

## LETTER XXXII.

*Continuation of the internal Affairs of France from the Insurrection of the Sections in 1795, to the End of the directorial Government in 1800—Jacobinical Conspiracy frustrated—Elections of May, 1797—Royalist Attempt at Conspiracy, and Exile of many Members of the Councils—Return of Buonaparte to Paris, May, 1798—His Expedition to Egypt—Return of Napoleon, October, 1799—He obtains the Consulate, and dissolves the legislative Body. A. D. 1800.*

SINCE the grand event of the reformation, the French revolution may be regarded as the most important occurrence of modern times; less, certainly, on account of its immediate consequences with regard to France herself, than of the immense influence it has had on the destinies of mankind in general. Our insular situation, and, still more, the ignorance and apathy of men's minds on political subjects, had kept the principles of the English revolution shut up within our own country. The principles of that of America, another grand epoch in the history of the human race, are only applicable to colonies which have thrown off the recently imposed yoke of conquest, and the questionable claims of mother-countries. Besides, each of these revolutions was but a return to a former state of things; and, strictly speaking, the only matter in dispute was the reclamation of ancient rights, by men who had been deprived of them. But the revolution in France was of a different character; it appealed to claims still more ancient, more universal; claims inherent in human nature—it appealed to the rights of man—it proposed to itself an object more absolute and decisive, and, above all, more calculated to serve for future example; a complete social reorganization, not founded on obsolete charters drawn forth from ancient archives, but on the imprescriptible right which she recognised as belonging to men in a state of society, to settle among themselves the terms of their association. It is this view of the matter, my son, which has led me to detail to you so minutely as I have done, the more striking incidents of this eventful period. The history of the French revolution will continue to interest the human race to distant ages; and it will afford lessons of instruction, not only to governors but to the governed, which both may turn to profitable account. Nevertheless, after the attention hitherto bestowed upon it, we may be excused in taking a more general and superficial survey of the state of their domestic concerns from this period.

The French revolution, which had destroyed the ancient system of government, and entirely overturned the ancient state of society, had two distinct objects in view—a free constitution and an increased civilization. We have traced it through a period of six years, during which, each of the great classes of which the nation was composed attempted the establishment of its own peculiar system. The privileged class endeavoured to establish theirs against the court and the citizens, by retaining the distinction of orders and the states-general: the citizens endeavoured to establish theirs against the privileged class and the multitude, by the code of 1791: and the multitude theirs against the rest of the nation, by the constitution of 1793. None of these governments, however, could be consolidated, because they were of an exclusive character; but while they were in operation, each class, as it obtained a temporary superiority, destroyed whatever was intolerant, and whatever was calculated to retard the march of civilization in the classes above it.

When the directory succeeded the convention, the contest between the classes had become much less violent than heretofore. The most considerable persons in each of them, however, formed a party, which still struggled for the possession of power and the establishment of its own form of government, but the mass of the population which had been so profoundly shaken from 1789 to 1795, longed for repose, and was ready to conform to the new order of things. It was at this period that the general impulse in favour of liberty came to a pause; and a better order of things in regard to civilization commenced; the revolution, after the troubles and commotions attending the

first years of its existence, and the total destruction of its immense labours, now assumed its second character—a character of order, of solidity, and repose. This second period was marked by this peculiar feature, that it seemed as if the nation had in some measure abandoned all idea of liberty. Parties, finding themselves no longer able to enjoy it in a lasting and exclusive manner, grew discouraged and retired from the ardent pursuit of politics to a more peaceful and private life. The revolution now became every day more consolidated: after giving birth to a nation of partisans, it produced first a nation of labourers and then of soldiers.

At the time the directory were appointed, the situation of the country was sufficiently discouraging; the public treasury was exhausted, and the couriers were often detained for want of the small sum that was necessary to defray the expenses of their journey. At home, anarchy and distress every where prevailed; paper-money, the issues and credit of which were alike exhausted, destroyed all commerce and all confidence; famine stalked abroad, for every one refused to sell his commodities, because it was only to give them away; and in addition to these distresses, the arsenals were empty. Abroad, the armies were unprovided with wagons, horses, or provisions; the soldiers were destitute of clothes; and the generals frequently in want of that part of their pay which was in cash, amounting to eight francs a day, a very moderate but indispensable addition to their pay in assignats. And lastly, the troops whose wants had rendered them discontented, and impaired their discipline, had again been defeated, and were acting on the defensive. Such was the distressing situation of the country after the fall of the committee of public safety, which during its existence had provided against scarcity both in the army and in the interior, by means of requisitions and the maximum.

The men who were selected to remedy this disordered state of affairs were, for the most part, persons of ordinary capacities, but they applied themselves to their task with earnestness, courage, and prudence; and, in a short time, they succeed in re-establishing confidence, industry, commerce, and plenty. The convention had directed Pichegru and Jourdan—the one at the head of the army of the Rhine, and the other of the Sambre and Meuse, to surround and make themselves masters of Mayence, in order that they might by that means occupy the whole line of the Rhine; but the scheme failed through the misconduct of Pichegru. Though invested with the full confidence of the republic, and deservedly enjoying the greatest military reputation of that period, he entered into counter-revolutionary plots with the prince of Condé; but they were unable to come to a right understanding with each other. Pichegru invited the emigrant prince to enter France by Switzerland or by the Rhine, promising that he would remain passive, the only thing which depended upon himself. The prince, however, was desirous that Pichegru should, as a preliminary step, hoist the white flag in his army, which was entirely republican. This hesitation could not but injure the cause of the reactionists, who now began to prepare the conspiracy of October, or Vendémiaire. Pichegru, however, having determined in one way or other to serve his new allies and betray his country, allowed himself to be beaten at Heidelberg, compromised the army of Jourdan, evacuated Manheim, raised the siege of Mayence with considerable loss, and exposed his frontier.

Carnot projected a new plan for the ensuing campaign, and it had for its object to carry the arms of the republic into the very heart of the hostile states. Buonaparte, who, as we have already seen, had been made general of the interior, after the insurrection of October, was now appointed to the command of the army of Italy. Jourdan was continued at the head of the army of the Sambre and Meuse; and Moreau was chosen to succeed Pichegru in the command of the army of the Rhine. An offer was made to the latter, whose treason, though not proved, was strongly suspected by the directory, to appoint him ambassador to the court of Sweden; but the offer was refused, Pichegru preferring to retire to Ambois, his native place. It was arranged that the great armies under the command of Buonaparte, Jourdan,



exercising the rights of citizens until the expiration of seven years, after having served, as it were, an apprenticeship to the republic. Thus did this party, in its thirst for rule, bring back the dictatorship. The directory at this time reached the height of its power. The armies of the republic had been every where victorious; and now, freed from all intestine opposition, it imposed peace on Austria, by the treaty of Campo Formio, and on the empire by the congress of Rastadt. The coalition of 1792 and 1793 was now dissolved, and England was the only belligerent power that remained. To pacify the people of the latter country, lord Malmesbury was sent, in the character of plenipotentiary, first to Paris and then to Lisle. The negotiations were twice broken off, and the war between the two powers continued. While England was negotiating at Lisle, she was preparing at St. Petersburg the triple alliance, or second coalition.

The directory, on their part, destitute of money, unaided by any party at home, and possessing no other support than the army, and no other means of obtaining *éclat* than the continuation of its victories, was no more in a condition to consent to a general peace than England was disposed to grant it on the terms proposed. The public discontent was increased by the imposition of certain taxes, and by the reduction of the public debt to a *consolidated third*, and that payable only in money, an arrangement by which the fund-holders were ruined. War was necessary to its existence. An immense body of soldiers could not be disbanded without danger. This embarrassing state of things led the directory to undertake the expedition to Egypt, and the invasion of Switzerland.

Napoleon, the conqueror of Italy, and the pacificator of the continent, had now returned to Paris, where he was received with enthusiasm by the populace. Honours were granted to him, such as no other general of the republic had ever enjoyed. A patriotic altar was prepared in the Luxembourg, and in his passage to the triumphal ceremony, of which he was the object, he passed under an arch formed of the colours taken in Italy. He was addressed by Barras, president of the directory, who, after congratulating him on his victories, invited him "to crown so glorious a life by a conquest which the great nation owed to its outraged dignity." This was nothing less than the conquest of England! and every preparation was apparently made for a descent—while the real object was the invasion of Egypt. Such an enterprise suited both Buonaparte and the directory. The independent conduct of this general in Italy, his ambition, which could not be wholly concealed under a studied simplicity, rendered his presence at home by no means desirable to the directory. On the other hand, he himself was not without apprehensions that the exalted opinion which had already been formed of him, might be diminished by an inactive life: for the world always expects from those whom it terms great, more than they are able to perform. While the directory, in the expedition to Egypt, thought only of the removal of a formidable general, and of attacking the English in India, Buonaparte regarded it as a gigantic conception, an employment perfectly congenial to his taste, furnishing him with new opportunities of astonishing mankind. But having detailed the particulars of the Egyptian expeditions in my former letter, it is needless to dwell upon them in this place.

The directory, which was desirous of procuring the neutrality of the Ottoman Porte, that it might attack the English, violated that of Switzerland, that it might expel the emigrants from its territories. Republican principles had penetrated into Geneva and the Pays de Vaud: but the policy of the Swiss confederation was, the influence of the aristocracy of Berne, avowedly of a counter-revolutionary cast. They had driven from the cantons all the Swiss who had shown themselves partisans of the French republic. Berne was the head-quarters of the emigrants, and there most of the plots against the revolution were hatched. The directory complained but received no satisfaction. The Vaudois, placed by ancient treaties under the direction of France, invoked its support against the tyranny of Berne. The appeal of the Vaudois, its own grievances, and the desire of extending its own system in Switzerland, much more than the temptation to seize the petty treasure of Berne, with which it

has been reproached, decided the directory. After some negotiations, which led to nothing, the war commenced. The Swiss defended themselves with great courage and obstinacy; they thought of bringing back the times of their forefathers; but they were at length compelled to yield. Geneva was reunited to France, and Switzerland exchanged its ancient constitution for that of the year three. From that moment two parties existed in the confederation, one of which advocated the cause of France and the revolution, and the other that of Austria and a counter-revolution. Switzerland, from this period, ceased to be a common barrier, and became the high road of Europe.

The revolution of Switzerland was speedily followed by that of Rome, where general Duphot being killed in a disturbance, which the pontifical government made no effort to prevent, that state was, as a punishment for the offence, changed into a republic. All these events tended to complete the system of the directory, and to give it a preponderance in Europe; it was now at the head of the Helvetian, Batavian, Ligurian, Cisalpine, and Roman republics, all of which were constructed after the same model. But while the directory extended its influence abroad, it was again threatened by parties at home.

The elections of May, 1796, were by no means favourable to the directory; they were entirely of a different character from those of the year five. Since the fourth of September, the removal of the counter-revolutionists had restored all the influence of the exclusive republicans, who re-established clubs under the name of *constitutional circles*. This party preponderated in the electoral assemblies, which, by an extraordinary casualty, had to name four hundred and thirty-seven deputies; two hundred and ninety-eight for the council of five hundred, and one hundred and thirty-nine for that of the ancients. As soon as the elections approached, the directory began to exclaim loudly against the anarchists. But its proclamations not having had the effect of preventing democratic elections, it determined to annul them by virtue of a law of circumstance (*loi de circonstance*), by which the councils had, after the 4th of September, granted it the *power of judging* the proceedings of the electoral assemblies. It invited the legislative body, by message, to appoint a commission of five members for this purpose. A great portion of the elections was, in consequence, on the 11th of May annulled. This blow was aimed by the directorial party at the ultra republicans, as, nine months before, it had aimed a blow at the royalists.

The directory was desirous of retaining that political equilibrium which had characterized the first two years of its existence, but its situation was materially changed. Since its last measure, it could no longer be deemed an impartial government, because it was no longer a constitutional one. Its pretensions to independence excited general discontent; it continued, however, in the same state until the elections of the year seven. It displayed great activity, but it was of a narrow and bustling kind. Merlin (de Douai) and Treillard, who had succeeded Carnot and Barthélemy, were two political pettifoggers; Reubell had in the highest degree the courage requisite for a statesman, without possessing enlarged views; La Réveillère was too much occupied with the sect of theophilanthropists for the head of a government. As to Barras, he continued his dissolute course of life and his directorial regency; his palace was the resort of gamblers, women of intrigue, and stock-jobbers of every kind. The administration of the directors partook of their character, but was in a peculiar manner influenced by their situation, the embarrassments of which were still farther increased by war with the whole of Europe.

While the republican plenipotentiaries were still negotiating a peace with the emperor at Rastadt, the second coalition commenced its campaign. The treaty of Campo-Formio was nothing more than a suspension of hostilities between the republic and Austria, and England had no difficulty in engaging her in a new confederacy, in which all the European powers, with the exception of Prussia and Spain, took a part. The subsidies of the British cabinet, and the attractions of the west, decided Russia; the Porte and the Barbary



states embraced the confederacy on account of the invasion of Egypt; the empire, in order to recover the left bank of the Rhine: and the petty princes of Italy, for the purpose of destroying the new republics. They were discussing at Rastadt the treaty relative to the cession of the left bank of the Rhine, the navigation of that river, and the demolition of some fortresses on the right bank, when the Russians passed into Germany, and the Austrian army began to move. The French plenipotentiaries were taken by surprise, and received orders to depart within twenty-four hours; they instantly obeyed, and, after having obtained safe conduct from the enemy's general, commenced their journey. At some distance from Rastadt they were stopped by a party of Austrian hussars, who, having ascertained their names and titles, assassinated them: Bonnier and Roberjot were killed, and John de Bray was left for dead. This unexampled violation of the law of nations, a premeditated assassination of three men invested with a sacred character, excited universal horror. The legislative body indignantly decreed war against the governments to which the guilt of this enormous crime attached.

Hostilities had already commenced in Italy and upon the Rhine. The directory, apprized of the march of the Russian troops, and suspecting the intentions of Austria, obtained from the councils a law empowering them to raise recruits. The *military conscription* placed two hundred thousand young men at the disposition of the republic. This law, the consequences of which were incalculable, was the result of a more regular order of things. The levies in mass had been made for the service of the revolution, the conscription became the legal service of the country.

The troops belonging to the most impatient powers, and who formed the vanguard of the coalition, had already commenced the attack. The king of Naples had advanced upon Rome, and the king of Sardinia had levied troops, and threatened the Ligurian republic; but not being strong enough to bear the shock of the French armies, they were easily vanquished. General Championnet, after a sanguinary victory, entered Naples, and the Lazzaroni, after defending the interior of the city for three days, were subdued, and the *Parthenopean republic* was proclaimed. General Joubert took possession of Turin, and when the new campaign opened, the whole of Italy was in the hands of the French.

The coalition, which had the advantage of the republic in preparations and in effective force, attacked it by the three great openings of Italy, Switzerland, and Holland. A strong Austrian force debouched in the dutchy of Mantua, defeated Shérer twice upon the Adige, and was soon afterward joined by the whimsical and, until then, victorious Suwarrow. Moreau succeeded Shérer, and was, like him, defeated: he retreated on the side of Genoa, in order to protect the barrier of the Apennines, and to join the army of Naples commanded by Macdonald, who was also routed at Trebia. The confederates next directed their principal force against Switzerland. Some Prussian corps joined the archduke Charles, who had defeated Jourdan on the Upper Rhine, and who was making preparations for crossing the Helvetian frontier. The duke of York at the same time landed in Holland with forty thousand Anglo-Russian troops. The small republics which protected France were invaded, and, after some new victories, the confederates were enabled to penetrate into the very seat of the revolution.

In the midst of these military disasters, to which was added the discontent of all parties, the elections of May, 1799, took place; they were, like those of the preceding year, republican. The directory was no longer possessed of sufficient strength to contend against public misfortunes and the animosity of parties. The retirement of Reubell, who was succeeded by Siéyes, deprived it of the only man who could make head against the storm, and introduced in his stead the most decided opponent of this obnoxious and worn-out government. The moderate party and the ultra-republicans concurred in demanding of the directors an account of the internal and external state of the republic.

The councils declared themselves permanent, and Barras deserted his col-

leagues. The animosity of the councils was directed solely against Treilhard, Merlin, and La Réveillère, the last supports of the old directory. They removed Treilhard, because the interval of a year had not elapsed between his legislative and directorial functions, as required by the constitution. The ex-minister of justice, Gohier, was immediately put in his place. The orators of the council next vigorously attacked Merlin and La Réveillère, whom, as they could not depose, they wished to compel to resign. The directors, who were thus menaced, sent a justificatory message to the councils, and proposed peace. On the 18th of June, the republican Bertrand (du Calvados), ascended the tribune; and, after having examined the offers of the directors, proceeded in these terms: "You have proposed a reunion; and I propose that you should consider whether you can still retain your offices. If you desire the welfare of the republic, you will not hesitate to decide. You have no power to do good: you will never have either the confidence of your colleagues, or that of the people, or that of the representatives, without which it is impossible for you to execute the laws. Thanks to the constitution, there already exists in the directory a majority which enjoys the confidence of the people, and of the national representatives. Why do you hesitate to restore unanimity both in design and principle, between the two first authorities of the state? You have no longer even the confidence of those vile flatterers who have hollowed out your political grave. Terminate your career by an act of devotion, which the sound hearts of republicans will alone know how to appreciate."

Merlin and Réveillère, deprived of the support of government by the retirement of Reubell, the deposition of Treilhard, and the desertion of Barras, and influenced by the demands of the councils as well as by patriotic motives, at length yielded to circumstances, and resigned the directorial authority. This victory, gained by the united efforts of the republicans and the moderate party, proved advantageous to both. The first introduced general Moulins into the directory, the latter Roger Ducos. The councils, by the transaction of the 18th of June, which disorganized the old government of the year three, took their revenge against the directory for the 4th of September and the 11th of May. At this period, each of the two great powers of the state had in its turn violated the constitution: the directory, in decimating the legislature; the legislature, in expelling the directory. It was hardly possible that this form of government, of which all parties had cause to complain, should have a prolonged existence.

Siéyes, after the successful issue of the 18th of June, endeavoured to destroy what still remained of the government of the year three, in order that he might establish a legal government upon another plan. He was a man of a capricious temper, and fond of system, but he possessed an accurate perception of what was required in different situations. He once more entered upon the theatre of the revolution, but at a singular epoch, with the design of closing it by a definitive constitution. After having materially assisted in effecting the principal changes of 1789, by his motion of the 18th of June, which transformed the states-general into a national assembly, and, by his plan of internal organization, which substituted the departments for the provinces, he had ever since remained silent and passive. He had waited until such time as the measures for the public defence should again give place to measures for the defence of institutions. Appointed, under the directory, ambassador to Berlin, the continuance of the neutrality of Prussia was attributed to him. At his return, he accepted the office, which until then he had refused, of director, because Reubell had retired from the government, and he believed that all parties were sufficiently tired to co-operate in a final pacification, and the establishment of liberty. For carrying his views into effect, he relied upon Roger Ducos, in the directory; upon the council of ancients, in the legislature; and out of doors, upon the moderate party and the middling class, who, after having wished for laws as a novelty, now wished for repose as a novelty too. This party was desirous of establishing a firm and steady government, which should have neither retrospections nor enmities, and which should thenceforward satisfy all opinions and all interests.



and Moreau, should attack the Austrian territories by way of Italy and Germany, form a junction at the passage of the Tyrol, and by degrees march upon Vienna. This great movement, the success of which would render the republic mistress of the chief seat of the continental coalition, the generals prepared to execute.

It was not without difficulty, however, that the directory could be protected from the attacks of the two opposing factions, the democrats and the royalists, whose ascendancy it was the means of preventing. The former were incessantly labouring to establish absolute equality in spite of the state of society, and democratic liberty, notwithstanding the increased degree of civilization. But they had been so effectually subdued, that there was no probability of their ever again obtaining the possession of power. Yet though ejected from the government, and expelled society,—though disorganized and proscribed, it was far from having disappeared, it once more rose from its state of depression. They re-established their club at the Pantheon, and it was for some time tolerated by the directory, to whom, as it became daily more numerous, it became daily more alarming. Its leader was Gracchus Babœuf, self-denominated “the tribune of the people,” a bold man, of a heated imagination, and fanatically attached to an extraordinary kind of democracy. He possessed great influence over his party, preparing it by his journal for the reign of “general happiness.” At first the directory endeavoured to restrain this democratic faction within bounds, but its sittings were prolonged to a late hour, and in process of time, the members of the club proceeded thither in arms, and were projecting an expedition against the directory and the councils, when the directory found it high time to interfere, and accordingly, on the 26th of February, 1796, it closed the doors of the Pantheon, and on the following day sent a message to the councils, apprizing them of the measure it had adopted.

This democratic faction, finding themselves deprived of their place of meeting, now resorted to other expedients. They succeeded in seducing the legion of police, in concert with which they proposed to destroy the existing constitution; but the directory, informed of this manœuvre, disbanded and disarmed the legion of police. The conspirators, taken a second time by surprise, now resolved upon a plan of insurrection and attack: they appointed “an insurrectionary committee of public safety,” which established communications with the Parisian mobility. The leaders of the party frequently assembled in a place which they denominated “the temple of reason,” where they chanted elegies on the death of Robespierre, and lamented over “the slavery of the people!” They now prepared every thing for the attack: they agreed to establish “general happiness,” in order to which they proposed to make an equal distribution of property—to institute a government of “true and absolute democrats”—to form a convention, consisting of sixty-eight Mountainists, together with a democrat from each department; and lastly, to unite from the several points where they were distributed, and immediately march against the directory and the councils. On the night of the intended insurrection, they were to post up two placards, one of which was to contain these words, “Constitution of 1793, liberty, equality, general happiness;” the other, this declaration, “Those who usurp supreme power ought to be put to death by freemen.” They were all ready, the proclamations were printed, and the day fixed, when they were betrayed. On the 10th of May, the evening preceding the intended attack, the conspirators were seized in their council-chamber. The plan and all the details of the plot were found in Babœuf’s house. The directory informed the councils of it by message, and announced it to the people by proclamation. This singular attempt, which was so strongly tinged by fanaticism, excited the greatest terror; the recent domination of the jacobins still presented a fearful image to the imagination.

Babœuf, prisoner as he was, like a bold conspirator, wrote to the directory, proposing terms of peace; but the latter, after publishing his letter, sent the writer of it and his accomplices to the high court of Vendôme, which sen-

tenced them to death, when Babœuf and Darthé, hearing their sentence, despatched themselves with their own daggers. Their partisans made another and feeble attempt at overthrowing the government. In the night of the 7th of September, about eleven o’clock; they marched, to the number of six or seven hundred, armed with sabres and pistols, against the directory, which, however, they found defended by its guards. They then proceeded to the camp of Grenelle, which, from the supposed understanding between themselves and it, they had hopes of gaining over. The camp had retired to rest when the conspirators arrived; but when the sentinels demanded “Who goes there?” they replied, “Long live the republic! long live the constitution of 1793!” the sentinels immediately gave the alarm—the commander ordered his men to sound to horse, and his dragoons, who were half-naked, to mount. Surprised at this reception, the conspirators made but a feeble resistance—they were put to flight, leaving a number dead, and many made prisoners. A commission was appointed at Grenelle to try the conspirators, of whom thirty-one were put to death, thirty were sentenced to transportation, and twenty-five to imprisonment. This unfortunate catastrophe was nearly the ruin of the party—from that period democrats still existed, but the party was disorganized. It was at this moment that the contest between the authorities appointed by the sections, and the directory which was supported by the army, commenced. As each resorted to its own party for support and protection, when those who had the elective power placed themselves at the disposal of the counter-revolutionists, the directory was compelled to introduce the army into the government; a measure which in the sequel produced dreadful inconveniences.

The situation of the directory became considerably altered by the elections of May, 1797. These elections, by introducing the royalist party into the legislature and the government, renewed the question which the battle of Vendémaire had decided. Until this period a perfectly good understanding had been kept up between the directory and the councils. Both composed of conventionalists, united by a common interest, and equally animated by the wish to establish the republic, after it had been shaken by all the storms of party, they had manifested much good-will to each other in their communications, and great concert in their measures. There existed an anti-constitutional minority, which formed an opposition in the councils, but it was cautious and guarded in its measures; and this party, which acquired increased strength by the elections of May, 1797, now became less equivocal in its intentions, and in their attitude more menacing. The royalists were in fact an active and formidable body, which had its chiefs, its agents, its lists, and its journals. They prevented the election of the republicans, and, for the moment, assumed the banner of the multitude, which, as it always follows the most energetic party, was carried away with their enthusiasm.

On the 28th of May, the councils assembled; and, from that moment, they showed the spirit which animated them. Pichegru, whom the royalists introduced upon the new field of battle, was chosen president of the council of five hundred with enthusiasm, and Barbé Marbois was called with the same animation to the presidency of the ancients. The legislative body next proceeded to the nomination of a director, in the place of Latourneur, who retired by rotation or ballot on the 19th of May. Their choice fell upon Barthélemy, who, being a royalist and an advocate for peace, was agreeable to both the councils and to Europe. But all this was ominous to the directory, and indicated hostility both against it and the conventional party. Their administration and their policy were speedily and openly attacked; though every thing which could have been done by a legal government in their present circumstances had been done by the directory. Yet it was reproached with the continuance of the war and the disordered state of the finances. In this train matters proceeded for some time, the two parties watching each other, and the multitude in the attitude of spectators. The directory, aware that matters were advancing towards a crisis, though it relied on public opinion, did not neglect its chief security, the support of the troops. Several



regiments of the army of the Sambre and Meuse, commanded by Hoche, were ordered to advance towards Paris. The councils complained of this to the directory, who affected to be ignorant of the matter, and made very unsatisfactory excuses.

An intermediate party, whose principles were of a constitutional and pacific nature, attempted to prevent this struggle, and to re-establish harmony, but their efforts proved ineffectual. Carnot was at the head of this party, and some members of the council of five hundred, directed by Thibadeau, together with a considerable number of the ancients, supported his scheme. Carnot, who at this period was the director of the constitution, and Barthélemy, who was the director of the legislature, constituted a minority in the executive government. The former, austere in his conduct and self-willed in his views, could agree neither with Barras nor Reubell, who, supported by their colleague Laréveillère, were by no means indisposed to resort to violence against the councils, while Carnot was desirous of strictly adhering to the provisions of the law. Alarmed at the preparations of the directory, the councils manifested a desire to compromise matters on the sacrifice of certain ministers who did not possess their confidence; but the directory refused to listen to any terms of accommodation, the only effect of which, they were well aware, would be to postpone their ruin, and that of the republic, until the elections of the year six. They procured menacing addresses from the armies against the councils. The councils protested, but without effect, against this interference of the army; and they made dispositions for an engagement, in case it should become necessary. At the point to which the two parties had now arrived, a victory was necessary in order once more to decide the great contest between the revolution and the old government.

The two leading men among the royalist conspirators were Pichegru and Willot. The latter, an intemperate military officer, was anxious that the councils should strike the first blow, by decreeing the accusation of the three directors, Barras, Reubell, and Laréveillère, but Pichegru hesitated; and the advice of the indecisive part of the councils prevailing, they pursued the tardy course of constitutional proceedings. Not so with the directory. They determined to proceed to the attack without a moment's delay. The morning of the 4th of September was appointed for the execution of this project. The troops stationed round Paris entered the city on the preceding evening under the command of Augereau. The project of Barras and his two colleagues was, to take possession of the Tuileries with troops, before the legislative body could assemble, and thus avoid a forcible expulsion; to convene the councils in the vicinity of the Luxembourg, after having arrested their principal leaders, and to complete, by a legislative enactment, a stroke of policy which had been commenced by force. They were supported by the minority of the councils, and they relied upon the approbation of the multitude. At one o'clock in the morning the troops arrived at the Hotel-de-Ville, and stationed themselves upon the quays, the bridges, and the Champs Elysées. In a very short time twelve thousand men and forty pieces of cannon surrounded the Tuileries. At four o'clock the alarm gun was fired and general Augereau presented himself at the gate of the Pont-Tournant.

The guard of the legislative body was under arms, and the inspectors of the hall, apprized on the preceding evening of what was to take place, had repaired to the Tuileries for the purpose of defending the entrance. Ramel, who had the command of the legislative guard, was devoted to the councils, and he had stationed his eight hundred grenadiers at the different avenues of the garden, which was secured by gates. But it was not with so feeble a force that Pichegru, Willot, and Ramel could oppose any effectual resistance to the directory. Augereau had no occasion even to force the passage of the Pont-Tournant; he had scarcely arrived within hearing of the grenadiers, before he called to them,—“Are you republicans?” The latter immediately replied by lowering their arms and shouting, “long live Augereau! long live the directory!” and joined him.

Augereau now traversed the garden, penetrated the hall of the councils, and arrested Pichegru, Willot, Ramel, and all the inspectors of the hall, whom he sent to the temple. The members of the councils were hastily convened by the inspectors, and repaired in crowds to the place of meeting, but the troops either arrested or refused to admit them. At six o'clock in the morning the whole business was completed. The Parisians on rising found the troops still under arms, and the walls placarded with proclamations announcing the discovery of a formidable conspiracy. The people were invited to retain their confidence and preserve order. A letter addressed to the directory by general Moreau had already been printed, in which he detailed the plots of his predecessor, Pichegru, with the emigrants, and also another letter from the prince of Condé to one of the members of the council of ancients. The whole population remained quiet, manifesting neither approbation nor regret.

The directory were desirous that this extraordinary proceeding should obtain the sanction of the legislature, and above all that it should be completed. As soon, therefore, as the members of the five hundred and those of the ancients were assembled at the Odéon and the school of medicine, to which places they were directed on the shutting up of the hall of the convention, and found themselves in sufficient number for the purposes of deliberation, a message from the directory announced to them the motives by which it had been actuated in all its measures. “Legislative citizens,” said this message, “if the directory had but delayed one day longer, the republic would have fallen a victim to its enemies. The very place in which you sit was appointed for the meeting of the conspirators: it was there that they yesterday distributed their passes and their certificates for the delivery of arms. It was from that point that they this night carried on a correspondence with their accomplices; and, finally, it was from that place or in the neighbourhood, that they again attempted those clandestine and seditious assemblages which the police is at this moment engaged in dispersing. To have allowed the faithful representatives of the people to be thus confounded with the enemies of their country, would have been to endanger not only the public safety, but their own.

The council of five hundred appointed a commission, composed of the abbé Siéyes, Paulain Grandpré, Villers, Chazel, and Boulay de la Meurthe, with instructions to prepare a law of public safety. The measure they adopted was that of banishment, which thus succeeded the guillotine in this second period of revolution and dictatorship. In this act of ostracism, were included upwards of forty members of the council of five hundred—eleven of the council of ancients—and of the directors, Carnot and Barthélemy, with many others who belonged to none of those bodies, among whom were the conductors of thirty-five journals. Some of the condemned members contrived to evade the sentence of exile, of which number Carnot was one. The greater part were transported to Cayenne, but a great many never quitted the isle of Rhé. This was the fourth defeat of the royalists; two had taken place when it was deprived of power, namely, those of the 14th of July and the 10th of August; and two when it was prevented from resuming its power, viz. those of the 5th of October and the 4th of September. This repetition of impotent attempts, and these successive failures, contributed in no small degree towards reducing this party to submission under the consulate and the empire.

The principal effect of the late measure was the return of the revolutionary government, a little modified. The two ancient privileged classes were again driven into the back ground; the refractory priests were a second time exiled. All who had formed a part of the military household of the Bourbons, the superior agents of the crown, the members of parliament, the commanders of the orders of the Holy Ghost and of St. Louis, the knights of Malta—all, in short, who had protested against the abolition of the nobility and retained its titles, were ordered to quit the territory of the republic. The old nobles, as well as those recently created, were rendered incapable of