very altar at which they had taken refuge. It is said that one of their number, frantic at the thoughts of the fate which he supposed awaited them, presented himself to Buonaparte, announced his name and condition, and prayed to be led to instant death. Napoleon took the opportunity to show once more that he was acting on principles different from the brutal and persecuting spirit of jacobinism. He issued a proclamation, in which, premising that the recusant priests, though banished from the French territory, were not prohibited from residing in countries which might be conquered by the French arms, he declares himself satisfied with their conduct. The proclamation goes on to prohibit, under the most severe penalty, the French soldiery, and all other persons, from doing any injury to these unfortunate exiles. The convents are directed to afford them lodging, nourishment, and fifteen French livres (twelve shillings and sixpence British) monthly, to each individual, for which the priest was to compensate by saying masses *ad valorem*;—thus assigning the Italian convents payment for their hospitality, in the same coin with which they themselves requited the laity.

Perhaps this liberality might have some weight with the pope in inducing him to throw himself upon the mercy of France, as had been recommended to him by Buonaparte in a confidential communication through the superior of the monastic order of Camalduli, and more openly in a letter addressed to cardinal Mattei. The king of Naples made no movement to his assistance. In fine, after hesitating what course to take, and having had at one time his equipage ready harnessed to leave Rome and fly to Naples, the pontiff judged resistance and flight alike unavailing, and chose the humiliating alternative of entire submission to the will of the conqueror. It was the object of the directory entirely to destroy the secular authority of the pope, and to deprive him of all his temporalities. But Buonaparte foresaw, that whether the Roman territories were united with the new Cispadane republic, or formed into a separate state, it would alike bring on prematurely a renewal of the war with Naples, ere the north of Italy was yet sufficiently secure to admit the marching a French force into the southern extremities of the Italian peninsula, exposed to the descents of the English, and insurrections in the rear. These Napoleon foresaw would be the more dangerous and difficult to subdue, that, though he might strip the pope of his temporalities, he could not deprive him of the supremacy assigned him in spiritual matters by each Catholic; which, on the contrary, was, according to the progress of human feeling, likely to be more widely felt and recognised in favour of a wanderer and a sufferer for what would be accounted conscience sake, than of one who, submitting to circumstances, retained as much of the goods of this world as the clemency of his conqueror would permit.

Influenced by these considerations, Buonaparte admitted the pope to a treaty, which terminated in the peace of Tolentino, by which Sextus purchased such a political existence as was left to him, at the highest rate which he had the least chance of discharging. Napoleon mentions, as a curious instance of the crafty and unscrupulous character of the Neapolitans, that the same Pignatelli, whom we have already commemorated, attached himself closely to the plenipotentiaries during the whole treaty of Tolentino; and, in his ardour to discover whether there existed any secret article between the pope and Buonaparte which might compromise the interests of his master, was repeatedly discovered listening at the door of the apartment in which the discussions were carried on. The articles which the pope was obliged to accept at Tolentino, included the cession of Avignon and its territories, the appropriation of which, by France, had never yet been recognised; the resigning the legations of Bologna, Ferrara, and Romagna; the occupation of Ancona, the only port excepting Venice which Italy has in the Adriatic; the payment of thirty millions of livres, in specie or in valuable effects; the complete execution of the article in the armistice of Bologna respecting the delivery of paintings, manuscripts, and objects of art; and several other stipulations of similar severity. Buonaparte informs us, that it was a principal object in this treaty to compel the abolition of the inquisition, from which he had only departed in consequence of receiving information, that it had ceased to be used as a religious tribunal, and subsisted only as a court of police. The conscience of the pope seemed also so tenderly affected by the proposal, that he thought it safe to desist from it. The same despatch, in which Buonaparte informs the directory, that his committee of artist collectors "had made a good harvest of paintings in the papal dominions, and which, with the objects of art ceded by the pope, included almost all that was curious and valuable, excepting some few objects at Turin and Naples," conveyed to them a document of a very different kind. This was a respectful and almost reverential letter from Napoleon to the pope, recommending to his holiness to distrust such persons as might excite him to doubt the good intentions of France, assuring him that he would always find the republic most sincere and faithful, and expressing in his own name the perfect esteem and veneration which he entertained for the person of his holiness, and the extreme desire which he had to afford him proofs to that effect. This letter furnished much amusement at the time, and seemed far less to intimate the sentiments of a sans-culotte general, than those of a civilized highwayman of the old school of Macheath, who never dismissed the travellers whom he had plundered, without his sincere good wishes for the happy prosecution of their journey.

A more pleasing view of Buonaparte's character was exhibited about this time, in his conduct towards the little interesting republic of San Marino. That state, which only acknowledges the pope as a protector, not as a sovereign, had maintained for very many years an independence, which conquerors had spared either in contempt or in respect. It consists of a single mountain and a single town, and boasts about seven thousand inhabitants, governed by their own laws. Citizen Monge, the chief of the committee of collecting artists, was sent deputy to San Marino to knit the bands of amity between the two republics,—which might well resemble a union between Lilliput and Brobdignag. There were no pictures in the little republic; or they might have been a temptation to the citizen collector. The people of San Marino conducted themselves with much sagacity; and although more complimentary to Buonaparte than Diogenes to Alexander the Great, when he came to visit the philosopher in his tub, they showed the same judgment in eschewing too much courtesy. They respectfully declined an accession of territory, which could but have involved them in subsequent quarrels with the sovereign from whom it was to be wrested, and only accepted as an honorary gift the present of four field-pieces, being a train of artillery upon the scale of their military force, and of which, it is to be hoped, the captain regents of the little contented state will never have any occasion to make use.

Rome might, for the present at least, be considered as completely subjugated. Naples was at peace, if the signature of a treaty can create peace. At any rate, so distant from Rome, and so controlled by the defeat of the papal arms—by the fear that the English fleet might be driven from the Mediterranean—and by their distance from the scene of action—the king of the Two Sicilies, or rather his wife, the high-spirited daughter of Maria Theresa, dared not offer the least interference with the purposes of the French general. Tuscany had apparently consented to owe her political existence to any degree of clemency or contempt which Buonaparte might extend to her; and, entertaining hopes of some convention between the French and the English, by which the grand duke's port of Leghorn might be restored to him, remained passive as the dead. The republic of Venice alone, feeling still the stimulus arising from her ancient importance, and yet painfully conscious of her present want of power, strained every exertion to place herself in a respectable attitude. That city of lofty remembrances, the Tyre of the middle ages, whose traders were princes, and her merchants the honourable of the earth, fallen as she was from her former greatness, still presented some appearance of vigour. Her oligarchical government, so

was hereafter to be waged on the hereditary dominions of that haughty power.

The French, possessed of this grand object of their wishes, were not long in displaying their national characteristics. Their military and prescient sagacity were evinced in employing one of their most celebrated engineers, to improve, and bring nearly to perfection, the defence of a city which may be termed the citadel of Italy. They set afoot, besides civic feasts and ceremonies, and among others, one in honour of Virgil, who, being the panegyrist of an emperor, was indifferently selected as the presiding genius of an infant republic. Their cupidity was evinced by their artists' exercising their ingenuity in devising means to cut from the wall and carry off the fresco paintings, by Titian, of the wars between the gods and the giants, at all risks of destroying what could never be replaced. Luckily, the attempt was found totally unadvisable.

The eyes of all Europe were now riveted on Napoleon Buonaparte, whose rise had been so sudden that he had become the terror of empires and the founder of states; the conqueror of the best generals and most disciplined troops in Europe, within a few months after he had been a mere soldier of fortune, seeking rather for a subsistence than expecting honourable distinction. Such sudden elevations have occasionally happened amid semi-barbarous nations, where great popular insurrections, desolating and decisive revolutions, are common occurrences, but were hitherto unheard of in civilized Europe.

The pre-eminence which he had suddenly obtained had, besides, been subjected to so many trials, as to afford every proof of its permanence. Napoleon stood aloft like a cliff on which successive tempests had expended their rage in vain. The means which raised him were equally competent to make good his greatness. He had infused into the armies which he commanded the firmest reliance on his genius, and the greatest love for his person; so that he could always find agents ready to execute his most difficult commands. He had even inspired them with a portion of his own indefatigable exertion and his commanding intelligence. The maxim which he inculcated upon them when practising those long and severe marches which formed one essential part of his system, was, "I would rather gain victory at the expense of your legs than at the price of your blood." The French, under his training, seemed to become the very men he wanted, and to forget, in the excitation of war and the hope of victory, even the feelings of weariness and exhaustion. The following description of the French soldier by Napoleon himself occurs in his despatches to the directory during his first campaign in Italy:—

"Were I to name all those who have been distinguished by acts of personal bravery, I must send the muster-roll of all the grenadiers and carabineers of the advanced-guard. They jest with danger and laugh at death; and if any thing can equal their intrepidity, it is the gayety with which, singing alternately songs of love and patriotism, they accomplish the most severe forced marches. When they arrive at their bivouac, it is not to take their repose, as might be expected, but to tell each his story of the battle of the day, and produce his plan for that of to-morrow; and many of them think with great correctness on military subjects. The other day I was inspecting a demi-brigade, and as it filed past me, a common chasseur approached my horse, and said, 'General, you ought to do so and so.' 'Hold your peace, you rogue!' I replied. He disappeared immediately, nor have I since been able to find him out. But the manœuvre which he recommended was the very same which I had privately resolved to carry into execution."

To command this active, intelligent, and intrepid soldiery, Buonaparte possessed officers entirely worthy of the charge; men young, or at least not advanced in years, to whose ambition the revolution, and the wars which it had brought on, had opened an unlimited career, and whose genius was inspired by the plans of their leader, and the success which attended them. Buonaparte, who had his eye on every man, never neglected to distribute rewards and punishments, praise and censure, with a liberal hand, or omitted to press for what latterly was rarely if ever denied to him—the promotion of

such officers as particularly distinguished themselves. He willingly assumed the task of soothing the feelings of those whose relatives had fallen under his banners. His letter of consolation to general Clarke, upon the death of young Clarke his nephew, who fell at Arcola, is affecting, as showing that amid all his victories he felt himself the object of reproach and criticism. His keen sensitiveness to the attacks of the public press attended him through life, and, like the slave in the triumphal car, seemed to remind him that he was still a mortal man.

It should farther be remarked, that Napoleon withstood, instantly and boldly, all the numerous attempts made by commissaries, and that description of persons, to encroach upon the fund destined for the use of the army. Much of his public and more of his private correspondence is filled with complaints against these agents, although he must have known that, in attacking them, he disobliged men of the highest influence, who had frequently some secret interest in their wealth. But his military fame made his services indispensable, and permitted him to set at defiance the enmity of such persons, who are generally as timid as they are sordid. Buonaparte's former patron, Barras, was supposed to be accessible to this species of corruption.

Towards the general officers there took place a gradual change of deportment, as the commander-in-chief began to feel gradually, more and more, the increasing sense of his own importance. It has been said by an officer of the highest rank, that, during the earlier campaigns, Napoleon used to rejoice with and embrace them as associates, nearly on the same footing, engaged in the same tasks. After a period, his language and carriage became those of a frank soldier, who, sensible of the merit of his subordinate assistants, yet makes them sensible, by his manner, that he is their commander-in-chief. When his infant fortunes began to come of age, his deportment to his generals was tinctured with that lofty courtesy which princes use towards their subjects, and which plainly intimated, that he held them as subjects in the war, not as brethren.

Napoleon's conduct towards the Italians individually was, in most instances, in the highest degree prudent and political, while, at the same time, it coincided, as true policy usually does, with the rules of justice and moderation, and served in a great measure to counterbalance the odium which he incurred by despoiling Italy of the works of art, and even by his infringements on the religious system of the Catholics. On the latter subject, the general became particularly cautious, and his dislike or contempt of the church of Rome was no longer shown in that gross species of satire which he had at first given loose to. On the contrary, it was veiled under philosophical indifference; and, while relieving the clergy of their worldly possessions, Napoleon took care to avoid the error of the jacobins; never proposing their tenets as an object of persecution, but protecting their persons, and declaring himself a decided friend to general toleration on all points of conscience.

In a letter addressed publicly to Oriani, a celebrated astronomer, he assures him that all men of genius, all who had distinguished themselves in the republic of letters, were to be accounted natives of France, whatever might be the actual place of their birth. "Hitherto," he said, "the learned in Italy did not enjoy the consideration to which they were entitled—they lived retired in their laboratories and libraries, too happy if they could escape the notice, and consequently the persecution, of kings and priests. It is now no longer thus—there is no longer religious inquisition, nor despotic power. Thought is free in Italy. I invite the literary and scientific persons to consult together, and propose to me their ideas on the subject of giving new vigour and life to the fine arts and sciences. All who desire to visit France will be received with distinction by the government. The people of France have more pride in enrolling among their citizens a skilful mathematician, a painter of reputation, a distinguished man in any class of literature, than in adding to their territories a large and wealthy city. I request, sir, that you will make my sentiments known to the most distinguished literary persons in the state of Milan." To the municipality of Pavia he wrote, desiring that the profes-

sors of their celebrated university should resume their course of instruction under the security of his protection, and inviting them to point out to him such measures as might occur, for giving a more brilliant existence to their ancient seminaries.

It must be remembered, that Napoleon had engaged in treaty with the duke of Modena, and had agreed to guarantee his principality, on payment of immense contributions in money and stores, besides the surrender of the most valuable treasures of his museum. In consequence, the duke of Modena was permitted to govern his states by a regency, he himself fixing his residence in Venice. But his two principal towns, Reggio and Modena, especially the former, became desirous of shaking off his government. Anticipating in doing so the approbation of the French general and government, the citizens of Reggio rose in insurrection, expelled from their town a body of the ducal troops, and planted the tree of liberty, resolved, as they said, to constitute themselves a free state, under the protection of the French republic. The ducal regency, with a view of protecting Modena from a similar attempt, mounted cannon on the ramparts, and took other defensive measures.

Buonaparte affected to consider these preparations as designed against the French; and marching a body of troops, took possession of the city without resistance, deprived the duke of all the advantages which he had purchased by the mediation of the celebrated Saint Jerome, and declared the town under protection of France. Bologna and Ferrara, legations belonging to the papal see, had been already occupied by French troops, and placed under the management of a committee of their citizens. They were now encouraged to coalesce with Reggio and Modena. A congress of a hundred delegates from the four districts was summoned, to effect the formation of a government, which should extend over them all. The congress met accordingly, engaged their constituents in a perpetual union, under the title of the Cispadane republic, from their situation on the right of the river Po; thus assuming the character of independence, while in fact they remained under the authority of Buonaparte, like clay in the hands of the potter, who may ultimately model it into any shape he has a mind. In the mean time, he was careful to remind them, that the liberty which it was desirable to establish ought to be consistent with due subjection to the laws. "Never forget," he said, in reply to their address announcing their new form of government, "that laws are mere nullities without the force necessary to support them. Attend to your military organization, which you have the means of placing on a respectable footing—you will be more fortunate than the people of France, for you will arrive at liberty without passing through the ordeal of revolution."

Meantime, the Lombards became impatient at seeing their neighbours outstrip them in the path of revolution, and of nominal independence. The municipality of Milan proceeded to destroy all titles of honour, as a badge of feudal dependence, and became so impatient, that Buonaparte was obliged to pacify them by a solemn assurance that they should speedily enjoy the benefits of a republican constitution; and to tranquillize their irritation, placed them under the government of a provincial council, selected from all classes, labourers included. This measure made it manifest, that the motives which had induced the delay of the French government to recognise the independence (as they termed it) of Lombardy, were now of less force; and in a short time, the provisional council of Milan, after some modest doubts on their own powers, revolutionized their country, and assumed the title of the Transpadane republic, which they afterward laid aside, when, on their union with the Cispadane, both were united under the name of the Cisalpine commonwealth. This decisive step was adopted the 3d of January, 1797. Decrees of a popular character had preceded the declaration of independence, but an air of moderation was observed in the revolution itself. The nobles, deprived of their feudal rights and titular dignities, were subjected to no incapacities; the reformation of the church was touched upon gently, and without indicating any design of its destruction. In these particulars, the Italian commonwealths stopped short of their Gallic prototype.

If Buonaparte may be justly charged with want of faith, in destroying the

authority of the duke of Modena, after having accepted of a price for granting him peace and protection, we cannot object to him the same charge for acceding to the Transpadane republic, in so far as it detached the legations of Ferrara and Bologna from the Roman see. These had been in a great measure reserved for the disposal of the French, as circumstances should dictate, when a final treaty should take place between the republic and the sovereign pontiff. But many circumstances had retarded this pacification, and seemed at length likely to break it off without hope off renewal. If Buonaparte is correct in his statement, which we see no reason to doubt, the delay of a pacification with the Roman see was chiefly the fault of the directory, whose avaricious and engrossing spirit was at this period its most distinguishing characteristic. An armistice, purchased by treasure, by contributions, by pictures and statues, and by the cession of the two legations of Bologna and Ferrara, having been mediated for his holiness by the Spanish ambassador Azara, the pope sent two plenipotentiaries to Paris to treat of a definitive peace. But the conditions proposed were so severe, that however desperate his condition, the pope found them totally inadmissible. His holiness was required to pay a large contribution in grain for ten years, a regular tribute of six millions of Roman crowns for six years, to cede to France in perpetuity the ports of Ancona and Civita Vecchia, and to declare the independence of Ferrara, Bologna, and Ravenna. To add insult to oppression, the total cession of the Clementine museum was required, and it was stipulated that France should have, under management of her minister at Rome, a separate tribunal for judging her subjects, and a separate theatre for their amusement. Lastly, the secular sovereignty of the dominions of the church was to be executed by a senate and a popular body. These demands might have been complied with, although they went the length of entirely stripping his holiness of the character of a secular prince; but there were others made on him, in capacity of head of the church, which he could not grant, if he meant in future to lay claim to any authority under that once venerable title. The sovereign pontiff was required to recall all the briefs which he had issued against France since 1789, to sanction the constitutional oath which released the French clergy from the dominion of the holy see, and to ratify the confiscation of the church-lands. Treasures might be expended, secular dignities resigned, and provinces ceded; but it was clear that the sovereign pontiff could not do what was expressly contrary to the doctrines of the church which he represented. There were but few clergymen in France who had hesitated to prove their devotion to the church of Rome, by submitting to expulsion, rather than take the constitutional oath. It was now for the head of the church to show in his own person a similar disinterested devotion to her interests. Accordingly, the college of cardinals having rejected the proposals of France, as containing articles contrary to conscience, the pope declared his determination to abide by the utmost extremity, rather than accede to conditions destructive, degrading, and, in his opinion, impious. The directory instantly determined on the total ruin of the pope, and of his power, both spiritual and temporal.

Napoleon dissented from the opinion of the government. In point of moral effect, a reconciliation with the pope would have been of great advantage to France, and have tended to reunite her with other Catholic nations, and diminish the horror with which she was regarded as sacrilegious and atheistical. Even the army of the holy see was not altogether to be despised, in case of any reverse taking place in the war with the Austrians. Under these considerations, he prevailed on the directory to renew the negotiations at Florence. But the French commissioners, having presented as preliminaries sixty indispensable conditions, containing the same articles which had been already rejected, as contrary to the conscience of the pontiff, the conferences broke up; and the pope, in despair, resolved to make common cause with the house of Austria, and have recourse to the secular force, which the Roman see had disused for so many years. It was a case of dire necessity; but the arming of the pope's government, whose military force had