

the test of arms. An English fleet, consisting of eighteen ships of the line, four frigates, and a number of bomb-vessels and gun-boats, having on board some regiments of marines and riflemen, was accordingly sent to the Baltic, under the command of admiral Parker and vice-admiral Nelson. Great preparations, on the other hand, were made to guard the passage of the sound on both the Danish and Swedish sides, and to protect all the approaches to Copenhagen. On the 30th of March, the British fleet passed that strait without much opposition, and anchored near the isle of Huen. The whole fleet of Denmark was from thence seen stationed in the road of Copenhagen, flanked by very powerful batteries. On this formidable force the attack was committed to lord Nelson, at his own request; and on the 2d of April it took place, with twelve ships of the line, and all the frigates and smaller vessels of the fleet. The action, which was maintained on both sides with extraordinary bravery, was very sanguinary. During its continuance, lord Nelson, perceiving his success to be certain, and regretting the loss of so many brave men, sent a proposal to the crown-prince of Denmark to cease hostilities, and landed personally to adjust the terms of conciliation. At this period, the whole of the Danish line to the southward of the Crown islands, consisting of seventeen sail, were sunk, or burnt, or taken. Three of the English ships of the line, which had grounded, were exposed to the fire of the crown batteries—a circumstance which, no doubt, quickened lord Nelson's efforts to put an end to the carnage. From his own account, the battle of Copenhagen was the most dreadful that he had ever witnessed.

The succeeding armistice terminated hostilities in the Baltic; for an event had already taken place which altered the whole state of affairs in the north of Europe. The emperor Paul, whose conduct sufficiently indicated insanity, and who was become intolerable to his subjects, and dangerous to those about him, was hurled from his throne by the only mode of deposition practicable under a despotic monarchy! On the 22d of March it was officially announced, that he was *found dead in his bed*. His son Alexander succeeded him in the throne, and immediately on his accession declared for the laws and institutions of his august grandmother. One of his first acts was to liberate and bring back from their places of confinement all the British sailors belonging to the sequestered ships. Negotiations were entered into with the court of London, and on the 17th of June a convention was signed at Petersburg by lord St. Helens and the Russian ministers, in which all disputes were adjusted. The courts of Denmark and Sweden also acceded to the same amicable compact, by which were obtained a limitation and explicit definition of the right of search and the principle of blockade, together with a reduction of articles considered as contraband of war, to those of real military or naval ammunition. The Danish troops evacuated Hamburg; the navigation of the German rivers was restored; and the court of Berlin engaged to evacuate Bremen and Hanover, after certain arrangements had been made.

During the progress of these military achievements, changes of an extraordinary and very important nature had been taking place in the domestic affairs of Great Britain. The first imperial parliament was opened by commission on the 22d of January, when the house of commons re-elected Mr. Addington for their speaker. But the most memorable occurrence with which the year was ushered in, was that of a change in the British ministry. After an administration of seventeen years, Mr. Pitt gave in his resignation, which was followed by that of lord Grenville, earl Spencer, the lord-chancellor, Mr. Dundas, and Mr. Windham. They were succeeded by Mr. Addington as the successor of Mr. Pitt; lord Eldon was appointed to the office of lord-chancellor; earl St. Vincent to that of first lord of the admiralty; lord Hawkesbury was made secretary of state for foreign affairs; lord Pelham succeeded to the home department; and colonel York was made secretary at war. But before the new ministers could regularly enter on their respective offices, his majesty was seized with a return of his indisposition, which, under the name of a fever, was announced on the 16th of February, and did not entirely give way till the middle of March.

The breaking up of a ministry at such a critical time naturally engaged the attention of parliament; and on February the 10th, a motion by lord Darnley, for an inquiry into the conduct of his majesty's ministers, was taken into consideration. Lord Grenville, on that occasion, stated the failure of their intentions in favour of the Catholics to have been their inducement to resign their places, which they now held only till their successors were appointed. At the earnest request of several peers, lord Darnley postponed his motion. In the house of commons, on the same day, a letter was read from Mr. Addington, tendering the resignation of his office of speaker, on account of his majesty's declared intention of appointing him to a situation incompatible with that post. The election of a new speaker accordingly followed, in which the choice fell upon sir John Mitford, the attorney-general.

While these things were transacting at home, Egypt became a splendid theatre of British glory. Mr. Pitt and his colleagues in office had refused to ratify the treaty of El-Arish, which was much censured by many as a very impolitic measure; but it afforded to the British troops the opportunity of acquiring immortal renown. A formidable armament was despatched from England, under the command of admiral Keith and sir Ralph Abercrombie, in order to effect, at an immense expenditure of blood and treasure, the expulsion of the French from Egypt, which sir Sidney Smith would, by the convention of El-Arish, have achieved without contest or cost.

The British land-forces consisted of more than sixteen thousand men, with whom a body of troops from India was to co-operate by the way of the Red Sea and the isthmus of Suez. On the 1st of March the fleet arrived off Alexandria, and on the following day, anchored in the bay of Aboukir. Till the 7th the sea ran so high as to render the disembarkation of the troops impracticable; but on that day the first division made good their landing, in the face of a body of French advantageously posted, and under a heavy fire of grape-shot. Although the front of the landing place was narrow, and commanded by a hill on which the French had taken their position, and which appeared almost inaccessible, the British troops advanced with the greatest intrepidity, and forced the enemy to retire and leave behind them seven pieces of artillery, and a number of horses. On the 12th the whole army moved forward, and came within sight of the French, who were advantageously posted on a ridge between the canal of Alexandria and the sea.

The British general being determined to commence the attack on the following day, the army marched in two lines, by the left, with an intention of turning the right flank of the enemy. His design, however, was anticipated by the French commander, who, descending with his army from the heights on which they were formed, attacked the leading brigades of both lines, which were consequently obliged to change their position. In this action the English had a superiority of numbers, as only one division of the enemy's army was engaged, but the advantages of position were on the side of the French. After a severe conflict, victory declared in favour of the English, though not without considerable loss.

The British army now followed up its success with extraordinary vigour; and on the 21st of March was fought the memorable battle of Alexandria, at a distance of about four miles from that city. The French troops were under the command of general Menou, whose dispositions were excellent, but whose precipitancy in resolving on an attack under existing circumstances has been thought injudicious. With the advantages which he possessed in point of position, having the city of Alexandria in his rear, his part was to act defensively, since the British general could not, from his situation, have long delayed offensive measures. Had Menou waited only forty-eight hours, general Abercrombie had intended to make an assault by night, which probably would have been the most difficult and dangerous ever hazarded. But the die was cast—the case was desperate. It was necessary to make the attempt or abandon the enterprise; and in the latter case the English might have been attacked during their re-embarkation. The French general, however, by his precipitancy, lost all the advantages arising from his situation,

and freed the English from the necessity of making a hazardous attack on his camp.

The action commenced in the morning before daylight, by a feigned attack on the left of the English, in which the French were repulsed. But the most vigorous efforts of the enemy were directed against the right of the British army, which they endeavoured to turn. The attack on that point was made with great impetuosity by the French infantry, supported by a strong body of cavalry, who charged in a column. The contest was extremely obstinate; but the French were twice repulsed, and ultimately thrown into confusion. At the same time a column of their infantry attempted to penetrate the centre of the British army, but was repulsed and obliged to retreat. A corps of light troops, supported by infantry and cavalry, also advanced to keep in check the left of the English, which was the weakest part of their line; but all the efforts of the enemy were in vain. Victory at length declared completely in favour of the English, who remained masters of the field, with the loss of nearly two thousand men killed, wounded, and missing. The loss of the French was computed at double that number.

In this action, the famous invincible standard of the French, which has been so much the subject of conversation, was taken by Anthony Luty, a private in the regiment of Minorca. But the glory gained by the British troops was dearly purchased by the loss of their general. In the heat of the battle, the gallant Abercrombie was attacked by some French cavalry, and thrown from his horse. One of them, supposed from the tassel of his sword to have been an officer, made a blow at him; but while the sword was falling, the general seized it, and wrested it from his hand. At that instant the officer was attacked by a soldier of the forty-second regiment, who plunged his bayonet into him. General Abercrombie was wounded in the thigh, but was unconscious of it at the time. At first he complained merely of a contusion in the breast, supposed to have been occasioned by the fall from his horse, or given by the hilt of the sword in the scuffle with the French officer. Sir Sidney Smith was the first British officer who came up to sir Ralph Abercrombie. He had broken his own sword, which sir Ralph perceiving, he instantly presented him with that which he had wrested from the Frenchman. The gallant general continued to command, till weakness, proceeding from the effusion of blood, rendered it necessary to convey him off the field, and he died on the 28th, just a week after the battle had taken place. Seldom has a commander fallen more gloriously, or more regretted by his army, than general Abercrombie. His death in all respects corresponded with the uniform tenor of his life. He closed a military career which, in America, in Belgium, and in Holland, had been distinguished by consummate skill in command, and the most brilliant exploits. In the engagement in which Abercrombie fell, general Moore was also dangerously wounded. On the same melancholy occasion three of the French generals lost their lives.

The command of the British army in Egypt now devolved on general Hutchinson, who nobly perfected the work which his gallant predecessor had commenced. The situation to which he succeeded was certainly arduous. The French were defeated, but they had lost no ground; they were still in great force, both at Alexandria and Cairo; and the whole of Egypt was still in their possession. The British general lost no time in proceeding to Alexandria, where the principal force of the enemy was concentrated. In order to facilitate the blockade, it was found necessary, on the 13th of April, to cut the famous canal of Alexandria, and let the waters of the sea into the lake Mareotis. In the interim the town and castle of Rosetta were taken by a division of the British army under colonel Spencer, aided by a body of Turks. The French garrison offered but a feeble resistance, and retired across the Nile. The English and Turkish forces then proceeded to attack the enemy near Ramaniah, where they defeated them and drove them towards Cairo, and on the following day the place surrendered to the English troops.

General Hutchinson now proceeded to the reduction of Cairo, rather than to commence the siege of Alexandria, and commenced his march towards that

city. In the mean time, colonel Lloyd, with a detachment of troops from Bombay, arrived at Suez, and after suffering excessively from the heat in crossing the desert, a distance of more than sixty miles, arrived on the 10th of June at the camp of the grand vizier.

About the middle of June, general Hutchinson, with the army under his command, arrived in the vicinity of Cairo. The captain pacha, at the same time, posted himself at Gizah, on the opposite side of the Nile; and the grand vizier took a position within cannon-shot of the city. Cairo being thus completely invested, a flag of truce was sent from the garrison to the British camp, and, after a negotiation of several days' continuance, on the 27th of June the terms of surrender were agreed on, between the French general Beliard and general Hutchinson. The substance of the capitulation was, that the French army in Cairo, with all the private property of the officers and men, should be conveyed in ships of the allied powers, and at their expense, to the nearest French ports in the Mediterranean; and general Menou, who commanded in Alexandria, was to be at liberty to avail himself of this convention. Surprise has been expressed, that a garrison which consisted of nearly fourteen thousand men, including Greeks, Copts, Mamelukes, and French, did not resolve to stand a siege; but the reason assigned is that of the discontents that prevailed among them. The French troops displayed their wonted valour on various occasions in Egypt; but they had no desire to remain in the country.

While these things were pending in Egypt, an army under the command of general Baird arrived from India, by the way of the Red Sea, and was joined by a small force from the cape of Good Hope, under the command of sir Home Popham, sir Roger Curtis, colonel Carruthers, and others. Hearing of the successes of the British troops, general Baird landed at Coseir on the 8th of June, with a force of seven thousand five hundred men, and proceeded across the desert to Kinneh, a distance of a hundred and twenty miles. From Kinneh, where they arrived on the 30th of June, they proceeded to Egypt, to join the English troops and assist in its reduction.

The convention of Cairo not being acceded to by general Menou, the combined British and Turkish armies, on the 17th of August, commenced the siege of Alexandria; and on the 1st of September, the garrison, consisting of ten thousand men, French, Syrians, and Greeks, surrendered on the conditions of the capitulation of Cairo. Alexandria was defended by three hundred and twelve pieces of cannon, and seventy-seven more were found on board the ships of war in the harbour. In the magazines were found fourteen thousand one hundred and two cartridges, and one hundred and ninety-five thousand two hundred and eighteen pounds of powder in barrels. But notwithstanding these means of defence, general Menou soon perceived that it was impossible, without succours from France, to make an effectual resistance. In his circumstances, therefore, to have exposed his troops to the effects of a long siege or a murderous assault, would have been nothing less than a useless sacrifice of the lives of men who had suffered so many hardships in the service of their country. While, therefore, it is only an act of justice to acknowledge the bravery of general Menou, and of the troops under his command, we must, on military principles, justify his conduct in the surrender of the city.

Thus terminated this celebrated expedition, in which the British troops acquired great glory, and sustained less loss than might have been expected, from the circumstances of their not being inured to the climate, and from the strength of the enemy. Humanity, indeed, mourns over the effusion of so much blood and the expenditure of so much money, in this expedition, when we recollect that the French army evacuated Egypt on nearly the same conditions as had been stipulated at El-Arish. In justification, however, of the British ministers who had refused to ratify that convention, it must be observed, that the stipulations of El-Arish tended only to remove the French army from Egypt, and to place it in Italy, where it might have immediately proceeded to act against the Austrians, who were the allies of England.

It should be kept in mind, that when general Menou capitulated, circumstances were changed; a treaty of peace was concluded between Austria and France; and Russia had declared herself hostile to Great Britain. It was therefore no longer necessary to prevent the return of the French army to Europe.

Before we dismiss the narrative of the year 1801, it will be necessary to glance at the naval warfare that was still maintained between England and France.

An important action took place on the 6th of July, off the coast of Spain, between sir James Saumarez and a squadron of French and Spanish ships of war. The British admiral, in a previous engagement with three French ships of the line, had the misfortune to lose the Hannibal, which, having run aground within reach of one of the land batteries, was obliged to be left in the hands of the enemy. But on the 12th of July, he succeeded in bringing them to action, together with five Spanish ships of the line that had joined them; and his intrepid conduct and good fortune procured him a compensation for his former disaster. The admiral came up with them about eleven o'clock at night; and a fatal mistake of the enemy soon decided the contest. In the darkness and confusion that prevailed, the Spanish ships fired upon each other. One of them, the Real Carlos, of one hundred and twelve guns, took fire, and blew up with a dreadful explosion. Another, of the same rate, mistaking her for an enemy, ran on board her, and shared the same melancholy fate; while the San Antonio, of seventy-four guns and seven hundred and thirty men, being unsupported, was obliged to strike to the British flag. The rest of the ships immediately crowded all the sail they could carry, and before daybreak had made a successful retreat.

The project of destroying the enemy's ships at Boulogne was not yet abandoned, and another expedition, under the command of admiral Nelson, was fitted out for that purpose. His lordship found twenty-four vessels of the enemy's flotilla anchored in a line before the mouth of the harbour; and on the 4th of August, the wind being favourable, he made the signal for battle, giving orders to direct the bombs not against the town but against the shipping. This, however, like all other expeditions of ours to the coast of France, even in the hands of Nelson, had an unsuccessful issue. After a severe engagement, the admiral was obliged to retreat with the loss of about one hundred and twenty men.

France being now set free from her continental war by the treaty of Luneville, naturally directed her arms and resources against her only remaining enemy; and the invasion of England became the leading object of policy pursued by her government throughout a great part of the present year. Encampments were formed and occupied on the coasts of France and Flanders; a large combined fleet of French and Spanish ships of war was collected in the harbour of Brest; and every effort was made to restore the French navy, and equip in different ports a great number of vessels fitted for the purpose of landing men. On the other hand, these menaces were met in England by suitable preparations, and a spirit fully answerable to the danger. A circular letter from the home secretary of state to the lord-lieutenants of counties was issued in July, intimating to commanding officers of the various bodies of cavalry and infantry, the necessity of keeping their corps in a state of constant preparation for immediate service; and particularly recommending that they should frequently be assembled for military exercise. The naval force of the empire, which surpassed that of any former period, was disposed in such a manner as to keep the closest watch on the movements of the enemy, and blockade all their principal ports. In the English channel, a petty war was maintained, chiefly between cruisers and gun-boats, the latter of which were frequently intercepted as they attempted to steal from port to port along the French coast. But this petty warfare is too insignificant for the page of history.

A vigorous effort was made at this time by the rulers of France, to detach Portugal from her connexion with great Britain; and in the month of March,

the court of Madrid, stimulated by the French, under the pretext of an affront, declared war against Portugal. Accordingly, in May a Spanish army of forty thousand men, headed by the prince of the peace, entered Portugal, and in a short time reduced all the strong places in the province of Alentejo. Scarcely any resistance was made; and it has therefore been supposed, that there was a secret understanding between the two courts. On the 6th of June, preliminaries of peace were signed at Badajoz, by which the fortress and district of Olivenza were ceded to Spain, and the ports of Portugal shut against the English. The French government refused to concur in this treaty, on the ground that it was contrary to a convention between them and Spain, a condition of which was, that peace should not be made with Portugal, unless certain places in that country were allowed to be occupied by French troops till a general peace. The result was that a French army entered Portugal from Salamanca, and invested the town and fort of Almeida. To animate the exertions of Portugal in their defence against French aggression, a subsidy was granted them by England. They found it expedient, however, in a short time to negotiate; and a definitive treaty was concluded at Madrid on the 29th of September, by which all the territory of Portugal was preserved, but some extension was given to French Guiana out of its American possessions. During this contest, an expedition was despatched from England to take possession of the island of Madeira, in order to secure it to the crown of Portugal.

The ministers of his Britannic majesty were now occupied with deliberations on the subject of peace. The dissolution of the northern confederacy, and the expulsion of the French from Egypt, had removed the most powerful obstacles to peace. The war between France and England was now without any adequate object; each country appearing to stand firm on its own basis, without the power of effecting any material alteration in the condition of the other. The new administration, consequently, had the prudence not to neglect the opportunity which these circumstances presented. Negotiations were commenced and carried on for some time with a degree of secrecy, between M. Otto, who still resided in London, and lord Hawkesbury; and on the 1st of October, the preliminaries were signed. The tidings of this event were received by the people of both countries with extraordinary indications of joy. They now hoped to be relieved from the accumulating burdens under which they had so long laboured; and a spirit of mutual amity between two nations, which, though habitually political enemies, have always retained much private respect for each other, seemed at once to be restored. This pacification was soon followed by treaties between France and the Ottoman Porte, and also between France and Russia. A concordat was likewise entered into between the French republic and the pope, the substance of which was not made public in France till the following year.

The war which was thus brought to a close, will stand fatally distinguished in history for the formidable armies that were brought into the field; the extensive combinations of military plans; the numerous and sanguinary contests that took place; the prodigious destruction of the human species; and the extraordinary result of the contest. During this important and memorable war, the military establishments of Europe far surpassed every thing of the kind witnessed in this quarter of the globe, in either ancient or modern times. The armies of France were more numerous than those which any other European nation had ever brought into the field. Posterity will scarcely credit the pages of history which shall relate, that in a war of ten years, against the most powerful combination of enemies that ever was formed, France, though rent with intestine divisions, and oppressed by the most horrible tyranny, acquired so vast an extent of territory, with an almost unlimited control over Italy, Spain, and the provinces of Belgium.(1)

(1) Dodsley's Annual Register, 1797—1803.—Dr. Aikin's Annals of George III.—Dr. Bissett's History of the Reign of George III.—Debrett's State Papers.—London Gazette.—Boisgelin's History of Malta.—Intercepted Letters from Buonaparte in Egypt.—Southey's Life of Lord Nelson.—Precis des Evénemens Militaires, 1799.—History of the Campaign in Holland, in the year 1799.—Baldwin's political Recollections concerning Egypt.