

sions, claimed the victory. During the night, the Austrians, by an unnecessary extension of their line, occupied the country from Stammorsdorf to Neusiedel. Their general had formed a scheme of concurrent attack upon both flanks of the enemy, in the hope of cutting off the communication with the Danube; but there was not sufficient time to carry into effect all the arrangements that were necessary for this purpose; and that division which had received orders before the rest could be instructed and prepared, suffered severely by a premature attack upon the right wing of the French army. It had been expected that the archduke John would be able to take part in the action; but it was not prudent to depend upon his opportune arrival. The central body passed through Wagram, and had a long contest for the possession of Aderkla, which was eventually secured by the Austrians, who, forming two lines in its front, drove the French back upon Raschdorf, spreading disorder through that part of the field in which Napoleon was more especially engaged. In the mean time, a part of the Austrian right, which had moved towards Asperna, found that village and a neighbouring wood occupied by the enemy, but a dislodgement was effected with little difficulty, and the French were pursued to their *tête-de-pont* on the banks of the Danube. The deficiency of cavalry prevented a due advantage from being taken of the retrograde movements of the French centre; and the same disparity was highly unfavourable to the Austrian left, which, after being recalled from its attack, could not, even with the aid which it received from the centre, secure itself from being seriously outflanked, or permanently defend Neusiedel against the vigorous assaults of Davoust. The ill success of this corps made an unfavourable impression upon other parts of the Austrian line. The centre, being exposed to a new and formidable attack, gradually retreated; and the right, threatened with the danger of being turned by the columns marching along the river, evacuated the posts which had been recently seized, and concurred in those movements of timidity or of prudence which not only inspired the French with the confident hope of victory, but gave them a right to claim it, though it is but due to Napoleon to add, in this place, that he afterward confessed to his friends at St. Helena, that his victory at Wagram was *less decisive* than any of the others on which he plumed himself.

The Austrians having retreated to Znaim, in Moravia, they were followed by Napoleon, who there received from the emperor Francis a proposal to treat for peace, and an armistice was acceded to, on the surrender of several fortresses. The armistice was continued from time to time till the month of October, when a definitive treaty was concluded between the two powers, and signed at the palace of Schonbrun, the head-quarters of Napoleon. The conditions of the treaty proved much less unfavourable than might have been expected from the forlorn and hopeless condition of Austria, whose armies were now dispersed and all but ruined. To Bavaria, the emperor Francis was obliged to yield the important territory of Salzburg, with other districts in the vicinity. To France were ceded Fiume and Trieste, with the entire line of coast connecting the dominions of France on both sides of the Adriatic. In Poland, the king of Saxony obtained, in addition to the provinces constituting the duchy of Warsaw, the western Galicia, with the city of Cracow. Another portion of Austrian Poland was assigned to Russia, which had derived advantages from the misfortunes of every other nation. The title of Joseph Buonaparte as king of Spain was recognised. The Tyrolese were abandoned to their fate; that heroic people still maintaining an unavailing resistance. At length, overwhelmed rather than vanquished, an end was put to hostilities in that quarter, and the blood-stained triumph of Bavaria was crowned by the barbarous execution of the patriot Hoffer. (1)

(1) London Gazette.—Military Panorama.—Austrian account given in the Supplement to the London Gazette of July 11th, 1809.—Der Krieg der Tyroler Landleute, von J. S. L. Bartholdy.

LETTER VIII.

Review of the Affairs of England, 1809, 1810—Treaty of Alliance between Great Britain and Spain—Parliamentary Proceedings—Charges against the Duke of York—Expedition to the Isle of Walcheren—Dissensions in the British Cabinet—Violent Agitations of Party—Brilliant Exploits of the British Navy—Dispute with the United States.

BEFORE we resume the narrative of the peninsular war, which, from the period at which we are arrived, became a prominent object in the political events of Europe, I must detain you a moment, my dear Philip, while we take a cursory survey of the domestic occurrences of our own country. The British parliament was convened for the despatch of public business on the 19th of January, 1809. The speech from the throne, which was delivered by commission, adverted to an overture for peace which the emperor of France had tendered from Erfurt, in relation to which his majesty expressed his persuasion that the two houses would participate in the feelings expressed in his declaration on the occasion, which should be laid before them. He informed them that his engagements with Spain were now reduced into the form of a treaty of alliance. The peculiar claim of the king of Sweden to his majesty's support was insisted on; and the vigorous prosecution of the war earnestly recommended. Some very animated debates ensued on this occasion in both houses of parliament. The assistance afforded to Sweden; the expedition to Portugal; the convention of Cintra; the disasters of Spain; and the American embargo, which had now been confirmed by a non-intercourse bill passed in the new congress, prohibiting the entrance of the ports of the United States to all vessels belonging to Great Britain or France, or to any of the countries under their influence, and adhering either to the Berlin decree or the British orders in council;—all these topics were brought forward and furnished materials for debate and discussion.

The debates on the affairs of Portugal and Spain took precedence in point of curiosity and interest. The earls of St. Vincent, Grenville, and Moira reproached the idea of sending an army to Portugal when Spain was at stake. "In Spain," said lord Moira, "must be fought the battle of British independence. The fall of Spain must involve in its train the fall of this country. Had the British government sent out in due time a proper person to concert measures with the Spanish people, and amicably to explain the motives upon which the British nation wished to act towards Spain, the Spaniards would never have refused to accept the aid of troops from England." Lord Grenville asserted that "it was only in the north of Spain, and on the borders of the Pyrenees, that a British force could have acted with effect. After the French had been driven from Madrid, and had retired to the frontiers of Spain, if a British army had been sent to the north of Spain before the French had received reinforcements, they probably might have been driven through the Pyrenees, those passes forced, and the keys of their country put into the hands of the Spaniards." Lord St. Vincent pointedly condemned the plan of debarking troops in the extremity of the south, which are designed to act in the north. In answer to all these and similar complaints, lord Hawkesbury declared that the sending of a British force to Portugal in preference to Spain, was a measure adopted in compliance with the representations of the Spanish juntas; and Mr. Canning, in the lower house, endeavoured to justify the principle on which his majesty's ministers had acted, by a development of the state of Spain at the commencement of the grand insurrection. "When the whole Spanish nation," said he, "rose unanimously, and with a concert almost miraculous, the consequence was, the sudden creation of various local authorities, acknowledging no head: jealous, watchful, and extremely suspicious of any attempt on the part of one to obtain ascendancy over the other. The supreme central junta was not established until the last week in September."

the assistance of England was appealed to and as promptly afforded. In Spain, particularly, the British troops, led by a general whose name now began to be weighed against those of the ablest of the French commanders, displayed their accustomed gallantry under auspices which no longer permitted it to evaporate in actions of mere éclat. Yet the British administration, while they had thus embraced a broader and more adventurous, and indeed a far wiser system of conducting the war, nevertheless evinced in one very important instance, that they were not free from the ancient prejudices which had so long rendered the energies of the country almost useless to the liberties of the world. The general principle was indeed adopted, that the expeditions of Britain should be directed where they could most benefit the cause of Europe, and most injure the interests of Buonaparte; but it was not difficult to perceive a spirit of national selfishness pervading their councils and mingling itself with their proceedings. Besides the forces already in the peninsula, Great Britain had the means of disposing of forty thousand men, with a fleet of thirty-five ships of the line and twenty frigates, to assist on any point where their services might be useful. Such an armament on the coast of Spain might have brought to an early issue the long and sanguinary contest in that country, saved much British blood which the protracted war wasted, and struck a blow, the effects of which, like the battle of Trafalgar, Napoleon might have felt on the banks of the Danube. Such an armament, if sent to the north of Germany prior to the destruction of Schill and the defeat of the duke of Brunswick's enterprise, might have been the means of placing all the northern provinces in active opposition to France, by an effort for which the state of the public mind was already prepared. A successful action would even have given spirits to Prussia, and induced that depressed kingdom to resume the struggle for her independence. In fact, Britain might have had the honour of kindling the same flame, which, when excited by Russia in 1813, was the means of destroying the French influence in Germany, and breaking up the confederation of the Rhine. But, unhappily, neither of these important objects seemed to the planners of this enterprise to be connected in a manner sufficiently direct with objects exclusively interesting to Britain. It was therefore agreed that the expedition should be sent against the strong fortresses, swampy isles, and dangerous coasts of the Netherlands, in order to seek for dock-yards to be destroyed, and ships to be carried off. Antwerp was particularly aimed at; but although Napoleon attached great importance to the immense naval yards and docks which he had formed in the Scheldt, yet when weighed with the danger and difficulty of an attack upon them, the object of destroying them seems to have been very inadequate. Besides, before Antwerp could be attacked, the islands of Beveland and Walcheren were to be taken possession of, and a long amphibious course of hostilities was to be maintained, to enable the expedition to reach the point where alone great results were expected.

Early in the month of May, 1809, preparations commenced for fitting out this expedition, and towards the end of July, an army of forty thousand men was collected, to be assisted by a fleet of thirty-nine sail of the line, and thirty-six frigates, besides numerous gun-boats, bomb vessels, and small craft. The command of the whole armament was intrusted to the earl of Chatham, son of the great minister of that name, who, far from inheriting the talents of his father, was signalized by nothing so much as a spirit of inactivity and procrastination, the consequences of which had been felt in all the public offices which he held, and which therefore were likely to be peculiarly fatal in an expedition requiring the utmost celerity and promptitude of action. The armament set sail on the 28th of July, and on the 1st of August invested Flushing. A tremendous cannonade and bombardment commenced on the 13th, which two days afterward produced from general Monnet, the commander of the garrison, a request for a suspension of arms. This was followed by a surrender of the place, with its garrison, consisting of about five thousand men, who were sent to England prisoners of

war. But here terminated the success of the British. The French, who had at first been much alarmed, had time to recover from their consternation. Fouché, then at the head of the police in Paris, and it may be said of the government, being then minister of the interior, lost no time in collecting and getting under arms about forty thousand national guards, to replace the regular soldiers, of which the low countries had been drained. The command was given to Bernadotte, now created prince of Ponte Corvo, who availed himself of the time afforded by the English, to put Antwerp into a complete state of defence, and to assemble within and under its walls more than thirty thousand men. The country was inundated by opening the sluices; strong batteries were erected on both sides of the Scheldt, and to ascend that river became almost impossible. In addition to all this the spirit of discord began to manifest itself between the British naval and military officers. The troops likewise were becoming very sickly, from their position in these low and marshy grounds, in the most unhealthy season of the year. The final objects of the expedition were therefore abandoned; and on the 14th of September, lord Chatham was induced to depart for England, with the greatest part of his army. The remainder were left to keep possession of Walcheren, for the purpose of blocking up the Scheldt, and affording an inlet for British commerce into Holland, where the people were well disposed to admit colonial produce and other commodities. To the troops, however, this determination was extremely fatal. Among the marshes, stagnant canals, and unwholesome trenches of the isle of Walcheren, there constantly broods a fever of a deeply pestilential and malignant kind, and which, like most maladies of the same description, is more destructive to strangers than to the natives, whose constitutions become by habit proof against its ravages. This dreadful disease broke out among the British troops with the force of a pestilence, and numbers died on the spot, while others who escaped with life brought back with them chronic disorders, and shattered constitutions, which long rendered the name of the Walcheren fever a subject of terror to Englishmen. The joy with which Napoleon saw the army of his enemy thus consigned to an obscure and disgraceful death, broke out even in his bulletins, as though the pestilence by which they fell had been caused by his own policy, and was not the consequence of the climate and the ill-advised delay which prevented the soldiers from being withdrawn from it. "We are rejoiced," said Napoleon, in a letter to the minister at war, "to see that the English have packed themselves in the morasses of Zealand. Let them be only kept in check, and the bad air and fevers peculiar to the country will soon destroy their army." At length, after the loss of more lives than would have been wasted in three general battles, the fortifications of Flushing were blown up, and on the 23d of December, Walcheren was completely evacuated by the relics of the British army, nearly one-half of which was either dead or on the sick list. Such was the termination of an expedition, which, after a prodigious expense, totally disappointed the public hopes and afforded a subject of mockery to the enemies of the country. But the evil did not terminate here; the mode in which it had been directed and conducted became a source of dissension in the British cabinet, and brought on a duel between lord Castlereagh and Mr. Canning, who was severely wounded in the affray. It also occasioned the temporary secession of Mr. Canning, unquestionably the most able and eloquent of its members, who was thus withdrawn from public affairs at a moment when his talents could be least spared by his country. In some measure, however, to counteract this unhappy state of affairs, the marquis of Wellesley was appointed to the situation of secretary at war, a circumstance which gave, in the estimation of the public, a strong pledge that the efficient measures suggested by the talents of that noble statesman would be supported and carried through by his brother sir Arthur Wellesley, to whom alone, as a general, the army and the people began to look with hope and confidence.

In this distracted state of the cabinet, the duke of Portland thought proper
Vol. III.—M m

per to retire from his eminent station as head of the administration, assigning as a reason for it his growing infirmity; and lord Castlereagh also relinquished the seals of office as secretary at war. On the 23d of September, Mr. Spencer Perceval, upon whom, in consequence of the resignation of the premier and the two secretaries, nearly the sole weight of the government now devolved, wrote to earl Grey and lord Grenville, stating that "his majesty had authorized the earl of Liverpool (late lord Hawkesbury) and himself, to communicate with their lordships for the purpose of forming an extended and combined administration; and requesting their presence in London." As under the actual circumstances of the case no such overture could have been hazarded without the determination to allow the whigs a decided lead in the combined administration, a very favourable opportunity, as was generally thought, occurred of uniting and reconciling the two great opposing parties in the state. Yet this advance was received with a coldness which can only be accounted for by calling to mind the circumstances under which they had formerly quitted office. Lord Grenville indeed repaired to town, in obedience to what he considered to be the king's pleasure; but in his answer to Mr. Perceval, dated 29th of September, he peremptorily declined the communication proposed, declaring "that it could not be considered in any other light than as a dereliction of public principle." Earl Grey, writing from his seat in Northumberland, declared "his attendance in town unnecessary, unless he had received the king's commands to that effect;" and in terms equally strong with those of lord Grenville, avowed "a union with the present ministers to be, so far as regarded himself, impossible: and that the proposed communication could lead to no useful result." Mr. Perceval in reply explained, that "the proposal was not for the accession of their lordships to the present administration, but for the formation of a combined and extended one." Here the correspondence ended; and the ministers then in office finding themselves compelled to act with energy or resign at discretion, Mr. Perceval accepted the office of first lord of the treasury; marquis Wellesley received the seals of the foreign department; lord Liverpool succeeded Castlereagh as minister at war; and the honourable Richard Rider took the place of lord Liverpool in the home department. If the administration were injured in their popularity by the late train of events, no part of this displeasure fell upon the king, who seems to have gained upon the affections of his subjects, in proportion as advanced years and infirmities (for he had now become almost blind) excited the feelings of commiseration in his behalf. The 25th of October, 1809, being the fiftieth celebration of his accession to the throne, was distinguished throughout the united kingdom as a jubilee, and was marked by every demonstration of loyal attachment and reverence.

Before we take our leave of the affairs of Great Britain during this trying crisis, it will be proper to glance at the success which attended her arms and councils in quarters to which we have not yet adverted. In the month of January, 1809, an expedition, under the command of general Prevost and admiral Cochrane, appeared off the island of Martinique; and a landing was effected on the following day. After some severe actions, in which the French were driven from various strong posts, they withdrew their troops to fort Bourbon, which was immediately invested by the British. The place was captured on the 24th of February, with little farther loss, and all resistance ceasing, the island was reduced under the dominion of his Britannic majesty. The French colony of Cayenne was, about the same time, captured by a combined force of English and Portuguese; the former under the command of Captain Yeo of the navy.

A French fleet of nine sail of the line, lying in the road of Aix, near Rochelle, protected by the forts of that island, lord Cochrane, who was acting under the orders of admiral Gambier, proposed to make an attack upon, with a squadron of five ships, a few frigates, and some smaller armed vessels. Standing in with a favourable wind on the 11th of April, a boom laid across the entrance was broken through by the leading ship, on perceiving which,

the greater part of the French ships slipped their cables and ran for the shore. On the following day, lord Cochrane gave information by telegraph to the admiral, that seven of the enemy's ships were on shore, in a situation which afforded an opportunity of destroying them. It being found, however, that the state of the wind rendered it hazardous to enter the roads, in which the water was shallow, with large ships, admiral Gambier, who had unmoored, anchored again three miles from the forts, and sent all the small vessels to the attack. Lord Cochrane, leading the way, opened a fire on a ship of fifty-six guns, which struck, and this was followed by three others of the line, which were also forced to strike; all of which were set on fire and destroyed. The other French ships being got into deep water, moved up the river Charente, where it was impracticable to molest them, but it was doubtful whether they could be again got out to sea.

Lord Collingwood, who had succeeded Nelson in the chief command of the Mediterranean fleet, having proposed to general Stuart an expedition against the islands of Zante, Cephalonia, and others, while the French were occupied with the defence of Naples, a joint force from Messina, Malta, and Corfu was arranged for this purpose, and on the 1st of October, it anchored in the bay of Zante. On the following day a capitulation was agreed on, by which all that group of islands surrendered to the British arms, and the government of the Septinsular republic was restored.

On the 23d of October, three French ships of the line and four frigates, with a convoy of about twenty vessels, were despatched on their passage from Toulon. Lord Collingwood directed rear-admiral Martin to proceed with a squadron in chase of them; and on the 25th, off the mouth of the Rhone, two of the French ships of the line were chased on shore, and set on fire by their own crews, while a third, with a frigate, ran on shore at the entrance of the port of Cette, with little chance of being got off. The convoy mostly escaped at the time into the bay of Rosas; but, on the 30th, some ships with the boats of the fleet, under orders from captain Hallowell, entering into the bay, most gallantly overcame every obstacle and all the resistance that could be made, as well from the vessels as from the castle of Rosas and the forts, and captured or destroyed the whole, though not without considerable loss. The lading of the convoy was destined for the supply of the French army in Spain.

The unhappy dispute with America still remained unadjusted. In the office of president of the United States, Mr. Jefferson, who declined a second re-election, was succeeded by Mr. Madison. The embargo, which had been severely felt from its long continuance, was repealed, and an act substituted, prohibiting all intercourse with France and England, with this proviso, however, that if either nation rescinded its obnoxious decrees, the prohibition relative to that nation should cease. Mr. Erskine, the English envoy in America, was consequently empowered to promise, that if the American interdiction of July the 7th were withdrawn, the commerce of America with the French colonies should be placed on the same footing as in times of peace, the British cruisers being allowed to capture all vessels trading contrary to this restriction. But Mr. Erskine ventured also, as would seem without proper authority, to declare the orders in council rescinded from the 10th of June, 1809, on the general engagement that "an envoy extraordinary should be received by the president, with a disposition correspondent to that of his Britannic majesty." The British government, however, refused its ratification to this agreement, and the prohibitory laws were again enforced. Mr. Jackson was sent out as successor to Mr. Erskine, but his language was so offensive that congress refused to receive any communications from him, on which he withdrew from the city of Washington to New-York.(1)

In my next letter I shall resume the history of the peninsular war.

(1) Mr. Jackson insinuated, in a correspondence with the secretary of state, that the American government knew that Mr. Erskine was not authorized to make this arrangement. This was distinctly denied by the secretary, but being repeated by Mr. Jackson, the president declined all farther intercourse with him.

"In May, 1810, the non-intercourse expired, and the American government made proposals to both the belligerent powers, that, if either would revoke its hostile edicts, this law should only be revived and enforced against the other nations." Accordingly, "France repealed her decrees, and the president of the

To these circumstances Mr. Canning ascribed the direction of the expedition, and the delay of the advance of the British army from Portugal.

A very considerable portion of the present session of parliament now became occupied with a most extraordinary investigation into the conduct of his royal highness, the duke of York, generalissimo of the British army, of which a regard to impartiality seems to demand that some notice should be taken. So early as the 27th of January, colonel Wardle, an officer of the militia service, and member of parliament, had publicly asserted the existence of a system of abuse in the military department, over which the royal duke presided. The substance of the charge was, that an intriguing female, whose name was Mary Anne Clarke, who during several years had been a favourite with his royal highness, but who was then discarded, had carried on a traffic in commissions, not only with the knowledge, but also the participation, of the commander-in-chief; and he concluded by moving for a committee of inquiry.

The introduction of the subject gave rise to considerable discussion, and when various observations had been offered by different members, Mr. Perceval, chancellor of the exchequer, to the surprise and regret of the more considerate members, proposed that the inquiry should take place in a committee of the whole house, which was accordingly carried. This ill-advised measure gave occasion to some of the most indecent scenes ever witnessed in that assembly. The daring evidence of Mrs. Clarke was corroborated from various quarters, and fully proved the fact of her own profligate traffic. That she had actually received sums of money for her interest in obtaining promotions and other appointments was proved beyond all reasonable doubt; but the duke's knowledge of her transactions and participation in her gains, were circumstances, the proof of which depended chiefly on the testimony of Mrs. Clarke herself.

The defenders of his royal highness were, for the most part, members of the administration and the crown lawyers; whereas, on the other side were many of the most independent members, who did not always vote with the opposition. Testimonies the most respectable, however, were given by several distinguished persons to the excellence of the duke's general conduct in his high office, and the improvements which the military system had received under his management. Nor was it alleged against him that in any of the instances adduced, promotion had been bestowed on the undeserving, or yet that any pecuniary consideration had been actually received by the commander-in-chief. On the 23d of February, his royal highness addressed a letter to the speaker of the house of commons, in which he not only denied all personal participation, but the slightest knowledge of these abuses, adding, that, if upon such evidence as had been adduced against him, the house of commons could think his innocence questionable, he claimed of their justice that he should not be condemned without trial, nor be deprived of the benefit and protection which is afforded to every British subject, by those sanctions under which alone evidence is received by the ordinary administration of the laws.

It now became necessary to put an end to these anomalous proceedings, or to frame regular articles of impeachment. With a view to the first alternative, Mr. Perceval, on the 17th of March, moved a resolution, that the house, having examined the evidence, and having found that personal corruption, and connivance at corruption, had been imputed to the duke of York, were of opinion that the imputation was wholly unfounded,—which was carried by two hundred and seventy-eight against one hundred and ninety-six votes. But though the general conduct of his royal highness as commander-in-chief was not denied to be highly meritorious, the current of national opinion was so adverse, and the public indignation at the discoveries which had transpired so vehement, and so plainly indicated in the numerous addresses presented to colonel Wardle, that the royal duke found it expedient to resign his high office, which was transferred to the hands of sir David Dundas. On the notice of this resignation, a final resolve passed,

“that under existing circumstances the house did not think it necessary to proceed farther with the minutes of evidence taken before the committee,” which was carried by a large majority. Thus terminated a discussion which, whatever may be thought of its origin, was rendered important in its progress by the unusual interest taken in it throughout the country, and the freedom of debate with which it was conducted; and if its issue be regarded as a proof of the preponderating influence of the ministers in parliament, it also furnishes demonstrative evidence, that the most elevated rank cannot, under the British constitution, shelter abuses from detection, or protect those concerned in them from the effects of the public displeasure. During this ferment of the public mind, a charge of corruption, though of a very different nature, was brought against lord Castlereagh. While that nobleman presided at the India board, he had been complimented by the company with the disposal of a writership; and being desirous of a seat in parliament for a friend, he was recommended to a “trafficking broker,” who professed to be able to obtain one as an equivalent for the writership. With this man and for this purpose, lord Castlereagh most imprudently assented to an interview. But the writership, estimated by good judges at three thousand guineas, being a certainty, and the seat in reversion a great uncertainty, the treaty broke off. Though trafficking for seats in parliament was a practice of common occurrence, it was confessedly unconstitutional; and the requisite attention to decorum would not permit any individual occupying a high and responsible office to be personally concerned in any such transaction. Lord Castlereagh, in his defence, disclaimed being actuated by any corrupt motive, or the exertion of any official influence, though he much regretted that he had inadvertently been led to converse on such a subject with such a man as Reading. He farther added, that if the house deemed the action, or rather intention, which was all that the accusation amounted to, unparliamentary, he should bow to any censure which he might be thought to deserve.

A resolution of censure was accordingly moved by lord Archibald Hamilton, on the 25th of April, which gave rise to a long debate. But as the offence was only contemplated, and attended with palliating circumstances, the chancellor of the exchequer moved the order of the day, in voting for which, Mr. Canning took occasion to remark, “that he would by no means be understood in giving his vote, as thereby pronouncing the case submitted to them as not of very serious importance.” This opinion having apparently more weight than the vote, the order of the day was negatived, and Mr. Canning himself moved “that the house, on considering the whole of the case, saw no necessity for a criminating resolution,” which was carried by a majority of two hundred and fourteen to one hundred and sixty-seven voices. Before the close of the session, Mr. Curwen obtained leave to bring in a bill for securing the independence and purity of parliament, by preventing the obtaining of seats by improper means; and also to extend the laws against bribery. While the bill was in progress, the speaker of the house of commons made a strong appeal in its favour. “The question,” said this distinguished personage, “is no less than this: whether seats in this house shall henceforth be publicly saleable? A *proposition*, at the sound of which our ancestors would have started with indignation; but a *practice*, which, in these days, and within these walls, in utter oblivion of every former maxim and feeling of parliament, has been avowed and justified. If we forbear to reprobate this traffic, we give it legality and sanction. That it is a parliamentary offence, every page of our history, our statutes, and our journals bears evidence.” The bill, after various modifications, passed by a small majority.

In defiance, however, of these domestic feuds and disgraceful scenes, the exertions of England, at this period, were of a nature and upon a scale to surprise the world. It seemed as if her flag literally overwhelmed the whole seas on the coasts of Italy, Spain, the Ionian islands, and the Baltic sea. Wherever there was the least show of resistance to the yoke of Napoleon,