

Original Copy 1827
~~Herbert Marsh~~

THE
HISTORY
OF
THE POLITICKS
OF
GREAT BRITAIN AND FRANCE,

FROM
THE TIME OF THE CONFERENCE AT PILLNITZ,
TO THE DECLARATION OF WAR AGAINST
GREAT BRITAIN,

WITH
AN APPENDIX,

CONTAINING A NARRATIVE OF THE ATTEMPTS MADE BY THE
BRITISH GOVERNMENT TO RESTORE PEACE.

To which is now added,

A POSTSCRIPT,

Containing an Examination of the Conduct of the British Ministry,
relative to the late Proposal of BUONAPARTE.

—*—
IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.
—*—

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FROM THE

AND THE CONFERENCE AT BRISTOL TO

THE DECLARATION OF WAR AGAINST

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CHAP. XIII

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THOUGH the diplomatic relations between Great Britain and France, had been so far interrupted, that the credentials of the British Ambassador at Paris, which the deposition of Louis XVI. rendered useless,

less, had not been renewed, (1) and even in December, 1792, when Great Britain had so many grounds of complaint, no British Ambassador was sent to Paris, (2) yet on the other hand they were so far continued, that the British Government not only permitted both the French Minister Chauvelin, and other agents of the Executive Council, to reside in London, but likewise consented to negotiate with them. It is true, that Mr. Chauvelin had delivered no other letters of credence, than those which he had received from the late King of France, (3) and there-

(1) On this subject see the ninth chapter.

(2) The reasons why no British Ambassador was sent to Paris in December, 1792, have been assigned in the eleventh chapter.

(3) It was not before the 17th of January, 1793, that the British Cabinet was desired to accept of letters of credence for Mr. Chauvelin in the name of the Executive Council: and Mr. Chauvelin's negotiation with Lord Grenville began on the 27th of December 1792.

fore, according to diplomatic strictness, he could not be considered as a person vested with an official employment. However, since he still retained the title of French Minister, since he received regular communications from the new, as he had done from the old Government of France, and since these communications were both accepted and answered by the British Ministry, he so far supplied the place of a regularly accredited Ambassador, that if the French Government had been desirous of removing the grievances, of which the British Government complained, they might have been as easily removed by the agency of a person in the situation of Mr. Chauvelin, as by the agency of an Ambassador, who had received letters of credence in due form from the Executive Council. Further Lord Grenville assured Mr. Chauvelin, *“that outward forms would be no hindrance to his Britannic Majesty, whenever the question related to explanations, which*

“ which might be satisfactory and advantageous to both parties :” and Mr. Pitt himself declared in like manner to Mr. Chauvelin, “ that it was his desire to avoid a war, and to receive a proof of the same sentiments from the French Ministry.” This was acknowledged even by Brissot, in his report to the Convention of the 12th of January: (4) and he further admitted, not only “ that the British Ministry had both given and courted explanations,” (5) but that “ they

(4) Brissot’s own words were: “ Lord Grenville attestait à votre Ambassadeur, que les formes n’arrêteraient jamais le Roi d’Angleterre, lorsqu’il s’agirait d’obtenir des déclarations rassurantes et profitables pour les deux partis. Pitt de son côté ne témoignait au commencement de Décembre, que le désir d’éviter la guerre, et d’en avoir le témoignage du Ministère Français.” *Moniteur*, 15th Janv. 1793.

(5) “ On provoquait et donnait des explications.” *Ib.* It is extraordinary, that in defiance of these confessions of Brissot, relative both to Mr. Pitt and Lord Grenville, a British writer could venture to represent Ministers,

“ had pointed out the very terms of the interpretation, which would satisfy them in regard to the decree of the 19th of November.” (6) Their readiness, therefore, to negotiate with the new Government of France, in order, if possible, to avert the horrors of a war, admits of no doubt: and, though they had not formally recognized the French Republic, yet the very act of entering into a negotiation with the persons, who had the direction of it, was a virtual acknowledgment, that to these persons (whether justly or unjustly is another inquiry) belonged the executive authority of France. as “ scrupulously observant of the most novel punctilios, which could furnish the smallest pretence for repelling peace.”

(6) “ Le Ministère Anglais avait indiqué à un des agens de France à Londres les termes dans lesquels l’interprétation de ce décret devait être conçue pour rassurer pleinement le Cabinet de Saint-James et le Parlement.”

Ib. Whether the French Government *really* gave satisfactory explanations, is a question, which will be examined in the following part of this chapter.

Had

Had the British Ministry, as their adversaries pretend, been resolved at all events to engage in a war with France, with a view of overturning the new Government of that country, they would hardly have negotiated with its agents, they would hardly have given and have courted explanations, they would hardly have declared, that outward forms and diplomatic punctilios would present no obstacles to their treating on subjects, which regarded the welfare of both parties. It is a fact likewise, which is known to the whole world, that Lord Grenville actually conducted a negotiation with Mr. Chauvelin, relative to the complaints which the British Government had to make on the conduct of France: but whether the grounds of complaint were removed or corroborated by this negotiation, is a question on which the reader will easily decide, when the notes of Mr. Chauvelin, of the French

Executive Council, and of the British Secretary of State are laid before him.

Before, however, we proceed to this negotiation, which commenced on the 27th of December, 1792, it will be necessary to take notice of the conference, which Mr. Pitt had with Mr. Maret in the former part of this month, (7) and which is circumstantially related by Mr. Miles, (8) who was an inti-

7. I do not know the exact day on which this conference was held: but it must have taken place in the first half of the month, because Mr. Maret, though he waited for an answer from the French Executive Council relative to this conference, departed from London on the 18th, as appears from a letter written by Mr. Miles to Le Brun on the 19th, which begins thus: "Je vous ai déjà écrit par Monsieur Maret, qui est parti hier pour se rendre à Paris." Authentic Correspondence, Appendix, p. 63. At the end of January, Mr. Maret came again to London: but the history of this second journey belongs to the fifteenth chapter.

(8) Authentic Correspondence, p. 89—95.

mate

mate friend of the latter, and acted on this occasion as mediator between the two parties. A French agent (not Mr. Maret), with whom Mr. Miles had frequent conferences, but whose name he has not mentioned, had assured Mr. Miles, that he was empowered by the French Executive Council, to demand an audience of Mr. Pitt, and had requested Mr. Miles to wait on the Minister, and obtain his consent. This consent Mr. Pitt granted, without knowing even the name of the person with whom he was to confer: for, what was very extraordinary, the French agent insisted, that his name should not be mentioned, "till he had positive assurance, that he would be received, and a rendezvous was given." (9) As

(9) *Ib.* p. 90. Mr. Pitt's condescension in granting an interview to an agent of the French Executive Council, even though this person insisted that his name should not be previously mentioned, shows how ardently Mr. Pitt desired to avoid a rupture with France.

this.

this circumstance necessarily excited distrust, Mr. Miles, before the meeting took place again, pressed the agent not to deceive him; he represented the disagreeable consequences which might ensue, if he were not really authorized by the French Executive Council to demand the interview to which Mr. Pitt had consented, and, in case he were not already authorized, Mr. Miles proposed to defer the conference for a few days, during which a messenger might go to Paris, and return with the necessary instructions. But the French agent again protested that he was already empowered to hold a conference with Mr. Pitt. (10) After all these preparations and repeated protestations, every one would have supposed, that this person would have been able on the day of meeting to produce such instructions from the French Executive Council, as would have empowered him to treat on the differ-

(10) *Ib.* p. 91.

ences subsisting between Great Britain and France. But, strange to relate, when the meeting took place, and his instructions were demanded, it appeared, that *he had no authority whatsoever*: and to augment, if possible, the insult which he had thus offered to the British Minister, he had the assurance to present another, as the person authorised to treat, who had no more authority than the pretended plenipotentiary himself. This other person was the well-known Mr. Maret, who was come over to England merely in the domestic concerns of the Duke of Orleans, and who, as his intimate friend Mr. Miles expressly testifies, *never pretended to have had any other business.* (11) And that he had no authority whatsoever from the French Executive Council to treat on state affairs, may be proved not only by the testimony of Mr. Miles, but by the evidence of Mr. Maret himself: for, on the 11th of Ja-

(11) *Ib. ib.*

January, 1793, a few weeks after his return to Paris, he wrote a letter to Mr. Miles, in which he made the following declaration.

*“I had no authority to treat, I had no mission :
“and when I declared this to Mr. Pitt and to
“yourself, I declared the truth.”* (12)

A scene like that, which has been just described, would have been sufficient to rouse

(12) Mr. Maret's own words were : “ Je n'avais ni
“ autorisation, ni mission : et j'ai dit la vérité en la
“ déclarant à vous et à Monsieur Pitt.” *Authentic
Correspondence, Appendix, p. 70.*—On the 18th of
December, 1792, about a week after the conference
had been held, Mr. Miles, in a letter to Le Brun, ex-
pressed his surprize at the unexpected issue of it, in the
following terms : “ Mr. *** m'a toujours juré qu'il
“ était autorisé à voir le Ministre, et je vous laisse à
“ juger de ma surprize, quand j'ai vu sortir de derriere
“ le rideau M. Maret, comme chargé d'une mission se-
“ crete, et que c'était lui, et non Mr. *** qui devait
“ voir Mr. Pitt. Si j'ai été étonné de tout ce qui est
“ passé, j'ai du l'être bien davantage, quand j'ai appris
“ que M. Maret n'était pas autorisé de traiter des affaires
“ politiques.” *Ib. p. 64.*

the indignation of any man, who was not endowed with the greatest moderation. The two-fold deception, which took place on this occasion, and the falsehoods of which the French agent was not ashamed to be guilty, shewed that the emissaries of the Executive Council thought themselves at liberty to trifle with a British Minister, even at the expense of truth. If then, after the manifold indignities which the British Government had already received from the National Convention, this additional insult had provoked an absolute refusal to listen any longer to the representations of its agents, I much question whether any Briton, who has the honour of his country at heart, would venture to blame it. Yet, notwithstanding these repeated affronts, Mr. Pitt, who sacrificed resentment to the desire of preserving peace, declared to Mr. Maret at this very conference, that in case he could obtain instructions, “ *it would give him great pleasure*

“to treat with him as a confidential person
“from the French Executive Council.” (13)

Greater willingness, and in fact, when we consider all circumstances, greater condescension on the part of a British Minister was hardly possible : and the expression, “a confidential person from the *French Executive Council*,” is far from indicating a contempt for the new Government of France, or a reluctance to treat with the agents of a Council, “whose heads had not been anointed
“from the holy oil-cruze before the altar of
“Rheims.” (14) Mr. Maret himself was so well pleased with his reception, and derived

(13) Mr. Miles says, p. 94, that he has Mr. Maret’s own authority for this assertion.

(14) These ill-timed words of a celebrated leader of Opposition were applied by Le Brun, in his report to the Convention of the 19th of December (*Moniteur*, 21st Dec. 1792), with great advantage to the French cause, which is in general under great obligations to the same orator.

from

from it such sanguine expectations of being enabled to act as a mediator of peace, which he sincerely wished to preserve, (15) that he immediately dispatched a courier to Paris, in the hope of obtaining instructions to treat with the British Government. (16) But the French Executive Council not only refused to send the required instructions, but even ordered him to abstain from all conversation with Mr. Pitt on the subject of politics, and to return immediately to Paris. "He was at my house," says Mr. Miles, (17) "when the dispatch arrived, and I read it with the more surprize and indignation on finding that Le Brun had reported to the Convention, that Mr. Pitt, alarmed, (18) had solicited an interview

(15) Authentic Correspondence, p. 91, 92.

(16) *Ib.* p. 94.

(17) *Ib.* p. 95.

(18) As Le Brun attributed to fear Mr. Pitt's readiness to treat with an agent of the French Executive Council,

“with the secret agents of the Executive Council, but that he (Le Brun), had expressly forbidden them to have any communication with the English Minister.”

Council, which he moreover strangely perverted, what inference would he have deduced, had a British Ambassador been sent to Paris to demand explanations? Nor was Le Brun the only one, who ascribed Mr. Pitt's pacific disposition to the meanest motives, on which account Mr. Miles, in a letter to Le Brun of the 2d of January, 1793, made the following complaint:

“Sa condéscendance à été attribuée, non à la franchise, non à l'intérêt qu'il est censé prendre à la prospérité de sa patrie, non pas à un principe de bonne politique, fondé sur les bases de la probité et de l'humanité, mais à la faiblesse, ou à un motif encore moins excusable, qui ne lui fera jamais attribué *que par des hommes sans vertu, et qui étant dépourvus de tout sentiment d'honneur, ne croient pas que de tels sentiments puissent exister chez les autres.* Selon eux, c'était à la crainte ou à la perfidie, que M. Maret devait son entrevue avec M. Pitt. Grand Dieu! quelle crainte aurait-il pu avoir? Une seule peut-être! Le poignard d'un assassin? Et qu'avait-il à gagner par la perfidie, etc.?” *Authentic Correspondence. Appendix,*

p. 92.

Dejected

Dejected at the unexpected issue of this affair, Mr. Miles wrote to Le Brun on the 18th of December, the day that Mr. Maret departed from London, and said, "I am sincerely grieved to see all my efforts for preserving peace and uniting the two nations, likely to fail through ill-founded prepossessions, (19) misconceptions, and underhand manœuvres, (20) as dangerous, as they are contrary to the real interest of both countries." (21) In the same letter,

(19) Namely, ill-founded prepossessions against the British Ministry, which Mr. Miles in this letter endeavours to remove.

(20) Mr. Miles (p. 94.) ascribes to the underhand manœuvres of Mr. Chauvelin, to whom Mr. Maret communicated the conversation between himself and Mr. Pitt, the refusal of the Executive Council, to permit Mr. Maret to negotiate. At the same time, another motive operated probably with Le Brun, as will appear hereafter.

(21) "Londres, le 18 Decembre, 1792.

"Je suis au desespoir, Monsieur, de voir tous mes ef-

speaking of Noel and Maret, he said, " I cannot but approve of their civility toward me, and their loyalty toward their country : *and if you had permitted the latter to complete what he had so well begun, I believe you would have had reason to be satisfied with his conduct.* After having assured you, that I had no personal interest in the negotiation, for which I had nearly paved the way, I hope you will yield to wise and prudent counsels, and that you will not miss the opportunity, which offers, of securing happiness to your country, and tranquillity to Europe. Do not imagine, that the people of England are disposed to revolt against the Government : do not imagine, that war is wished for in this

forts pour conserver la paix et rapprocher les deux nations prêts à s'échouer par des préventions mal-fondées, des malentendus, et des intrigues sourdes et dangereuses, autant qu'elles sont contraires aux véritables intérêts des deux pays." Authentic Correspondence. Appendix, p. 71.

" country

“ country : on the contrary, we wish to live
 “ on good terms with France.” (22) In the
 same letter, likewise, he declared to Le Brun,
 that, though Mr. Maret’s conference with
 Mr. Pitt had, through the fault of the Exe-
 cutive Council, produced no effect, he had
 promised Mr. Noel; (who was then lately
 arrived in London, but before the end of
 the month went as French Minister to the
 Hague) to procure for him also a conference,

(22) “ J’ai à me louer de leur conduite honnête à
 “ mon égard et loyale envers leur patrie ; et si vous euf-
 “ siez permis au dernier (Maret) d’achever ce qu’il a si
 “ bien commencé, je crois que vous auriez eu lieu d’en être
 “ très satisfait. Après vous avoir assuré, que je n’ai au-
 “ cun intérêt personnel dans la négociation que j’avais
 “ presque entamée, j’espère que vous vous prêterez à
 “ des conseils sages et prudents, et que vous ne perdrez
 “ pas l’occasion qui se présente d’assurer le bonheur de
 “ votre pays et la tranquillité de l’Europe. N’imaginez
 “ point que le peuple Anglais soit disposé à se revolter
 “ contre le Gouvernement ; n’imaginez pas qu’on dé-
 “ fire la guerre ici ; point du tout, nous désirons de
 “ vivre en bonne intelligence avec la France.” Ib.

as soon as he should be authorized by the Executive Council : (23) and in another letter which he wrote on the following day, and which Mr. Noel himself transmitted to Paris, (24) he again reminded Le Brun “ to
 “ authorize either Maret or Noel, to give sa-
 “ tisfactory explanations upon those points,
 “ which appeared, and with reason, to give
 “ uneasiness to our Government.” (25) But
 all his expostulations were fruitless : for the

(23) “ La premiere fois que je vis M. Noel, et qu’il
 “ m’eut appris l’objet de son voyage, je lui promis de
 “ lui procurer le moyen d’obtenir une entrevue avec
 “ M. Pitt, dès qu’il eut l’autorisation du Conseil Exé-
 “ cutif.” *Ib.* p. 76.

(24) His letter to Le Brun of the 19th of December
 begins thus. “ Je vous ai déjà écrit par M. Maret, qui
 “ est parti hier pour se rendre à Paris. Je vous écris en-
 “ core aujourd’hui confidentiellement, et c’est M. Noel
 “ qui aura la bonté de faire passer ma lettre.” *Ib.*
 p. 63.

(25) “ Voilà l’histoire abrégée de cette ridicule avan-
 “ ture (Mr. Maret’s conference with Mr. Pitt) qui
 “ m’ôtera

French Executive Council departed not from the resolution which had been once taken. (26)

It is here unnecessary to examine, whether the Executive Council acted with propriety or not, in refusing to authorise Mr. Maret to treat with the British Ministry, as it undoubtedly possessed the power of exercising its own judgment, in regard to the choice of a negotiator. But, as Mr. Maret had already had a conference with Mr. Pitt, as he was highly satisfied with his reception, and in consequence of the assurances which he received from the British Minister, had sent a courier to Paris in order to obtain in-

“ m’ôtera à jamais peut-être les moyens d’entamer une
“ négociation, si vous n’autorisez pas Maret ou Noel à
“ donner des explications suffisantes sur les points qui sem-
“ blent donner, et avec raison, de l’inquiétude à notre Gou-
“ vernement.” lb. p. 65.

(26) This resolution has been quoted at the end of the preceding paragraph.

structions, the refusal of the Executive Council, especially as Mr. Maret himself sincerely wished to prevent a rupture, by no means evinced a similar pacific disposition on the part of the French Government. Mr. Chauvelin, on the contrary, was very hostilely inclined: he made no scruple to declare, "that if he was not received at St. James's, the height of his ambition would be to leave this country with a declaration of war:" (27) and Mr. Miles, who was well acquainted with his character, has declared, that if a pretext for a quarrel between the two countries had been purposely sought, "France certainly could not have selected a better object for the purpose." (28) It is no wonder therefore that the British Ministry would rather have negotiated with Mr. Maret, whose pacific sentiments coincided with their

(27) Authentic Correspondence, p. 84.

(28) *Ib. ib.*

own, than with Mr. Chauvelin, who was equally desirous of war with his employers themselves. Besides, if Mr. Chauvelin alone was destined to negotiate, why did the Executive Council send so many other agents at this time to London : (29) and why did these agents demand conferences, if they had no authority to treat? We may submit it to the judgment of every impartial man to determine, whether this conduct bore not evident marks of duplicity, whether these agents belonged not to the class of emissaries, whose object was to excite an insurrection, and whether the conferences, demanded of the British Ministry, were not intended merely as cloaks to cover their really hostile designs. (30) It may be demanded further, whe-

(29) Mr. Miles (p. 96) says, "there was a constant supply of them." But Mr. Maret, as we have seen, was not of the number, as he had no mission whatsoever from the Executive Council.

(30) Mr. Miles (p. 94) has promised to explain at a

ther Le Brun, if he had been disposed to prevent a rupture with Great Britain, would have so shamefully misinterpreted the conference which was held with Mr. Maret: or whether the Executive Council would have permitted it, if they had not been inclined to provoke the British Government to a contest, which, it was the firm belief in Paris, would instantly occasion a revolt throughout this country. (31) But whether these questions be answered in the affirmative or not, thus much at least has been proved by evidence, which no one can controvert, that it was no refusal on the part of the British Ministry, as Opposition writers, and Opposition orators have repeatedly asserted, but the obstinacy of the French Executive period the cause of the above-mentioned imposition, which was practised by the French agent both on himself and Mr. Pitt. Whether he has ever done so, I know not.

(31) See the Authentic Correspondence, p. 96.

cutive Council, which prevented Mr. Pitt's conference with Mr. Maret from producing the desired effect. (32)

(32) Though the calumnies, which have been propagated against the British Government both at home and abroad during the present war, are almost without number, yet nothing can well surpass the malevolence, which appears in the inventions, which certain persons have ventured to lay before the public as real history, in regard to Mr. Maret. For they have not only declared, that he was furnished with instructions from the Executive Council, but have even fabricated the terms of these instructions, which they have rendered very conciliatory, in order to increase the odium, which they would willingly throw on Ministers, who, as they pretend, refused these advantageous offers, and consequently, as the said persons conclude, merited the execration of their country. That this representation of the conduct of certain Opposition writers may not be thought exaggerated, I will quote the following passage, which every one acquainted with political publications will easily know where to find. "It is confidently reported, that Mr. Maret had it in his instructions, "unequivocally to offer to our Ministry these three "points: First, that the navigation of the Scheldt should "be given up; secondly, that the French troops should

As it was the will therefore of the French Executive Council, that Mr. Chauvelin alone should conduct the negotiation with the British, not approach the Dutch territories within a given distance; and that the decree of the 19th of November should be either altered or repealed. When the ostensible reasons for undertaking a war are thus previously removed by the concession of the enemy, then none but the most suspicious motives can induce Ministers to sacrifice the peace, treasure, and welfare of the country to their secret or wicked views."—A charge of so black a nature, as is here laid to the British Ministry, and laid with the consciousness, as it necessarily was, of being unable to support it by any real evidence, betrays something worse than mere levity. Nor has the charge been confined to political publications, for it has been often heard even in the British Senate, till the authentic documents were published by Mr. Miles, who calls it p. 92.) "the vile expedient of a distressed and hungry faction, impatient to get into office, upon any terms, and by any means." Similar falsehoods were propagated in regard to Mr. Maret's journey to London at the end of January, 1793: but the notice of these must be deferred to the fifteenth chapter, where the history of Mr. Maret's second journey will be given at large.

nistry,

tish Ministry, he accordingly, on the 27th of December, 1792, delivered to Lord Grenville, his Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the foreign department, the following note. (33)

33. The French original is printed in the *Moniteur*, 3d. Jan. 1793.—In order to preserve, as much as possible, diplomatic accuracy, I have in general hitherto quoted French documents in their original language, even where an English translation is given in the text. But as the notes, which were exchanged during the present negotiation are very long, and it is necessary to lay the *whole* of their contents before the reader, in order to enable him to judge, whether the subjects in debate were fully exhausted, on which his final decision must now depend: further, as these notes in the English translation were laid before the British Parliament on the 28th of January, 1793, and thus acquired the authority of the originals themselves, I hope no one will take it ill, that I here make an exception, and produce only the English translation, which I copy from the *New Annual Register*. However, should any one doubt of its accuracy, he may easily compare it with the originals, because it will be always noted, where the originals are to be found: and in those passages, where there is room for verbal criticism, I shall not neglect to quote
even

“ The undersigned Minister Plenipoten-
 “ tiary of France has the honour to commu-
 “ nicate to Lord Grenville the instructions,
 “ which he has received from the Executive
 “ Council of the French Republic, with or-
 “ ders to lay them before his Britannic Ma-
 “ jesty’s Secretary of State for the depart-
 “ ment of foreign affairs, in case he should
 “ think that he should not speedily enough
 “ obtain an interview with the Minister.

“ The French Government, by continu-
 “ ing, since the recall of Lord Gower from
 “ Paris, to leave at London a Minister Ple-
 even here the French words themselves. At the same
 time I shall take the liberty of accompanying the notes,
 which passed on this occasion, with a continued com-
 mentary, in which the *actions* of the French Govern-
 ment will be compared with its *declarations*.—During
 this negotiation, Mr. Chauvelin wrote twice to Lord
 Grenville on the alien and corn bills: these two letters
 have no reference to our present inquiry, but belong to
 the eleventh chapter, where proper notice has been al-
 ready taken of them.

“ nipotentiary,

“ nipotentiary, though they gave to his Bri-
“ tannic Majesty an unequivocal proof of
“ the desire they had to remain in good un-
“ derstanding with the British Court, (34)

(34) This argument has likewise been used even by British writers, to prove the pacific disposition of the French rulers. But the premises by no means warrant the inference, which is deduced from them: for one Government may have resolved to engage in war with another, and yet, in order to conceal its intentions, permit its Ambassador to reside with that other Government, till the plan is fully ripe for execution. The mere possibility of this case destroys the whole force of the above-mentioned argument: and that in regard to France it was not only possible, but highly probable, or rather absolutely certain, is evident from the facts, which have been related in the tenth and twelfth chapters of this work. Further, it is to be observed, that, immediately after the return of Lord Gower from Paris, Mr. Chauvelin was actually recalled from London, that his letters of recall were brought by Mr. Noel, that Mr. Chauvelin objected, “ that though he was
“ not well with the English Minister, yet he was per-
“ fectly so with Mr. Fox, and some other members of
“ Opposition, and that it would not be prudent in
“ France to lose the fruits of his labours with these gen-
“ tlemen,

“ and to see all those clouds dissipated,
 “ to which events, necessary and insepa-
 “ rable from the internal Government of
 “ France, (35) seemed then to have given
 “ birth. The intentions of the Executive
 “ Council of France toward England have
 “ never ceased to be the same: (36) but
 “ them, and their subsequent services, for a vain form of
 “ diplomatic etiquette,” and that in consequence of this
 argument the Executive Council revoked the order, and
 permitted Mr. Chauvelin’s further residence in Lon-
 don. See the Authentic Correspondence, Appendix,
 p. 83. So far therefore was *friendship* for the British
 Court, as was asserted in Mr. Chauvelin’s note, the
 cause of his continuing to reside in London, that sheer
enmity to the Court of Great Britain was the motive
 of it.

(35) The events, which are here officially declared
 to have been *necessary and inseparable from the internal
 Government of France*, were the massacres committed on
 the 10th of August, 1792. From this declaration we
 may judge of the character of the men, with whom
 Great Britain was then doomed to negotiate.

(36) This assertion admits of no doubt.

“ they

“ they cannot see with indifference the
“ public conduct, which the British Minis-
“ try observe at present toward France.
“ It is much to be regretted, that they
“ have perceived in this conduct an in-
“ disposition, which they still force them-
“ selves not to believe. (37) They think it a
“ duty, however, which they owe to the
“ French nation, not to leave it much longer

(37) The French Executive Council here complains, that the British Government was *ill* disposed toward that of France, as if they had a right to expect that it should be *well* disposed toward those, who on the 28th of November, and on other occasions, had avowed their intentions of overturning the British constitution. But it is the practice of the modern rulers of France to make an absolute game of common sense; and they shew in all their dealings, that they imagine men are already prepared to receive chains, not only for their persons, but for their understandings. It must be admitted, likewise, that not a few have answered these expectations: and hence the present Directory is encouraged to impose on the world fallacious arguments, with as much assurance as the National Convention did.

“ in a state of uncertainty, into which it has
 “ been thrown by several measures lately
 “ adopted by the British Government, an
 “ uncertainty in which the English nation
 “ must share, and which must be equally
 “ unworthy of both. (38) The Executive
 “ Council of the French Republic has con-
 “ frequently authorised the Minister of France
 “ at London to demand with openness of the
 “ Ministers of his Britannic Majesty, whe-
 “ ther France ought to consider England as
 “ a neutral or hostile power, and has parti-
 “ cularly charged him to obtain, on this
 “ point, a definitive answer. (39) “ But in

(38) Whatever unworthiness there may be in a state
 of uncertainty, no such unworthiness fell to the share
 of the British Ministers, for they were already tolerably
 certain in regard to the designs of France, and conse-
 quently in regard to the measures which it was necessary
 to take at home.

(39) The best answer to this question was contained
 in the decree of the 19th of November, in the encour-
 agement given by the National Convention on the

“ demanding from the Ministers of his Bri-
 “ tannic Majesty an open and candid expla-
 “ nation of its intentions toward France, the
 “ Executive Council does not wish, that the
 “ smallest doubt should exist respecting the
 “ disposition of France toward England, and
 “ of its desire to remain at peace with it.
 “ They even wish to answer previously to all

28th of the same month to the societies, who announced
 their intention of overturning the British Constitution,
 in the decree of the 15th of December, and in the reso-
 lution of the 24th of that month, not to except Eng-
 land from the decree of the 19th of November: to
 say nothing of the circular letter of the Marine Minis-
 ter, and the order actually given to invade Holland, as
 they succeeded by several days Mr. Chauvelin's note of
 the 27th of December. In fact, after the French Go-
 vernment had solemnly declared itself the enemy of the
 British Government, it required no small share of assur-
 ance to demand a categorical answer, whether the latter
 intended to become the enemy of the former. There
 was only one categorical answer which could be given
 to such a question, namely: “ since you are resolved to
 become my enemy, I *must* become your's in my own
 defence.”

“ those reproaches, which may be thrown
“ out against France, in order to justify
“ England. Reflecting on the reasons, which
“ might determine his Britannic Majesty to
“ break with the French Republic, the Exe-
“ cutive Council can see them only in a
“ false interpretation given perhaps to the
“ decree of the National Convention of the
“ 19th of November.(40) If the British
“ Ministry are really alarmed at that decree,
“ it can only be for want of comprehending
“ the true meaning of it. The National
“ Convention never intended that the French
“ republic should favour insurrections, and
“ espouse the cause of a few seditious per-
“ sons, or, in a word, that it should endea-
“ vour to excite disturbance in any neutral or
“ friendly country whatever. Such an idea

(40) Even without so much reflexion, the Executive Council might have discovered many other reasons, which not only excited a suspicion, but proved to a demonstration that the National Convention was hostilely inclined toward the British Cabinet.

“ would

“ would be rejected by the French nation.
 “ It cannot without injustice be imputed to
 “ the National Convention. “ *This decree*
 “ *then is applicable only to those people, who,*
 “ *after having conquered their liberty, may re-*
 “ *quest the fraternity and assistance of the*
 “ *French republic, by a solemn and unequivocal*
 “ *expression of the general will.*” (41)

(41) This explanation is an instance of such black hypocrisies, and such daring assurance, as is hardly to be found but within the limits of republican France: for it was given twelve days *after* the decree of the 15th of December, in which the National Convention had solemnly declared, “ that every nation which would *not* rebel against its government, should be treated as an *enemy.*” See Note 14 to the preceding chapter. It was given likewise three days after the resolution of the 24th of December, by which the National Convention had determined, that the decree of the 19th of November should be actually applied to England. And yet Mr. Chauvelin, or rather the Executive Council, was not ashamed to assert, in this very note, that such an idea could not without injustice be imputed to the National Convention, and that this venerable body, which had declared itself the decided enemy of all nations, which

“ France not only ought and wishes to respect the independence of England, but would not rebel against their governments, had no design whatsoever of exciting insurrections in neutral countries. Besides, the interpretation here given of the decree of the 19th of November, is in direct contradiction to the plain terms of the decree itself, which are, “ la Convention Nationale accordera fraternité et secours à tous les peuples qui *voudront* recouvrer leur liberté,” not *qui ont recouvré* leur liberté, as the interpretation implies, which in other respects is a manifest absurdity, it being incredible, that in any country a disaffected party, which had been able without the assistance of France to accomplish its purpose, and effect a revolution, should be so completely besotted, as *afterwards* to require the intervention of the Great Nation. Further, the general proclamation, annexed to the decree of the 15th of December, in which the following words, “ nous sommes venus *pour chasser vos tyrans*,” (Ch. xii. Note 22.) was put into the mouth of the French Generals, affords an additional proof, that it was not the intention of the National Convention to defer the promised fraternity, till the nations, for whom this inestimable blessing was designed, had already dethroned their sovereigns. And that it was the grand *objet* of the decree of the 19th of November to *excite* insurrections, had been admitted by the same French Minister,

“ that also of its allies, with whom it is not
 “ at war. The undersigned, therefore, has

Le Brun, from whom Chauvelin received his instructions. For on the 5th of December, three weeks, therefore, before Mr. Chauvelin delivered the present note to Lord Grenville, Le Brun in a letter to the President of the National Convention announced an insurrection in a bishoprick of the German empire as an *happy effect* of the said decree. “ Citoyen Président,
 “ nous éprouvons de jour en jour les heureux *effets* du
 “ décret de la Convention Nationale, qui promet, au
 “ nom de la nation Française, assistance et protection
 “ aux peuples qui osent sécouer le joug de la tyrannie,
 “ et qui plantent au milieu d’eux l’arbre de la liberté.
 “ Les habitans de l’évêché de Porentru, etc.—*forts de*
 “ *la loi du 19 Novembre*, leur courage s’est ranimé, etc.”

Moniteur, 7 Dec. 1792. (The result of this happy effect was the establishment, under the auspices of the Great Nation, of the now forgotten Rauracian republic, which, like the Cisrhenane, preserved a temporary existence, till the mother-republic thought proper to take her daughter republics into her own bosom). In like manner, the President himself, on the 3d of December had quoted the decree in question, and introduced it with the following preface: “ N’aurions-nous
 “ *réveillé* les peuples souverains, detrônés par les rois,
 “ que pour les replonger par des traités dans la servi-

“been charged to declare formally, that
 “France will not attack Holland, while that
 “power confines itself, on its part, within the
 “bounds of strict neutrality. (42)

“rude?—Notre diplôme d’alliance et de défense réci-
 “proque est écrit de la main de la nature. Nos prin-
 “cipes et *notre haine contre les tyrans*, voilà nos minis-
 “tres plénipotentiaires.” *Moniteur*, 6 Dec. 1792.
 (It is never to be forgotten, that, in the language of
 the National Convention, the words *Roi* and *Tyran* are
 perfectly synonymous). Likewise Rémi, a celebrated
 orator of the Convention said, on the 2d of December:
 “Apprenez aux peuples à punir leurs tyrans d’une ma-
 “nière digne d’eux.—Si vous eleviez des doutes sur la
 “condamnation du dernier de vos tyrans, si vous le
 “supposiez encore au dessus des autres hommes, quel
 “exemple donneriez-vous *aux peuples à qui vous portez*
 “*la liberté?* Ils croiraient devoir hésiter, comme vous, à
 “punir leurs tyrans.” *Ib.* After the unanimous interpre-
 tations then, which had been publicly given in the Con-
 vention itself at the beginning of December, one of
 which proceeded from the President, and another from
 the Minister for foreign affairs, it was expected that the
 British Ministry, at the end of the same month, should
 give credit to Mr. Chauvelin’s diametrically opposite
 interpretation!

(42) Yet only *fourteen days* after this solemn declara-
 tion,

“ The British Government being thus assured, respecting the two points, no pretension (which has had such an effect on a celebrated Opposition writer, that he has asserted so late as the year 1797, “ the security of Holland, while she preserved her neutrality, was professed and in a manner *guaranteed*”) the Executive Council sent positive orders to General Miranda, to invade, within twelve days at furthest, Dutch Flanders and the province of Zealand. (See Ch. xii. Notes 50—53) It cannot be objected that the States General had in the mean time transgressed the bounds of neutrality, for a more scrupulous observation of them was impossible. An attack on France could not even have suggested itself to the Government of Holland; for the Dutch troops were withdrawn from the frontiers to preserve tranquillity in the interior, which the French party in Holland threatened to disturb: and it was the defenceless state, in which the Dutch frontier towns were thus left, that tempted the Executive Council to give the order for invasion. But we need not wonder at the falsity displayed in Mr. Chauvelin’s note, since Brissot, who knew all the secrets of the Executive Council, and was their principal agent in the National Convention, declared two days *after* the order for the invasion of Holland had been actually given, that the French Government had no such intention. His own words were: “ L’agression du Stadthouder envers

“ tence for the least difficulty can remain,
 “ but on the question of opening the Scheldt,
 “ a question irrevocably decided by reason
 “ la France, ou l’insurrection contre lui de la majorité
 “ des Hollandais, voilà *les seuls cas*, ou la France croi-
 “ rait de son devoir, et de sa justice, de porter les armes
 “ dans des Provinces-Unies : *et ces cas n’existent point, et*
 “ *la France, en ce, veut rester tranquille.*” *Moniteur*, 15
 Janv. 1793. The words, “ ces cas n’existent point,”
 contain likewise an acknowledgment, that the Stadt-
 holder had not acted hostilely toward France. Lastly,
 as soon as Brissot had ended his speech, the National
 Convention confirmed his declaration in regard to Hol-
 land by the following decree : “ Que le Conseil Exé-
 cutif est chargé de déclarer au Gouvernement d’An-
 gleterre, que l’intention de la république Française est
 d’entretenir l’harmonie et la fraternité avec la nation
 Anglaise, de respecter son indépendance et celle de ces
alliés, tant que l’Angleterre et ses alliés ne l’attaqueront
 pas.” *Ib.* On the 10th of January, therefore, the French
 Government gave the order for the invasion of Holland,
 and on the twelfth of the same month a *formal decree* was
 issued, containing the most positive assurances of the
 contrary. So daring and so solemn a falsehood had
 probably never been uttered by Statesmen of any coun-
 try, till French philosophy and French republicanism
 had set religion and honour at defiance.

“ and

“ and justice, of little importance in it-
 “ self, (43) and on which the opinion of
 “ England, and perhaps even of Holland
 “ are too well known, to render it difficult
 “ to make it seriously the sole cause of a
 “ war. Should the British Ministry, how-
 “ ever, embrace this last motive to induce
 “ them to declare war against France, would
 “ it not then be probable, that their private
 “ intention was to bring about a rupture at
 “ any rate, and to take the advantage at
 “ present of the most futile of all pretences,

(43) It was of no importance, therefore, whether the mouth of the Scheldt should be converted into a station for a French fleet! See what is said on this subject in the tenth and eleventh chapters. The French Government know, likewise, very well how important the mouth of the Scheldt was for *France*, or they would not have stipulated in the fourteenth article of the treaty, which they forced on Holland, in May, 1795, that the town and harbour of Flushing, the fortifications of which command the mouth of the Scheldt, should be constantly garrisoned by French troops.

“to colour an unjust aggression long ago
 “meditated? (44)

(44) This passage is fraught with artifice and sophistry. In the first place it is presupposed, what is absolutely false, that the appropriation of the Scheldt to France (for this was manifestly the meaning of what was called the opening of it) was a matter of total indifference both to England and Holland: and from these premises is deduced the inference, not that the British Ministry, in case they opposed the design, set too great a value on the preservation of the Scheldt, which is the only inference, that the premises, even if they were true, would warrant, but that the British Ministry had *long ago* meditated an attack on France. Now since the 16th of November, 1792, the day on which the resolution was made for the opening of the Scheldt, several other very alarming measures had been taken by the National Convention, which necessarily operated as still stronger inducements with the British Ministry, to oppose the ambition of France. Consequently, even if a declaration of war had proceeded from the British Government, instead of proceeding, as it really did, from the French Convention, and even if the opening of the Scheldt had been a matter of as little consequence as was pretended, still the natural conclusion would have been, that those more alarming measures, that those

more

“ On this fatal supposition, which the
 “ Executive Council rejects, (45) the under-
 “ signed would be authorised to support
 “ with energy the dignity of the French
 “ people, and to declare with firmness, that
 “ a free and powerful nation will accept war,
 “ and repel with indignation an aggression
 “ so manifestly unjust, and so unprovoked on
 “ their part. (46) When all these explana-
 more important motives had occasioned the war, and
 not that long existing causes, which the Executive
 Council neither did nor could alledge, had produced it.

(45) Here the fatal supposition is rejected : but with
 the usual consistency of the Executive Council, it will
 be soon afterwards again assumed.

(46) Whoever has read the facts recorded in the
 tenth and twelfth chapters of this work will find it diffi-
 cult, perhaps, to repress the indignation which he must
 necessarily feel at the hypocrisy and insolence of the
 French Executive Council, in daring to use such ex-
 pressions, as “ *unprovoked aggression, purity of the in-*
 “ *tentions of France, peaceful and conciliatory measures,*”
 and the like. But though they well knew, that they
 were

“ tions, necessary to demonstrate the purity
“ of the intentions of France, and when all
“ peaceful and conciliatory measures shall
“ have been exhausted by the French na-
“ tion, it is evident that the whole weight,
“ and the whole responsibility of the war
“ will sooner or later fall upon those who
“ have provoked it. Such a war would
“ really be the war of the British Ministry
“ only against the French Republic: and,
“ should this truth appear for a moment
“ doubtful, it would not perhaps be impos-
“ sible for France to render it soon evident
“ to a nation, which, in giving its confi-
“ dence, never renounced the exercise of

were uttering falsehoods, they knew likewise that these falsehoods would produce effect: they knew that they were furnishing their advocates with the means of defence: and they knew by experience how many thousands were at that time ready to become the dupes of the most wretched artifice. It is likewise a matter of great importance, when a revolution of principles is to be effected, to gain the popular opinion.

“ reason,

“ reason, and its respect for justice and
“ truth. (47)

(47) “ Ce ne serait réellement qu’une guerre du
seul Ministère contre la *république Française*, et si cette
vérité pouvait paraître un moment douteuse, il ne serait
peut-être pas difficile d’en convaincre bientôt une *na-*
tion, qui en donnant sa confiance, n’a jamais renoncé à
l’exercice de sa raison, à son respect pour la vérité et la
justice.” This sentence relates to the appeal to the
English *nation*, which Le Brun had already announced
to the National Convention on the 19th of December,
and which he said he had given Chauvelin express or-
ders to make. (See Ch. xii. Note 27.) It has been
shewn in the tenth chapter, that the French Govern-
ment was at this time fully persuaded the people of
England were ripe for rebellion. Consequently, it
was supposed that nothing would more contribute to set
this people in commotion, than an appeal to their *rea-*
son, and their respect for justice and truth, namely, as is
necessarily understood, and as Brissot, in his interpreta-
tion of the appeal, openly declared (Ch. xii. Note 34.)
from the *unreasonableness, the injustice and faithlessness* of
their Governments, from which the people would with-
draw that confidence they had hitherto placed in it, and
take the administration of public affairs into their own
hands, as soon as they were convinced, (which convic-
tion the French attempted to produce by every possible
artifice,

“ Such are the instructions, which the
“ undersigned has received orders to com-
artifice, though in vain) that the British Ministry *alone*
wished for war, and that too merely because France was
become a *republic*. Such is undoubtedly the meaning,
though it is very artfully veiled, of the present passage
in Mr. Chauvelin’s note. Now, when two Govern-
ments are at variance, and in a negotiation relative to
the points in dispute, an Ambassador of the one re-
ceives orders, not only to use insulting language to the
Ministers of the other, but to excite an insurrection of
the people, it is evident that the former Government
wishes not for a continuance but for a breach of peace
with the latter, which the circular letter of the Marine
Minister, issued during this very negotiation, fully con-
firms. If a British Ambassador at Paris had ventured,
in a note to the Executive Council, to threaten an ap-
peal to the people of France, in case the National Con-
vention continued to pursue its plans of conquest and
aggrandizement, and to intermeddle in the domestic
concerns of neutral nations, though such an appeal
would have been much more justifiable, than that with
which the British Government was threatened, yet there
can be no doubt, that he would either have received for
answer an order to quit the country, or would have
been committed to the Temple, as an exciter of sedi-
tion, for, under the republican Government of France,

the

“municate officially to Lord Grenville, in-
 “viting him, as well as all the Council of
 “his Britannic Majesty, to weigh, with
 “the most serious attention, the delibera-
 “tions and demands which they contain.
 “It is evident, that the French nation de-
 “sires to preserve peace with England. It
 “proves this by endeavouring to remove
 “every suspicion, which so many passions
 “and various prejudices are continually la-
 “bouring to excite against it. (48) But the

the imprisonment of foreign Ministers takes place at
 Paris as well as at Algiers. Lastly, it is not impro-
 bable that the Executive Council, beside the grand mo-
 tive of exciting an insurrection in England, had an ad-
 ditional reason for their insolent conduct: they wished
 probably to irritate the British Ministry, and to provoke
 a declaration of war already determined at Paris, in or-
 der to avoid the reproach of being the first aggressors.
 But in this they were wholly disappointed: for Lord
 Grenville replied to the menace with a temperate firm-
 ness, which the French themselves hardly expected.

(48) It was not passion and prejudice, but the own
 acts and declarations of the National Convention re-
 corded

“ more it shall have done to convince all
 “ Europe of the purity of its views, and the
 “ rectitude of its intentions, (49) the greater
 “ right it will have to a claim of being no
 “ longer misunderstood. (50)

recorded in the *Moniteur* itself, which excited the suspicion, and more than suspicion, of hostile designs against Great Britain. Nor did the present negotiation contribute in the least to the diminution of it.

(49) *Purity* of the views, and *rectitude* of the intentions, displayed by the National Convention on the 19th and 28th of November, and the 15th and 24th of December!

(50) It is true that their views were misunderstood, and very strangely misunderstood, especially by some, though perhaps not by all of their friends and advocates: but they were not misunderstood by the British Ministry, who clearly saw the point to which they were directed. Gentlemen of the opposition party likewise appear at present to have discovered the drift of French politicks, as we may judge from an admirable speech delivered in the House of Commons on the 20th of April, 1798, on which Mr. Pitt very justly remarked, that if resistance to the ambition of republican
 France

“ The undersigned has orders to demand
 “ a written answer to the present note. He
 “ hopes that the Ministers of his Britannic
 “ Majesty will be induced by the explana-
 “ tions, which it contains, to adopt ideas fa-
 “ vourable to a good understanding between
 “ the two nations ; and will have no occa-
 “ sion, in order to return to them, to confi-
 “ der the terrible responsibility of a declara-
 “ tion of war, which would incontestibly
 “ be their work ; (51) the consequences of

France had been deferred till the period, when the ho-
 nourable gentleman became convinced of its necessity,
 the House of Commons would have ceased to be the
 theatre of his oratorical talents.

(51) If this position was so easy to be proved, why
 did not the Executive Council attempt the proof of it ?
 And why did they not compare their own conduct,
 even to the nicest detail, with that of the British Go-
 vernment, if they were convinced that the comparison
 would illustrate the pretended purity of their views, and
 the vaunted rectitude of their intentions ? In fact, they

“ which must be fatal to both countries, and
 “ to all mankind, and in which a generous
 “ and free people could not long consent to be-
 “ tray their own interests, by serving to assist
 “ and support a tyrannical coalition.” (52)

Signed CHAUVELIN.

well knew that such a comparison would illustrate only the baseness of their designs, and therefore they very prudently avoided it. Their object was, not to investigate the truth, which would have been highly prejudicial to them, but to lead those into error, whom it was their interest to deceive.

(52) “ Dans laquelle un peuple généreux et libre ne pourrait consentir long-tems à trahir ses propres intérêts, en servant d’auxiliaire et de renfort à une coalition tyrannique.” Here we have another allusion to the threatened appeal to the people of Great Britain, whose generosity is extolled, not out of any regard entertained for them by the French Executive Council, but in order to separate the people from the Government, to gain over the former by the aid of flattery for the French cause, and, by the assistance of an odious contrast, to place the conduct of the latter, if possible, in a detestable light. By this artifice, the rulers of France endeavoured

When we reflect, that the ostensible object of this note was to remove the causes of those complaints, which had been made by the British Government, and to effect a reconciliation with that of France, we must acknowledge that it is a very singular phenomenon in diplomatic history. Whenever we find any party endeavouring to excite the British nation against the British Government, and to work the one against the other, that both might at length fall a prey to French ambition: for they imagined that the people of Great Britain were so easy to be duped, as to be capable of being converted into instruments of French ambition, as Barbaroux said in the National Convention on the 1st of February: “J’ai espérance de voir le peuple Anglais sortir enfin de la stupeur,—et nous venger lui-même d’une Cour, etc.” *Moniteur*, 3d. Feb. 1793. And that they expected the artifice would soon succeed, appears from the expression in Mr. Chauvelin’s note: “ne pourrait consentir *long-tems* à trahir ses propres intérêts.” Lastly, the assertion which is here manifestly implied, that the British Government, in opposing the French Convention, acted with treachery to the British nation, was as insolent as it was artful.

it is the *real* intention of one Cabinet to regain the lost friendship of another, it is usual to adopt polite and conciliatory language: but when one Government, which has already threatened another with imminent danger, says to that other Government, at the very outset of a negotiation apparently designed to restore harmony between them, "if the armament which you have begun (and which, in the present case, as has been clearly proved, was merely defensive) be still continued, we shall appeal to your people, which will not long consent to betray their own interests, by serving to support a tyrannical coalition," it is evident that the real object of that Government is *not* to effect a reconciliation. In fact, Mr. Chauvelin's note was so far from removing the causes of those complaints, which the British Government had very justly made, that it only added new injuries and insults: and if Ministers had

had

had refused to return any answer, it may at least be doubted, whether they would have merited censure. Nay, if such a negotiator as Mr. Chauvelin, a man who was sowing the seeds of civil war, while he affected to be a minister of peace, had been ordered on the receipt of this note, to depart immediately from the kingdom, it would have been nothing more than what the French Executive Council would have done under similar circumstances. But so desirous was the British Administration of preventing, if possible, an open rupture with France, that Mr. Chauvelin was permitted to remain, till it was found that all further negotiation must be fruitless, and that the French Government, instead of offering satisfaction for the past, and security for the future, confirmed, by the negotiation itself, the suspicion of its designs, to involve Great Britain both in foreign and domestic war.

Four days, therefore, after the receipt of Mr. Chauvelin's note, Lord Grenville returned the following answer, (53)

“ Whitehall, Dec. 31, 1792.

“ Sir,

“ I have received from you a note, in
 “ which, styling yourself Minister Plenipo-
 “ tentiary of France, you communicate to
 “ me, as the King's Secretary of State, the
 “ instructions, which you state to have your-
 “ self received from the Executive Council
 “ of the French Republic. You are not ig-
 “ norant, that since the unhappy events of
 “ the 10th of August, the King has thought
 “ proper to suspend all *official* communica-
 “ tions with France. (54) You are your-

(53) The French original is printed in the *Moniteur*, 14th January, 1793.

(54) See what is said on this subject in the ninth chapter.

“ self

“ self no otherwise accredited to the King,
 “ than in the name of his Most Christian
 “ Majesty. The proposition of receiving a
 “ Minister accredited by any other authority
 “ or power in France, would be a new ques-
 “ tion, which, whenever it should occur,
 “ the King would have a right to decide ac-
 “ cording to the interests of his subjects, his
 “ own dignity, and the regard which he
 “ owes to his allies, and to the general sys-
 “ tem of Europe. I am, therefore, to inform
 “ you, Sir, in express and formal terms, that
 “ I acknowledge you in no other public cha-
 “ racter, than that of Minister from his Most
 “ Christian Majesty, and that, consequently,
 “ you cannot be admitted to treat with the
 “ King’s Ministers *in the quality and under*
 “ *the form stated in your note,* (55)

(55) “ Dans la qualité et sous la forme dont il est
 “ question dans votre note.” That when Lord Gren-
 ville returned this answer, Mr. Chauvelin had received
 no other credentials, than those which had been given
 him by Louis XVI. appears from a passage in the note

“ But observing that you have entered
“ into explanations of some of the circum-
of the Executive Council of the 7th of January, 1793,
in which is said of Mr. Chauvelin “ *quoiqu’il ne soit*
“ *accrédité auprès de sa Majesté Britannique que de la*
“ *part du ci-devant Roi.*” *Moniteur*, 14 Janv. 1793.
Indeed it was in the note of the 7th of January, which
was delivered to Lord Grenville on the 13th of that
month, that the Executive Council first announced to
the British Ministry its intention of furnishing Mr.
Chauvelin with new credentials. On the 31st of
December, 1792, therefore, he had no other *public* cha-
racter, than that with which he had been invested by
Louis XVI., and if the British Cabinet had been ever
so disposed to acknowledge, at this early period, the
French Republic in due form (a question, which Lord
Grenville leaves here undetermined), still it was not in
its power on the 31st of December, to admit Mr. Chau-
velin as the *accredited* Minister of the French Republic,
because he had neither delivered, nor had even himself
received, any letters of credence from the administrators
of that Republic. Consequently it was impossible to
admit him to treat with the King’s Ministers “ in the
quality and under the form stated in his note.” But
Lord Grenville had already declared to him “ *that out-
ward forms would be no hindrance to his Britannic Ma-
jesty,*” whenever the question related to explanations,
which

“stances, which have given to England such
 “strong grounds of uneasiness and jealousy,
 “(56) and that you speak of these explana-

which might be satisfactory and advantageous to both parties. See note 4 to this chapter. The question, therefore, whether the differences subsisting between the two parties could be amicably settled or not, depended not on the form, but on the *substance* of the negotiation: it depended upon this, whether the French Executive Council, whatever might be the organ through which it spoke, really gave explanations, which were satisfactory, and assurances, on which the British Government could rely.

(56) Well might Lord Grenville say “*some of the circumstances, which had given uneasiness to England:*” for Mr. Chauvelin’s note contained no allusion whatsoever, either to the declaration of the National Convention on the 28th of November, that it was ready to assist in overturning the British constitution, or to the decree of the 15th of December, which declared hostilities against every nation, which refused to take up arms against its government, or to the determination of the National Convention on the 24th of December, that the decree of the 19th of November should be actually applied to England.

“ tions as being of a nature to bring our
“ two countries nearer, (57) I have been un-
“ willing to convey to you the notification
“ stated above, without at the same time
“ explaining myself clearly and distinctly on
“ the subject of what you have communi-
“ cated to me, though under a form which
“ is neither regular nor official.

“ Your explanations are confined to three
“ points. The first is that of the decree of
“ the National Convention of the 19th of
“ November, in the expressions of which all
“ England saw the formal declaration of a
“ design to extend universally the new prin-
“ ciples of government adopted in France,
“ and to encourage disorder and revolt in all
“ countries, *even in those which are neu-*

(57) It is true, that Mr. Chauvelin *spake* of them as such: but whether they really were so, the reader will easily determine from the notes 41 and 42 to this chapter.

“ *tral.* (58) If this interpretation, which you
 “ represent as injurious to the Convention,
 “ could admit of any doubt, it is but too
 “ well justified by the conduct of the Con-
 “ vention itself: *and the application of these*
 “ *principles to the King’s dominions has been*
 “ *shewn unequivocally by the public reception*
 “ *given to the promoters of sedition in this*
 “ *country, and by the speeches made to them*
 “ *precisely at the time of this decree, and since*
 “ *on several different occasions.* (59)

“ Yet, notwithstanding all these proofs,
 “ *supported by other circumstances* which are
 “ too notorious, (60) it would have been

(58) The eleventh article of the decree of 15th December (Ch. xii. Note 14), is a general proof of this assertion: and the resolution of the 24th of December (Ib. Note 14), is a particular proof of it in regard to England.

(59) See Ch. x. p. 203—212.

(60) See Ch. x. p. 222—238.

“ with

“ with pleasure that we should have seen
“ here such explanations, and such a con-
“ duct, as would have satisfied the dignity
“ and honour of England, with respect to
“ what has already passed, and would have
“ offered a sufficient security in future for
“ the maintenance of that respect toward
“ the rights, the government, and the tran-
“ quillity of neutral powers, which they
“ have on every account the right to ex-
“ pect.

“ Neither this satisfaction, nor this secu-
“ rity, is found in the terms of an explana-
“ tion, *which still declares to the promoters of*
“ *sedition in every country, what are the cases*
“ *in which they may count beforehand on the*
“ *support and succour of France, and which re-*
“ *serves to that country the right of mixing*
“ *herself in our internal affairs whenever she*
“ *shall judge it proper, and on principles in-*
“ *compatible with the political institutions of all*
“ the

“ *the countries of Europe.* No one can avoid
“ perceiving how much a declaration like
“ this is calculated to encourage disorder and
“ revolt in every country. (61) No one can
“ be ignorant how contrary it is to the re-
“ spect which is reciprocally due from inde-
“ pendent nations, nor how repugnant to
“ those principles, which the King has fol-
“ lowed, on his part, by forbearing at all
“ times from any interference whatever in
“ the internal affairs of France. (62) And

(61) Consequently the explanation, which the French Executive Council gave of the decree in question, was so far from affording satisfaction for the past, and security for the future, that it only increased the insult already offered, and magnified the danger with which Great Britain was already threatened.

(62) The acknowledgment of Le Brun, the French Minister for foreign affairs, on this subject, at the latter end of August 1792, has been already quoted at the beginning of the ninth chapter: and that the British Cabinet had continued to preserve the most strict neutrality toward France, even to the period when Lord Grenville wrote the present note, was admitted by the National
Convention

“ this contrast is alone sufficient to shew,
 “ not only that England cannot consider
 “ such an explanation as satisfactory, but
 “ that she must look upon it as *a fresh avowal*
 “ *of those dispositions, which she sees with so*
 “ *just an uneasiness and jealousy.*

“ I proceed to the two other points of
 “ your explanation, which concern the ge-
 “ neral dispositions of France with regard to

Convention itself on the 13th of January 1793. For the introduction to this decree runs thus: “ La Con-
 “ vention Nationale informée par le Ministre des af-
 “ faires étrangères, des préparatifs extraordinaires de
 “ l’Angleterre, considérant le changement de conduite
 “ de ce pays relativement *au caractere de neutralité qu’il*
 “ *avait conservée jusqu’ici touchant les affaires de la France,*
 “ *etc.*” Moniteur, 16 Janvier, 1793. With respect
 to the sudden change in the conduct of the British Ad-
 ministration, which is here made a subject of complaint,
 it was the unavoidable consequence of the measures,
 which had been taken by the Convention itself: for it
 is obvious, that, when one nation is threatened by
 another, it must put itself in a posture of defence.

“ the

“ the allies of Great Britain, and the con-
 “ duct of the Convention and its officers re-
 “ lative to the Scheldt. The declaration,
 “ which you there make, that France will
 “ not attack Holland, so long as that power
 “ shall observe an exact neutrality, is con-
 “ ceived nearly in the same terms with that,
 “ which you were charged to make in the
 “ name of his Most Christian Majesty in the
 “ month of June last. (63) Since that first
 “ declaration was made, an officer, stating
 “ himself to be employed in the service of
 “ France, has openly violated both the ter-
 “ ritory and the neutrality of the republic,
 “ in going up the Scheldt, to attack the ci-

(63) The following is the passage in Mr. Chauve-
 lin's note of the 18th June, to which Lord Grenville
 here alludes. “ Il s'empresse en même tems de lui
 déclarer, conformément au désir énoncé dans cette ré-
 ponse, que les droits de tous les alliés de la Grande Bre-
 tagne qui n'auront point provoqué la France par des
 démarches hostiles, seront par lui non moins religieuse-
 ment respectés.” *Moniteur*, 20th July, 1792.

“ tadel of Antwerp, notwithstanding the de-
“ termination of the government not to grant
“ this passage, and the formal protest by which
“ they opposed it. (64) Since the same de-
“ claration was made, the Convention has
“ thought itself authorized to annul the
“ rights of the republic exercised within the
“ limits of its own territory, and enjoyed by
“ virtue of the same treaties, by which her
“ independence is secured. And at the very
“ moment, when, under the name of an
“ amicable explanation, you renew to me in
“ the same terms the promise of respecting
“ the independence and the rights of Eng-
“ land and her allies, you announce to me,
“ that those, in whose name you speak, intend
“ to maintain these open and injurious aggres-
“ sions. It is certainly not on such a declara-
“ tion as this, that any reliance can be placed
“ for the continuance of public tranquillity.

(64) See Ch. x. Note 10, and Ch. xi. Note 7.

“ But I am unwilling to leave without a
 “ more particular reply, what you say on the
 “ subject of the Scheldt. If it were true,
 “ that this question is in itself of little im-
 “ portance, this would serve only to prove
 “ more clearly, that it was brought forward
 “ only for the purpose of insulting the al-
 “ lies of England by the infraction of their
 “ neutrality, and by the violation of their
 “ rights, which the faith of treaties obliges
 “ us to maintain. But you cannot be ig-
 “ norant that here the utmost importance is
 “ attached to those principles, which France
 “ wishes to establish by this proceeding, and
 “ to those consequences which would natu-
 “ rally result from them: (65) and that not

(65) The dangerous consequences both to England and to Holland, which necessarily resulted from the opening of the Scheldt, when France was in possession of the Low Countries, have been shewn in Ch. x. p. 196, and Ch. xi. p. 254—258. With respect to the

“ only those principles, and those conse-
“ quences, will never be admitted by Eng-
“ land, but that she is, and ever will be, ready
“ to oppose them with all her force.

“ France can have no right to annul the
“ stipulations relative to the Scheldt, unless
“ she have also the right to set aside equally
“ all the other treaties between all the powers
“ of Europe, and all the other rights of
“ England, or of her allies. She can have
“ even no pretence to interfere in the ques-
“ tion of opening the Scheldt, unless she
“ were the sovereign of the Low Countries,

principles, which the French Republican Government
wished to establish by this proceeding, they implied no-
thing less than, that the modern rulers of France pos-
sessed the right, not only to intermeddle in the internal
affairs of neutral nations, but to act as the arbitrators of
all Europe. In fact, they have both assumed this right,
and have exercised it during seven years, with almost
unremitted success.

“ or had the right to dictate laws to all Eu-
 “ rope.

“ England will never consent that France
 “ shall arrogate the power of annulling at
 “ her pleasure, and under pretence of a pre-
 “ tended natural right, of which she makes
 “ herself the only judge, the political sys-
 “ tem of Europe, established by solemn trea-
 “ ties, and guaranteed by the consent of all
 “ the powers. This Government, adhering
 “ to the maxims which it has followed for
 “ more than a century, will also never see
 “ with indifference that France shall make
 “ herself, either directly or indirectly, sove-
 “ reign of the Low Countries, or general
 “ arbiters of the rights and liberties of Eu-
 “ rope. *If France is really desirous of main-
 “ taining friendship and peace with England,
 “ she must shew herself disposed to renounce her
 “ views of aggression and aggrandizement,
 “ and to confine herself within her own terri-*

“ tory, without insulting other governments,
 “ without disturbing their tranquillity, with-
 “ out violating their rights. (66)

(66) “ Si la France désire réellement de conserver l'amitié et la paix avec l'Angleterre, il faut qu'elle se montre disposée à renoncer à ses vues d'agression et d'aggrandissement, et à se tenir à son propre territoire, sans outrager les autres gouvernemens, sans troubler leur repos, sans violer leurs droits.”

By this clear and precise declaration of the conditions, under which the British Cabinet was willing to continue at peace with France, and without which, peace could not possibly be maintained, the negociation was brought to a crisis: and the issue of it now depended entirely on the question, whether the National Convention would renounce its views of conquest and aggrandizement, and cease to interfere in the internal concerns of neutral nations, to infringe on their privileges, and disturb their tranquillity. If the National Convention thought proper to submit to these conditions, which, on the one hand were absolutely necessary for the preservation of Great Britain, and, on the other hand could not be considered as injurious to France, because they were nothing more than what the French Government itself had repeatedly declared to be the basis of their new system of politicks. Peace was preserved, whether France were a monarchy or a republic,

“ With respect to that character of ill-
 “ will, which is endeavoured to be found in
 “ the conduct of England toward France, I
 “ cannot discuss it, because you speak of it
 “ in general terms only, without alledging a
 “ single fact. All Europe has seen the jus-
 “ tice and the generosity which have cha-
 “ racterised the conduct of the King. *His*
 “ *Majesty has always been desirous of peace :*
 “ *he desires it still, but such as may be real*
 “ *and solid, and consistent with the interests*
 “ *and dignity of his own dominions, and with*
 “ *the general security of Europe. (67)*

republic, for no allusion whatsoever was made in these
 conditions to any particular form of government. But
 if the National Convention rejected the conditions, they
 confirmed the suspicions already entertained: and left
 the British Ministers no other choice, than either to
 prepare for a serious combat, or to sacrifice their coun-
 try to the ambition of France.

(67) “ Sa Majesté a toujours désiré la paix. Elle la
 désire encore, mais réelle et solide, et telle qu'elle soit
 compatible avec les intérêts et la dignité de ses états, et

“ On the rest of your paper I say nothing.
 “ As to what relates to me and to my col-
 “ leagues, the King’s Ministers owe to his
 “ Majesty the account of their conduct:
 “ and I have no answer to give to you on
 “ this subject, any more than on that of *the*
 “ *appeal which you propose to make to the Eng-*
 “ *lish nation.* (68) This nation, according
 “ to that constitution by which its liberty
 “ and its prosperity are secured, and which
 “ it will always be able to defend against
 “ every attack, direct or indirect, will never
 “ have with foreign powers connection or
 “ correspondence, except through the organ
 “ of its King: of a King whom it loves and
 avec la fureté générale de l’Europe.” Here reference
 is again made to the conditions, which had been already
 precisely determined.

(68) Beside the insinuation in Mr. Chauvelin’s note,
 see the declarations made on this subject in the Na-
 tional Convention by Le Brun and Brissot, Ch. xii.
 Notes 29, 30, 32, where Lord Grenville’s observations
 on it are quoted likewise in the French original.

“ revers,

“ reveres, and who has never for an instant
 “ separated his rights, and his happiness,
 “ from the rights, the interests, and the hap-
 “ piness of his people. (69)

“ (Signed) GRENVILLE.”

(69) This note is written with the coolness and dignity of a statesman, who is conscious of having justice on his side, and forms a striking contrast with the menacing language adopted in Mr. Chauvelin's note: and this contrast is the more remarkable, when we consider that the British Secretary of State was doomed to notice not only unprovoked aggressions, but explanations still more disgusting and insolent, than the aggressions themselves. Yet there are writers, even of our own country, who have ventured to declare that no one can compare the *temperate* language of the memorials from the Executive Council of France with the *insufferable arrogance* visible in the notes of Lord Grenville, without drawing a conclusion greatly to the disadvantage of the latter. Such an assertion is quite in character, and corresponds exactly with the tone adopted by the French themselves, who during the late negotiation at Rastadt, after all that part of Germany, which lies to the west of the Rhine, together with the Austrian Netherlands had been formally ceded to them, after they had made themselves masters of Holland and Italy, and

Two days after Lord Grenville had communicated this answer to Mr. Chauvelin, Mr. Miles wrote a letter to Le Brun, the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, on the subject of the pending negotiation: and as this letter is a document of some importance, and throws considerable light on the history of French politicks, it will be necessary to make from it a few extracts. (70) It is dated Cleveland-row, 2d. Jan. 1793, and begins thus: “You always express, Sir, in your
 “ different reports to the Convention, and in
 after they had conquered Switzerland in the midst of the negotiation, continually talked of the *great sacrifices* which *France* had made, in order to obtain peace. One should really suppose that French republicans possessed the privilege of setting common sense at defiance.

(70) The French original is printed in the *Authentic Correspondence of Mr. Miles with Le Brun*, Appendix, p. 92—98. I do not quote the whole of this letter here, because several parts of it relate to other things, and have been already introduced in various places, as the subjects required.

“ the

“ the dispatches which I have seen, the de-
“ fire of preserving peace between England
“ and France: but what reliance can be
“ had on *protestations which are contradicted*
“ *by facts*? How is it possible to believe your
“ *intentions* pacific, while your *conduct* is hos-
“ tile? Do we live in an age when enigmas
“ are in vogue, or is it necessary, in order to
“ comprehend your meaning, to read, what
“ you write, backward? (71) It is a me-
“ lancholy truth, Sir, that prosperity dazzles
“ nations, as well as individuals, and that
“ great calamities are sometimes necessary to
“ teach them justice and moderation. The
“ rapidity of your conquests in the Austrian
“ Netherlands, in Germany, and in Savoy,
“ made you lose sight of what you owe to
“ yourselves and others: and because you
“ succeeded, by the intrepidity of your arms,

(71) The passage, which immediately follows re-
lates to Mr. Maret, and has been quoted in this chapter,
Note 18.

“ against

“ against some governments, naturally weak,
 “ and already infected with the contagion of
 “ the times, you thought you could dictate
 “ laws to all Europe, and force it to adopt
 “ the same principles of anarchy, of which
 “ you have been the victims since the 14th of
 “ July, 1789.” Mr. Miles, after a long pas-
 sage, in which he endeavours to prove the
 pacific disposition of the British Cabinet,
 (72) then proceeds as follows: “ Recall all
 “ your emissaries, put an end to your pro-
 “ paganda, and no longer strive to disturb
 “ the public tranquillity in this country.
 “ Your decrees of the 19th of November,
 “ and 15th of December,* are menaces

(72) See Ch. xi. Note 51.

* “ I had reason to believe that these decrees were levelled at this country, in consequence of the delusion, which prevailed in France, that we were on the eve of an insurrection in England, and that the promise of support would instantly produce an explosion. *Note of Mr. Miles.*

“ which

“ which no government can hear, without
“ taking measures of precaution immediately
“ for its own safety: and while such decrees
“ exist, we cannot rely on your *pacific assur-*
“ *ances*. Besides, when you express your sen-
“ timents directly contrary to the explicit
“ declarations of the *Convention*, you can
“ only be considered as a private individual.
“ In the name of God, if you wish to avoid
“ an universal conflagration, do not meddle
“ with our government. *If* we are less free
“ than you, if we were even in the most ab-
“ ject state of slavery, let us and our chains
“ alone: and as you do not feel them, why
“ trouble yourselves about them? I dwell
“ the more willingly on this article, as I am
“ no stranger to the groundless hopes you
“ have conceived of a general revolt: and
“ while you *encourage such schemes*, it will be
“ impossible for me to assist you, or even to
“ hold any correspondence with you, or the
“ Executive Council.” Lastly, after having

once more assured Le Brun, that the British Cabinet was sincerely disposed to preserve peace, and that it would not enter into a war, unless forced to it, either as a measure of precaution, or as a measure of necessity, to repel an aggression on the part of France, (73) he made to the French Minister the following declaration. “ This country would not
 “ be averse to an arrangement dictated more
 “ by imperious circumstances than by jus-
 “ tice. I have proposed this arrangement as
 “ the only condition on which you would
 “ agree to give up the Scheldt, renounce
 “ your conquests, and grant peace to Prussia
 “ and Austria. (74) *It is for the Executive*
 “ *power (Council) to decide.*”

(73) Mr. Miles's own words in the French original were: “ ne rendez pas la guerre nécessaire, ni comme mesure de précaution, ni par nécessité pour repousser une agression de votre part, et vous ne l'aurez pas: comptez là-dessus, et je répondrai du reste.

(74) Mr. Miles has not explained in what the proposed arrangement consisted: nor is it easy to discover

On the 7th of January, 1793, after the French Executive Council had received Lord it from the contents of this letter alone. In the sentence immediately preceding, where it is natural to look for an explanation, he had said: "Be wise, and you will restore liberty to Liege and Brabant: the empire and the Emperor will have nothing to say, and a brave and loyal people will be freed from a yoke, which has long oppressed them."—But, as Mr. Miles himself says, that the arrangement, which he had proposed, was dictated more by imperious circumstances, than by justice, he could not allude to the just-mentioned settlement in regard to Liege and Brabant, because he represents *that* arrangement as perfectly consistent with justice. Besides, he says to Le Brun, that he had proposed the arrangement in question, as the only condition on which the Executive Council would consent to renounce its conquests: but it is a certain fact, as will presently appear, that the erecting of Brabant and Liege into an independent republic was a condition, to which the Executive Council was resolved not to submit. The arrangement in question, therefore, must mean something else: and as Mr. Miles had been already informed in a letter, dated Paris, 17th December, 1792, that the Executive Council would insist on the formal acknowledgment of the French Republic as a *sine quâ non* (Authentic Correspondence, Appendix, p. 83), we may conclude that

Grenville's note of the 31st of December, and Le Brun, who, in all matters relative to foreign affairs, was the principal person in it, the arrangement, which Mr. Miles proposed to the British Ministry, as an indispensable condition of peace, was no other than the required acknowledgment of the French Republic, especially as he says it was dictated rather by imperious circumstances, than by justice. If this conclusion be just, the British Ministry, according to Mr. Miles's own account, would have consented at the close of the year 1792, to have acknowledged the French Republic, had this Republic consented to renounce all views of conquest and aggrandizement. The words of the original are: *On n'est pas du tout éloigné d'un arrangement, que les circonstances impérieuses ont peut-être dicté beaucoup plus que la justice.* But whether this or any other arrangement was meant, Mr. Miles represented the acceptance of it by the British Ministry as a mark of great moderation: and in the sentence immediately following that, which was last quoted, he said to Le Brun, "if you decline an arrangement *so reasonable* (un arrangement si raisonnable), a calamitous war will be the consequence. The refusal, therefore, or acceptance of it on the part of the Executive Council decided the issue of the negotiation. But we shall see from their note, which was dated the 7th of January, and consequently after Le Brun had received

had likewise received Mr. Miles's letter of the 2d of January, the following note which, as will appear from the close of it, was the *ultimatum* of the French Government, was signed by Le Brun in the name of the Executive Council, and sent to Mr. Chauvelin, who, on the 13th of January, communicated it to Lord Grenville. (75)

ceived the present letter from Mr. Miles, for it was immediately sent to Paris in a dispatch from Noël (Authentic Correspondence, Appendix. p. 105), that they still persisted in the opening of the Scheldt, in the occupation of the Netherlands as long as they thought proper, and in the right to interfere in the internal concerns of neutral nations, in cases which they reserved to themselves to determine. Their object, therefore, was not merely to found a republic in France, but to acquire unlimited dominion over *other* nations.

(75) The French original is printed in the *Moniteur*, 14th January, 1793, and is superscribed: Note officielle du Pouvoir Exécutif de France, en réponse à celle du Ministre Britannique. Paris, le 7 Janvier, 1793, l'an deuxieme de la République.—In the *New Annual Register* for 1793, where the English translation of this note is printed, an error of the press has taken place in regard to the date, namely 4 instead of 7.

“ The

“ The provisional Executive Council of
“ the French Republic, before they reply
“ more particularly to each of the points
“ comprehended in the note remitted to
“ them on the part of the Minister of his
“ Britannic Majesty, will begin by repeating
“ to that Minister the most express assur-
“ ances of their sincere desire to maintain
“ peace and harmony between France and
“ England. The sentiments of the French
“ nation toward the English have been ma-
“ nifested, during the whole course of the
“ revolution, in so constant, so unanimous a
“ manner, that there cannot remain the
“ smallest doubt of the esteem which it
“ vows to them, and of its desire to have
“ them for friends. (76)

(76) It cannot be denied that the National Convention had manifested its sentiments to many Englishmen, (especially to those, who on November 28th, signified their intention of overturning the British Constitution) in so constant, so unanimous a manner, that there could not remain the smallest doubt of the esteem, which it
vowed

“ It is then with great reluctance that the
 “ Republic would see itself forced to a rup-
 “ ture, much more contrary to its inclination
 vowed to *them*, and of its desire to have *them* for friends,
 or, more properly speaking, for dupes. In addition to
 the documents quoted in the tenth chapter from the
 Moniteur, as proofs of *this* kind of friendship, may be
 alledged the fête civique, celebrated at White’s Hotel,
 in Paris, on November 18, the day before the celebrated
 decree in favour of universal insurrection was voted.
 This festival is described at length in Rivington’s An-
 nual Register for 1792, part ii. p. 153—155. The com-
 pany was composed of British, French, and some few
 persons from other nations: several members of the
 National Convention were present, likewise Generals
 Dillon, Santerre and Bruyere, with Lord Edward Fitz-
 gerald, Thomas Payne, and other well-known charac-
 ters. After dinner the following, among many other,
 toasts were drunk. “ The National Convention of
 France.” “ The Patriotic Societies of Great Britain and
 Ireland, with those who have contributed to inform
 and enlighten the people, Priestley, Fox, Sheridan, Bar-
 low,” &c.—“ *The approaching National Convention of
 Great Britain and Ireland.*”—“ May Revolutions never
 be made *by halves.*”

“ than to its *interest*. (77) Before it proceeds
“ to such a disagreeable extremity, explana-
“ tions are necessary ; and the object of them

(77) From this declaration the British Government could draw no other conclusion, than that an open attack on the part of France was not far distant : for, as the French rulers themselves declared, that a rupture with England would not be contrary to their *interest*, one might be certain, that their thirst after conquest and dominion, on which no man, who has read the tenth and twelfth chapters of this work, can entertain a doubt, would shortly derive new gratification in a war with England. The reason why they supposed that a war with England would be so advantageous to them, has been already assigned in the tenth chapter. They imagined, namely, that the disaffected party in England (as was afterwards the case in Ireland) would immediately join them, that a civil war would be the consequence, and that both parties (for they considered the disaffected merely as instruments in their own hands) would at length fall a prey to French avarice and ambition. Their pretended friendship, therefore, for the English democrats (for they certainly had none for the nation at large) was nothing more than a snare : and, without doubt, they have often laughed in their hearts,
that

“ is so highly important, that the Executive
 “ Council have not thought that they could
 “ intrust them to a secret agent always to be
 “ disfavoured. (78) For this reason they have
 “ thought proper, under every point of view,
 “ to intrust them to Citizen Chauvelin,
 “ *though he is not accredited to his Britannic*
 “ *Majesty but from the late King.*

“ The opinion of the Executive Council
 “ on this occasion is justified by the manner
 “ in which our negotiations are at the same
 that so many thousands have been dupes enough to fall
 into it. And with regard to those advocates of the
 French, who have described the British Ministers as the
 authors of the war, they could have no right to lay this
 accusation, even were it founded on truth: for no
 advocate can consistently censure a step, which his
 client himself declares to be agreeable to his own in-
 terest.

(78) This observation was intended as an excuse for
 their refusal to send instructions to Mr. Maret, with
 whom

“ time carried on in Spain, where Citizen
“ Burgoign was exactly in the same situation
“ as Citizen Chauvelin at London, which,
“ however, has not prevented the Minister
“ of the Catholic King from treating with
“ him (79) on a convention of neutrality,
“ the ratification of which is to be exchanged
“ at Paris between the Minister for foreign
“ affairs and the Chargé des affaires of Spain.
“ We will even add, that the principal Mi-
“ nister of his Catholic Majesty, when writ-
“ ing officially on this subject to Citizen
“ Burgoign, did not forget to give him
“ his title of Minister Plenipotentiary of
whom Mr. Pitt had expressed a desire to negotiate, and
who was undoubtedly much better qualified to have
prevented a rupture than Mr. Chauvelin. But for this
very reason he did not suit the purpose of the Executive
Council.

(79) We have seen, likewise, that nothing prevented
the Ministers of his Britannic Majesty from treating
with Citizen Chauvelin.

“ France.

“ France. (80) The example of a power of
 “ the first rank, such as Spain, might have
 “ induced the Executive Council to hope,

(80) *Ministre Plenipotentiaire de France.*—Now, as Mr. Chauvelin, when he delivered his note of December 27th, had, by the acknowledgment of the Executive Council, no other credentials than those which he had received from the King of France, and Mr. Burgoign, by the acknowledgement of the same Council, was in the same situation at Madrid as Mr. Chauvelin was at London, the circumstance, that the Minister of the King of Spain still continued to give him the title of *Ministre Plenipotentiaire de France*, by no means proves what the Executive Council intended to prove by it. For, since Mr. Burgoign had received no letters of credence from the Executive Council, the title, which the Spanish Ministry still gave him, was necessarily founded on the letters of credence, which he had brought from Louis XVI. The British Ministry likewise refused not to grant Mr. Chauvelin a title derived from *this* source, as appears from the first paragraph in Lord Grenville’s note of the 31st of December. They declared only, what was perfectly true, that, when he came forward as an agent of the French Executive Council, he could not act under a title, and under an authority, which he had not derived from that Council. This declaration was surely very different

G 3

from

“ that we should have found the same faci-
 “ lity at London. The Executive Council
 “ readily acknowledges, that this negotia-
 “ tion has not been demanded according to
 “ diplomatic strictness, and that Citizen
 “ Chauvelin is *not formally enough autho-*
 “ *rized.* (81) To remove entirely this ob-
 “ stacle, and that they may not have to re-
 “ proach themselves with having stopt, by a
 “ single defect in form, a negotiation, on the
 “ success of which depends the tranquillity
 “ of two great nations; they have sent to
 “ Citizen Chauvelin credential letters, which
 “ will give him the means of treating ac-

from a refusal to treat with him at all, a refusal which
 was never made, for, as Brissot himself said, “ the
 British Ministry both gave and courted explanations.
 See Note 5 to this chapter.

(81) Hitherto, therefore, the Executive Council had
 no reason to complain, that the British Ministry did not
 treat with him by the title of Minister Plenipotentiary
 of France.

“ cording

“ cording to all the severity of diplomatic
 “ forms.

“ To proceed now to the three points,
 “ which can alone form an object of diffi-
 “ culty with the Court of London, the Exe-
 “ cutive Council observes on the first, that
 “ is to say, the decree of November 19, that
 “ we have been misunderstood by the Mi-
 “ nisters of his Britannic Majesty, when they
 “ accuse us of having given an explanation,
 “ which announces to the seditious of all na-
 “ tions, what are the cases in which they
 “ may depend before-hand on the succour
 “ and support of France. Nothing can be
 “ more foreign to the sentiments of the Na-
 “ tional Convention, and to the explanation
 “ which we have given, than this reproach :
 “ and we did not think it was possible, that
 “ the open design of favouring seditious per-
 “ sons could be imputed to us, at a moment
 “ even when we declared, “ *that it would be*

“ doing an injury to the National Convention,
 “ to ascribe to them the plan of protecting in-
 “ surrections and seditious commotions, which
 “ might arise in any corner of a state, of associ-
 “ ating with the authors of them, and thus of
 “ making the cause of a few individuals that of
 “ the French nation. (82)

“ We have said, and we choose to repeat
 “ it, that the decree of November 19 could

(82) On this explanation, see Note 41 to the present chapter. The words here inserted by the Executive Council “ *in any corner of a state,*” (*dans quelque coin d'un état*) and the words “ *cause of a few individuals,*” (*la cause de quelques particuliers*) are very artfully introduced: for thus they reserved to themselves the right of assisting the seditious in all countries, as soon as their number was at all considerable. At the very time, therefore, that they pretended to give a satisfactory explanation of the decree, they maintained their resolution of applying it: for they had nothing more to do, than to declare, that the number of the seditious in any country was considerable, and by their own avowal, they were authorized to put it in practice.

“ not

“ not be applicable but to the single case,
 “ where the *general* will of a nation, clearly
 “ and unequivocally expressed, should *call* for
 “ the assistance and fraternity of the French
 “ nation. (83) Sedition can certainly never

(83) “ Nous vous avons dit, et nous aimons à vous le
 “ répéter que le décret du 19 Novembre, ne pouvait
 “ avoir son application que dans le *seul* cas, où la vo-
 “ lonté *générale* d'une nation, *exprimée clairement et sans*
 “ *équivoque*, appellerait l'assistance et la fraternité de la
 “ nation Française. Certes, la *sedition* ne peut jamais
 “ être là où se trouve l'expression de la *volonté générale*.”

It deserves particularly to be noticed, that this solemn declaration, not to interfere in the internal concerns of any nation, with a view of overturning its government, till the *general* will of that nation, clearly and unequivocally expressed, should *call* for the assistance of France, was given by the Executive Council on the 7th of January, and that on the *day following*, namely, on the 8th of January, the instructions for the commissaries in Belgium (that is, the commentary on the decree of December 15, quoted in the preceding chapter) were signed by the same Executive Council, in which they declared that they regarded *whole* nations as enemies, which *resolved* to retain their Sovereigns. The Executive Council's own words were: La nation Française regarde
 comme

“ exist where there is an expression of the
 “ general will. These two ideas mutually
 comme ennemi, même un peuple *entier*, si refusant la
 liberté et l'égalité il *voulait* traiter avec un prince et
 avec des castes privilégiées. Chauffard, p. 198. This,
 said the Executive Council, was the spirit of the ele-
 venth article (l'esprit de l'article xi.) of the decree of
 December 15. Likewise, the words of that article are
 in direct contradiction to the explanation given in the
 note to the British Government of January 7. See the
 preceding chapter. Further, the Executive Council,
 in its commentary on the eleventh article of the decree
 of December 15, said: “ Les deux dispositions, qui
 “ renferment cet article ne sont *ni une vaine menace, ni*
 “ *une promesse illusoire*; elles sont au contraire des *confé-*
 “ *quences directes de tous les principes, desquels dérive*
 “ *la loi juste et salutaire décrétée par la Convention*
 “ *Nationale.*” Chauffard, p. 225. Now there can be
 no doubt that the instructions given to the Commis-
 saries on Jan. 8, conveyed the *true* meaning of the Exe-
 cutive Council, and consequently that the explanation
 given to the British Government on Jan. 7, was given
with the consciousness of its falsehood: for it could have
 answered no purpose to have deceived their own Com-
 missaries, whereas, the keeping the British Cabinet in
 the dark, in regard to their real designs, afforded the
 most effectual means of putting them in execution.

Besides,

“ exclude each other : for sedition is, and can
 “ only be a commotion of a small number
 “ against the majority of a nation ; and this
 “ commotion would cease to be seditious, if
 “ all the members of a society should arise at
 “ once, either to correct their Government,
 “ to change its form entirely, or to accom-
 “ plish any other object. (84)

Besides, the instructions given to the Commissaries cor-
 responded not only to the words of the decrees of
 Nov. 19, and Dec. 15, but likewise to all the interpre-
 tations, which had been given in the National Conven-
 tion itself. (See Note 41.) Lastly, the declaration made
 to the Commissaries, that even a *whole* nation would be
 treated as an enemy, if it refused to rebel against its So-
 vereign, and consequently that France would inter-
 meddle in the internal concerns of neutral nations, even
 where *not one* seditious person was to be found in the
 whole country, forms also a strange contrast with the
 declaration made at the same time to the British Go-
 vernment, that their number must be very *considerable*,
 before the National Convention would think itself jus-
 tified in interfering.

(84) Brissot, likewise, in his report of the 12th of
 January, 1793, said : “ Un peuple libre sait distinguer
 “ l’insur-

“ The Dutch were certainly not seditious,
 “ when they formed the generous resolution
 “ *l'insurrection de la révolte, la volonté bien prononcée*
 “ *d'une grande majorité, du vœu partiel de quelques in-*
 “ *dividus. Protéger ces derniers contre la majorité,*
 “ *c'est protéger la révolte ; c'est être injuste, et une*
 “ *peuple libre ne veut point l'injustice ; les moyens té-*
 “ *nébreux sont indignes de lui.*” *Moniteur, 15 Jan.*
 1793. Yet, in Brissot's work, à ses commetans, p. 87,
 we find the following passage : “ *Les révolutions, répon-*
dait-on, ne se font qu'avec les minorités : c'est la mino-
rié qui a fait la révolution Française.” But even if the
 revolutionary principles of the French rulers had in-
 volved no contradiction, and even if their theory had
 been in itself perfectly pure and just, still the *application*
 of their theory to particular cases was subject to various
 doubts, the determination of which they reserved to
 themselves : for instance, the decision of the two pre-
 vious questions, first, whether the disaffected party in
 any country, to which they had directed their attention,
 really constituted a majority of that country, and se-
 condly, whether the majority, at the same time, wished
 for the intervention of French fraternity. Conse-
 quently, the Executive Council, in order to acquire the
 right of applying the decree of November 19 to Eng-
 land, and of interfering in the internal concerns of this
 kingdom, wanted, according to its own explanation,
 nothing

“ of throwing off the Spanish yoke : and,
 “ when the general will of that nation called
 “ on the assistance of France, it was not ac-
 “ counted a crime to Henry IV. nor to
 “ Queen Elizabeth, that they listened to

nothing more than the simple declaration, which it was at all times in its power to make, that the English societies, which had sent addresses to France in November, 1792, and, at other times, constituted the majority of the English nation. It is obvious, therefore, that, when they pretended to give a satisfactory explanation of the decree of November 19, they sought evasions for the application of it, and endeavoured to obtain their object by deceiving the English Government. After all, it was ridiculous to enter into theoretical distinctions relative to what should, or should not be made, when the application of the decree to England actually *was* made. But this is a *fact*, which the conduct of the National Convention, on November 28 and December 24, had proved beyond a doubt. They ought to have instantly repealed the offensive decree, and to have acted up to that repeal : but we see, from this very note of the Executive Council, that they insisted on retaining it, and it has been shewn in the twelfth chapter of this work, that they continued to regulate all their actions by it.

“ them.

“ them. (85) A knowledge of the general
“ will is the only basis of transactions between

(85) But neither Henry IV. nor Queen Elizabeth made a public declaration, that they were ready to assist all nations, which thought proper to take up arms against their Governments; and there is surely a wide difference between the lending of assistance to a particular people, after it is really oppressed, and the making a general prospective declaration like that contained in the decree of November 19. Besides, at the time when this decree was voted, France not only was itself in a state of revolution, but had already infused similar principles into the neighbouring nations; and therefore such a decree necessarily disturbed the general repose, by setting men's passions every where in commotion. Nor will any man venture to compare the state of the disaffected party in England, when this decree was issued, with the state of the Dutch, when they were assisted by Queen Elizabeth. For the latter were persecuted in the most cruel manner by the Spanish Governor, the Duke of Alva, who, in order to force them into Popery, introduced a Robespierrian system of terrorism, who instituted domiciliary visits, in order to discover religious heretics, as the French Directory did in 1798, in order to discover political heretics, and daily brought offerings to the sword or the faggot, as the modern rulers of France have done to the guillotine.

The

“ nations : and we cannot treat with any
 “ Government, but because that Govern-
 “ ment is supposed to be the organ of the
 “ general will of the nation to which it be-
 “ longs. When by this natural interpreta-
 “ tion, therefore, the decree of November 19
 “ is reduced to its real signification, it will be
 “ found, that it announces nothing more than
 “ an act of the general will above all contest,
 “ and so founded in right, that it was not
 “ worth while to express it. For this rea-

The support of a nation, thus cruelly oppressed, when
 that nation demanded assistance, was very different from
 the encouragement of insurrection in a country, where
 the inhabitants, upon the whole, have great reason to
 be satisfied with their condition. A great deal, like-
 wise, depends on the *object* of the support which one
 nation gives to another. Queen Elizabeth, after she
 had assisted the Dutch in shaking off the Spanish yoke,
 left them in quiet possession of their liberty, and even
 secured it by all possible means : whereas, the French
 rulers have removed from the Dutch, as they have done
 from the Swiss, a merely imaginary yoke, in order to
 impose on them a real and insupportable one.

“son, the Executive Council thinks, that the
 “evidence of this right might have perhaps
 “rendered it unnecessary for the National
 “Convention to make it the object of a par-
 “ticular decree: but with the preceding
 “interpretation it cannot give offence to
 “any nation. (86)

“It appears that the Ministers of his Bri-
 “tannic Majesty have made no objections
 “under the declaration respecting Holland,
 “since their only observation on this subject
 “relates to the discussion concerning the

(86) We have seen that the preceding interpretation contained the grossest falsehoods: consequently it could not be satisfactory. Even Brissot, though in his report to the National Convention of the 12th of January, *Moniteur*, 15. Janv. 1793) he supported the Executive Council, and endeavoured to justify the decree by similar sophistry, called it a few months afterwards, on more mature deliberation, “*l'absurde et impolitique décret du 19 Novembre, qui a justement excité les inquiétudes des cabinets étrangers.*—*A ses Commettans,* p. 68.

“Scheldt.

“ Scheldt. (87) It is on this last point,
 “ therefore, that we have to make ourselves
 “ understood.

(87) It is not true, that the Ministers of his Britannic Majesty made no objections under the declaration respecting Holland: for Lord Grenville, in his note of December 31, had combated that declaration with the following solid and unanswerable argument. In the month of June, 1792, the French Government had already engaged to respect the rights of the allies of England, as long as those allies continued neutral: but it had since *acted* contrary to that engagement, French ships of war having forced their way up the Scheldt, in opposition to the formal protest of the States General, and thus violated the rights of the Dutch, the allies of England. And not only was this violation founded on a resolution of the French Executive Council, but the said Council announced its determination to support that resolution. Since, therefore, the French Government broke its word in regard to *one* important point, what security had Great Britain that it would not break its word in *another*, and still further violate the rights of the Dutch, by an open invasion of their country?— This was the clear meaning of Lord Grenville’s argument; and experience soon proved that it was just, for it was only ten days after the date of his note, and only three days after the date of the present note of the Executive

“ We here repeat that this question itself
 “ is of little importance. The British Mi-
 “ nisters thence conclude, that it is therefore
 “ more evident, that it has been brought
 “ forward only for the purpose of insulting
 “ the allies of England. We reply with
 “ much less warmth and prejudice, (88)

cutive Council, that the order for the immediate invasion of Holland was actually given. See Ch. xii. Notes 50—52. It is no wonder, therefore, that on the 7th of January, the Executive Council wished to evade the question of the danger which threatened Holland. The manner in which they evaded it was likewise extremely artful, indeed much more so than any one, on a superficial reading of their note, would imagine. They exchanged, namely, the inference for the premises, wholly set aside the *analogical* part of Lord Grenville’s argument, confined themselves to the opening of the Scheldt, without taking the least notice of the conclusion, which had been drawn from it, and argued, as if the British Cabinet could have no reason to suspect an invasion of Holland, provided it heard something consolatory about the Scheldt.

(88) So far was any warmth from being visible in Lord Grenville’s note, that it was written with all possible coolness and deliberation, though the insolence of

Mr.

“ that this question is absolutely indifferent
 “ to England, (89) that it is little interest-
 “ ing to Holland, (90) but that it is of the

Mr. Chauvelin's note, to which he replied, was sufficient to have irritated any statesman, who had less command of his passions. With respect to prejudice, I leave every impartial reader to determine, whether the notes of the British, or the notes of the French Government, are more consistent with truth, with justice, and with reason. And even if the French notes had been able to lay the most solid claim to one or all of these qualities, it was not well calculated to produce a reconciliation with the British Government, to say to its face, that it wrote with warmth and prejudice. But reconciliation was not the object of the Executive Council.

(89) The contrary of this assertion, and the dangerous consequences resulting to England from the opening of the Scheldt, when the French are masters of the Netherlands, have been so clearly shewn in the tenth and eleventh chapters, that it would be a waste of time to add any thing more on the subject.

(90) This position is so manifestly false, that a confutation is unnecessary. The Dutch themselves best knew whether the opening of the Scheldt would be injurious to them or not: and if they had not been fully

“ utmost importance to the Belgians. (91)

“ That it is indifferent to England does not

“ even require to be proved. It is little in-

“ teresting to Holland, since the productions

“ of the Belgic Netherlands can be conveyed

“ through the canals which end at Ostend :

“ (92) but it is of great importance to the

“ Belgians, on account of the numerous ad-

“ vantages which they may derive from the

convinced that it would not, they would have hardly been so anxious to secure the close of it by so many different treaties, from that of Westphalia in 1648, down to the treaty with France in 1785.

(91) They ought rather to have said “ of the utmost importance to *France* : for the union of the Austrian Netherlands with France was already determined, when the French Executive Council drew up this note, as will presently be proved by authentic documents.

(92) But this is not the ground on which the importance of the close of the Scheldt for Holland rested. Nor is the position itself true : for the produce of Brussels, and all other parts of the Low Countries, which lie to the east of the Scheldt, can be much more conveniently shipped at Antwerp than at Ostend.

“ port

“ port of Antwerp. It is, therefore, on ac-
 “ count of this importance, to restore to the
 “ Belgians the enjoyment of a valuable right,
 “ and not to offend any one, that France has
 “ declared, that it is ready to support them
 “ in the exercise of so legal a right. (93)

“ But is France authorized to break stipu-
 “ lations which oppose the opening of the
 “ Scheldt? If we consult the right of na-
 “ ture, and of nations, not only France, but
 “ all the nations of Europe, are authorized
 “ to break them. No doubt can remain on
 “ this point. (94)

(93) It is evident from this declaration, that the French Executive Council was determined not to abandon the design of opening the Scheldt. Likewise, in the instructions sent to Mr. Chauvelin, it was expressly said, “ *that the Scheldt would not be given up.*” See the Authentic Correspondence, p. 84.

(94) When individuals in civil society enter into a contract, each party circumscribes his right of nature, in order to obtain civil privileges, to which the right of

“ If public right is consulted, we say that
“ it ought never to be but the application of
nature alone would not entitle him. In like manner,
when two nations enter into a treaty, they submit
themselves to limitations, to which the right of nature
would not oblige them, in order to obtain political ad-
vantages, which, without such limitations, would be
unattainable. Neither a contract, therefore, between
individuals, nor a treaty between nations, can exist,
without a restriction of the exercise of natural right.
Consequently, if we adopted the maxim, that every
treaty, which was inconsistent with the free exercise of
the right of nature, was in itself void, no treaty what-
soever could subsist. The whole depends on this single
question: Is he, who enters into a contract with another,
entitled to submit himself to the limitations which
arise from that contract? If he is *entitled* to submit
himself to these limitations, he is undoubtedly *bound* to
fulfil the conditions of the contract, and no third person
has a right to dispense with the obligation. The case
is exactly the same in regard to whole nations. But
the Government of the Austrian Netherlands, like every
other independent government, was certainly entitled to
submit itself to a limitation in the navigation of the
Scheldt, especially since, as far as this limitation ope-
rated, both sides of the Scheldt were Dutch territory, a
circumstance, which in itself gave the Dutch a claim

“ the principles of the general right of na-
 “ tions to the particular circumstances in
 to the sovereignty over that part of the river. And the
 continuation of this long enjoyed sovereignty had been
 further granted to them by the Emperor Joseph, only
 seven years before the period in question, for the sum of
 ten millions of florins: France itself had been a party
 to the engagement, and by a particular treaty with
 Holland, in the year 1785, had guaranteed to them that
 very sovereignty of which it now attempted to deprive
 them. See Martens' *Recueil des Principaux Traités*,
 tom. ii. p. 612. Consequently, it was neither the right
 of nature, nor the right of nations, but wholly and
 solely the right of the stronger, on which the opening
 of the Scheldt, in the year 1792, was grounded. Even,
 if the Austrian Netherlands had been at that time al-
 ready formally ceded to France, still the French Go-
 vernment would have had no right to have taken such
 a step: for, if an estate is mortgaged, or is otherwise
 subject to any kind of limitation, that estate does not
 change its quality by a change of its master. The
 new proprietor, if he chooses to free himself from the
 limitation, must, provided he act according to justice,
 make a compromise, and give an equivalent to the per-
 son or persons in whose favour the limitation had been
 made. But this mode of proceeding does not accord
 with the system adopted by the rulers of France, who

“ which nations may be in respect to each
 “ other: so that every private treaty, which
 “ might violate these principles, could never
 “ be considered but as the work of violence.

“(95) We will next add, that, in regard
 expect, as we have lately seen in the negotiations at
 Rastadt, that, when they take possession of an estate
 which is encumbered with debts, those debts should be
 transferred to the estates of their neighbours.

(95) But is such a treaty therefore not binding? It
 was the work of violence, that in the negotiation at
 Rastadt the left bank of the Rhine was ceded to France;
 for the German Empire, unless it had been forced to
 the concession, would not have yielded to its enemy so
 many beautiful and important provinces. Yet the
 French Directory certainly did not consider the articles
 of cession as therefore null and void. Public right is
 founded on existing treaties, whatever were the cir-
 cumstances which gave birth to those treaties: and all
 that the Executive Council said on this subject, is mere
 sophistry and confusion. In fact, it was not their in-
 tention to convince by clear argumentation, but to per-
 plex their opponents with finely-sounding words: and
 the French rulers, in general, have so completely laid
 aside the works of Puffendorf, Grotius, and Vattel,
 that

“ to the Scheldt, the treaty was concluded

“ without the participation of the Belgians.

“ (96) The Emperor, to secure the posses-

“ sion of the Netherlands, sacrificed, with-

that Mr. Genet, in a note to the American Secretary of State, said, “ I thank God, I have forgotten what these hired jurisprudivists have written upon the rights of nations. See the *New Annual Register*, 1793; *Public Papers*, p. 111.

(96) If no treaty, made by any two governments, were valid till it had been ratified by the general voice of the subjects of those two governments, it would be difficult to find a valid one in any part of Europe. It is in fact absurd to talk about consulting the great mass of the people, in regard to the connexions between its government and that of other nations. For how is it possible, that they, who are seldom rightly informed in regard even to political facts, who are wholly unable to penetrate into the secrets of foreign cabinets, and to discover the springs of action, should be able to form a proper estimate of the relative situation of their own country to that of foreign ones? Least of all have the present Lords of France a right to appeal to a want of expression of the general will; for they set at defiance not only the people, but even their representatives, who are both qualified and bound to discuss political subjects.

“ out

“ out scruple, the most inviolable of rights.
 “ Being master of these beautiful provinces,
 “ he governed them, as Europe has seen,
 “ with a rod of absolute despotism, respect-
 “ ed none of their privileges, but those
 “ which were of importance for him to pre-
 “ serve, and continually attacked and de-
 “ stroyed the rest. (97) France entering
 “ into a war with the House of Austria, (98)
 “ expels it from the Low Countries, and re-
 “ stores liberty (99) to those people, whom
 “ the Court of Vienna had devoted to fla-

(97) Do the new masters of the Netherlands act otherwise? Or, rather, do they not act infinitely worse?

(98) Namely, by a declaration of hostilities on the part of France, at a time when the Austrian Cabinet was neither prepared for war, nor, in all probability, had any intention of acting offensively. See Ch. vii. p. 132—143.

(99) In like manner the Romans, after they had reduced Greece to a Roman province, said, *Libertas Græciæ, data*. Livii Hist. lib. xxxiii.

“ very.

“ very. Their chains are broken : (100) they
 “ are restored to all those rights which the
 “ House of Austria had taken from them.
 “ (101) How can that right, which they
 “ had over the Scheldt, be excepted, espe-
 “ cially when it is of real importance only
 “ to those who were deprived of it? (102)
 “ In short, France has too good a profession
 “ of political faith (103) to make, to be

(100) And other chains, ten times as heavy, imposed on them.

(101) In order that those rights, together with whatever privileges the Emperor Joseph had left unimpaired, might be surrendered to the new House of France.

(102) That is, in plain English, “ as this right was of real importance to France.” And hence arose the determination of the Executive Council, not to abandon its design.

(103) Their *profession* of political faith was certainly very captivating, and has produced wonderful effects, especially in a popular pamphlet which appeared in the year 1797, where many examples of their fair *professions* are quoted at length. But a comparison of their *pro-*
fessions

“ afraid of avowing its principles. The Executive Council declares, then, not that it may appear to yield to some expressions of threatening language, but only to render homage to truth, (104) that the French

professions with their *actions*, which latter are left wholly unnoticed in the said pamphlet, will probably induce the reader of the present work to draw a conclusion diametrically opposite to that which results from a contemplation of their professions alone.

(104) We have already seen *in what manner* the French rulers rendered homage to truth. As to threatening language, no instance is to be found of it in Lord Grenville's note, though many in that of Mr. Chauvelin. At the same time must be admitted the truth of their assertion, that they were not influenced in any of their actions by a fear of the British Government: for a French agent said to Mr. Miles, on November 13, 1792, *that France as little dreaded England as she did the republic of Ragusa*. Authentic Correspondence, Appendix, p. 58. And this contempt of the power of England, which arose from the expectation of a civil war, necessarily increased their inclination to hostilities. They little thought, at that time, that the ruin of their
then

“ Republic does not mean to establish itself
 “ an universal arbiter of the treaties which
 “ bind nations together. It equally knows
 “ to respect other governments, and to take
 “ care that it may make its own respected.
 “ It does not wish to give law to any one :
 “ (105) and it will never suffer any one to
 “ give laws to it. *It has renounced, and still*
 “ *renounces, all conquest* : (106) and its occu-

then considerable navy would be the consequence: on the contrary, they expected that the navy and the commerce of England would be transported to France.

(105) The decree, then, of December 15, and the commentary on it by the Executive Council, which commanded whole nations, whether they wished it or not, to overturn their existing governments, under pain of being treated as enemies by the French Convention, *prescribed laws to no one !*

(106) If we had not been already too much accustomed to hear glaring falsehoods from the Executive Council, to expect an adherence to the truth, our indignation would perhaps be roused at the daring assertion, *that they still renounced all conquest*, when the Dutchy
 of

“ pying the Netherlands will continue no longer than the war, and during that time of Savoy had only a few weeks before been incorporated into France by a solemn and unanimous decree of the National Convention. See Ch. x. note 3. (Yet a celebrated Opposition writer has ventured to declare, “ *that the ancient limits of France were proposed as her dominion.*”) The incorporation of Nice and its territory was likewise unanimously voted within three weeks after this pretended renunciation of aggrandizement. See the *Moniteur*, 1st Feb. 1793. And on the very same day that the incorporation of Nice was voted, the incorporation of the Austrian Netherlands, and the Bishopric of Liege, was proposed by Danton, who said to the National Convention: “ Je ne demande rien à votre enthousiasme, mais tout à votre raison, mais tout aux *intérêts* de la République Française. N’avez-vous pas *préjugé* cette réunion, quand vous avez décrété une organisation provisoire pour la Belgique? Vous avez tout consommé par cela seul, que vous avez dit aux amis de la liberté: organisez-vous comme nous.” *Ib.* Nor was Danton’s proposal rejected, but only *deferred*, till the procès-verbal of the people of Liege, for which they waited, should arrive in Paris. *Ib.* In this manner did the rulers of France *render homage to truth*: in this manner did their actions correspond to their promises, to renounce conquest and aggrandizement.

“ which

“ which may be necessary for the Belgians
 “ to secure and consolidate their liberty :
 “ (107) after which, provided they be inde-
 “ pendent or happy, France will be suffi-
 “ ciently rewarded. (108)

(107) By this clause the Executive Council reserved to itself the right of occupying the Austrian Netherlands with a French army, as long as it thought proper: for it is to be understood, that the French alone would determine the question, *when* the liberty of the Belgians could be considered as sufficiently consolidated. Besides, it was easy to foresee, that if a French army remained there till the Belgians became a free people, it would remain there till it was expelled by force.

(108) Here we have a specimen of the sentimental, which has not failed of its effect: for a celebrated Opposition writer, though he has quoted not a syllable either from Mr. Chauvelin's note of Dec. 27, or from Lord Grenville's answer to it, or from his reply to the present note, has quoted this sentimental passage not less than twice in the compass of one page. But if, instead of suffering ourselves to be influenced by passion, we attend to the dictates of cool reason, we shall discover that, *at the very time* that the Executive Council wrote thus sentimentally on the pretended independence

“ When that nation shall find itself in
 “ the full possession of its liberty, and when
 dependence of the Belgians, it was fully determined to *incorporate Belgia into France*. For, in the first place, within four and twenty hours after this note was signed, the Executive Council signed the instructions for the Commissaries in Belgia, and the whole drift of these instructions, which are printed in *Chaussard Mémoires Historiques et Politiques*, p. 180—228, was manifestly to reduce the Belgians to a state of absolute dependence on France, as every one must perceive even on a superficial reading. Secondly, on Dec. 31, 1792, a whole week, therefore, before the note of the Executive Council to the British Government was signed, one of the Commissaries, Publicola Chaussard, received his private instructions, in which was said: “ Prions et requérons tous ceux à qui le dit Commissaire s’adressera, ou pourra s’adresser, de lui donner toute assistance et toutes les facilités qu’il jugera convenables et nécessaires pour remplir, *conformément au vœu de la République*, l’objet de sa mission.” *Chaussard*, p. 157. Thirdly, when the Commissaries, who were nine in number, met at Brussels on the 3d of February, 1793, to determine the important question: “ La Belgique doit-elle être réunie à la France ? ” agreeably to their instructions, or, as was said, agreeably to the will of the republic, the question was determined in the *affirmative*.

“ its general will may be declared legally
 “ and unfettered, then, if England and Hol-

tive. See the documents on this subject in *Chaussard Mémoires*, p. 80—85. See likewise p. 11—21, where the reasons are assigned for the necessity of incorporating Belgia into France. Three days after the decision, Chaussard wrote to Le Brun, the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, and said: “ *La minorité favorable aux principes révolutionnaires se devise elle-même: nous tâchons de la rallier autour du système de la réunion; mais une partie se flatte de l’espoir d’une Convention Nationale.*” *Ib.* p. 86. But the National Convention confirmed the decision of the Commissaries, as Chaussard himself says, p. 425, note 15. “ *La Convention par un décret a approuvé les arrêtés de ses Commissaires dans la Belgique.*” Likewise in Brissot’s work, à ses *Committans*, p. 87, we find the following passage: “ *Cambon disait hautement devant les Belges mêmes: la guerre de la Belgique nous coûte des centaines de millions; leurs revenus ordinaires, et même des impôts extraordinaires ne les mettront jamais à même de nous rembourser, et cependant nous avons besoin. L’hypothèque de nos assignats touche à la fin. Que faut-il faire? Vendre les biens ecclésiastiques du Brabant; voilà une hypothèque de deux milliards. Mais comment nous en emparer? En nous réunissant à la Belgique. Et aussitôt on ordonne cette réunion.*” Lastly, Ge-

“land still affix any importance to the opening of the Scheldt, the Executive Council

neral Dumouriez, who was well acquainted with the secrets of the French Government, has publicly made the following confession: “*L’intention secrète à Paris n’était point que le peuple Liegeois, et encore moins celui de la Belgique, se réunit en corps de nation, pour se donner une constitution et des loix; on craignoit qu’une fois assemblés ces deux peuples ne concussent leurs forces, et ne fondassent une république indépendante.*” Vie de Dumouriez, tom. iii. p. 348.

There remains, therefore, not the shadow of a doubt, that it was the intention of the French Government, from the very beginning, to incorporate Belgia into France, and consequently it is certain that the assurances of the contrary, which were given to the British Government on the 7th of January, were given with the consciousness of their falsehood.

With respect to the pretended love for the Belgians, which, according to the Executive Council, was so great, that their independence and happiness was the whole reward which was sought by France for its kind exertions, the above-quoted passage in Chaussard’s Letter to the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, affords an admirable proof it. For it appears from that passage, that the majority of the Belgians wished for no revolution whatsoever, and that even a part of the minority

“ will leave that affair to a direct negotia-
 “ tion with the Belgians. If the Belgians,

rity wished, not for an union with France, but for a National Convention of their own. Chaussard himself, therefore, admitted, that the incorporation of Belgia into France was a measure, which was disapproved by far the greatest part of the inhabitants. And this representation was in fact much too feeble; for, so early as the 29th of December, 1792, at a meeting of the Belgians at Bruffels, the proposal, that they should renounce their old constitution, and take the new oath, produced the following effect. *Le serment fut hautement refusé dans le plus grand nombre des sections.*

“ Point d’égalité, point de nouvelles loix; nos états, notre ancienne constitution, et point d’autre chose,” *s’écriat de toutes parts. Moniteur, 6 Janv. 1793.* The

French Executive Council, therefore, were well acquainted with the sentiments of the Belgians, even before they signed the instructions for the commissaries.

But Chaussard, faithful to this trust, easily discovered the means of removing all objections, and said in his vote for the incorporation: “ On m’oppose le vœu du

“ peuple: *le vœu d’un peuple enfant ou imbécile serait nul,*
 “ *parcequ’il stipulerait contre lui-même.*” Such is the

French method of promoting the high-prized happiness and sovereignty of the *people*. Well, therefore, did Dumouriez say: “ On *disait* aux Belges dans

“ through any motive whatever, shall con-
 “ sent to deprive themselves of the naviga-
 “ tion of the Scheldt, France will not op-
 “ pose it. It will respect their independence
 “ even in their errors. (109)

le préambule, qu'ils étaient libres ; on les *traitait* en esclaves.” Vie de Dumouriez, tom. iii. p. 374.—That the French rulers have spoken so speciously, and have acted so infamously, is no wonder, because systematic deception is a constituent part of their general plan : but that so many men of talents and penetration could suffer themselves to be duped by their artifices, is really a wonder. Fortunately, however, for Great Britain, our *Ministers* saw more clearly : or we should ere now have shared the wretched fate which has befallen the Dutch and the Swifs.

(109) It was to be expected that so captivating and sentimental a passage as this would not escape the notice of a celebrated writer, who has made a copious collection of the fair *professions* of the French rulers. Indeed, he has not only quoted it, but has ventured to declare, that “ implicit respect was manifested to the *independence* and *constitutions* of other nations.”—But in *what* manner the independence of Belgia was respected, in *what* manner its constitution, which the majority of the
 inhabitants

“ After so free a declaration, which manifests the present designs of peace, the Ministers of his Britannic Majesty ought to inhabitants wished to preserve, was held in honour, and in *what* manner the French Executive Council regulated its conduct by the will of the sovereign people, has been shewn in the preceding note. Further, says Dumouriez, immediately after the words last quoted : “ On ne leur laissait aucune administration : on les mettait en tutelle. On se chargeait du séquestre de tous les biens ecclésiastiques, qu’on nommait biens nationaux, sans s’embarrasser, s’il conviendrait aux Belges de dépouiller son clergé, et de déclarer ses biens nationaux. Tout cela se faisait, *pour les forcer à se donner à la France* ; et bientôt on employa *la violence et les moyens les plus criminels*, pour arracher l’émission de ce vœu.” Whoever wishes to read a circumstantial account of these violent and infamous measures, of which not only Dumouriez, but even Brissot (*à ses commetans*, p. 82—87.) loudly complains, may consult the second volume of Desodoards’ *Histoire Philosophique de la Révolution de France*. The description given by Desodoards, which no one will call in question, as the author is himself a staunch republican, and a decided enemy of Great Britain, should be further compared with the all-promising manifesto, with which the entry of the French army into the Netherlands was accompanied, and it will

“ entertain no doubt respecting the inten-
 “ tions of France. (110) *But if these expla-*
 “ *nations appear to them insufficient, and if we*
 “ *are still obliged to hear the language of haugh-*
 “ *tiness, and if hostile preparations are conti-*
 “ *nued in the ports of England, after having*
 “ *done every thing in our power to maintain*
 “ *peace, we will prepare for war, (111) con-*
 “ *scious, at least, of the justice of our cause,*

then be confessed, that a more abominable plan of systematic deception was at that time introduced, than had ever disgraced the annals of mankind.

(110) Nor did they entertain any doubt. ◦

(111) Hence it is evident that this note of the Executive Council contained their *ultimatum*: for they expressly say, “ we will prepare for war (*nous nous disposerons à la guerre*) if the explanations appear insufficient, and the preparations in the ports of England be still continued.”—The British Government, therefore, was reduced to this dilemma: either to admit, that the explanations given by the Executive Council were satisfactory, and to put a stop to the preparations making in the sea-ports, or to reject the explanations as unsatisfactory,

factory,

“ and of the efforts we have made to avoid
 “ that extremity. (112) We shall combat
 “ with regret the English, whom we es-
 “ teem : (113) but we shall combat them
 “ without fear.

(Signed) “ LE BRUN.”

To this final note of the French Execu-
 tive Council Lord Grenville returned, within

factory, and to continue the preparations in the sea-
 ports. But it has been fully proved, that the former
 was *impossible* : consequently, the latter was *unavoid-*
able.

(112) One becomes gradually so accustomed to the
 hypocrisy of the French rulers, that indignation at
 length gives way to contempt.

(113) With great artifice was this clause inserted.
 It was designed to separate the people from the Go-
 vernment, and to promote the expected insurrection.
 They never lose sight of their favourite maxim : *Il faut*
soulever les administrés contre les administrans.

five days after the receipt of it, the following answer. (114)

Whitehall, Jan. 18, 1793.

“ I have examined, Sir, with the utmost
 “ attention, the paper you remitted me on
 “ the 13th of this month. I cannot help
 “ remarking, *that I have found nothing satis-*
 “ *factory in the result of it.* The explanations
 “ which it contains, are nearly reduced to
 “ the same points which I have already re-
 “ plied to at length. The declaration of
 “ wishing *to intermeddle with the affairs of*
 “ *other countries* is there renewed. No de-
 “ nial is made, nor reparation offered for the
 “ outrageous proceeding I stated to you in
 “ my letter of December 31 : and the right
 “ *of infringing treaties, and violating the rights*

(114) The French original of Lord Grenville's answer to the note of the Executive Council was not printed in the *Moniteur*, as the preceding notes were : but as the English translation was officially laid before Parliament, it supplies the place of the original.

“ of

“ of our allies is still maintained, by solely
 “ offering an illusory negotiation upon this
 “ subject, which is put off, as well as the
 “ evacuation of the Low Countries by the
 “ French armies, to the *indefinite term*, not
 “ only of the conclusion of the war, but like-
 “ wise of the consolidation of what is called
 “ the liberty of the Belgians.

“ It is added, that, if these explanations
 “ appear insufficient to us, if you should be
 “ again obliged to hear a haughty tone of
 “ language, if hostile preparations should
 “ continue in the ports of England, after
 “ having made every effort to preserve peace,
 “ *you will then make dispositions for war.*

“ If this notification, or that relative to
 “ the treaty of commerce, had been made to
 “ me under a regular and official form, (115)

(115) It was admitted by the French Executive Council, in the very note to which Lord Grenville here
 • replied,

“ I should have found myself under the ne-
 “ cessity of replying to it, that to threaten
 “ Great Britain with a declaration of war,
 “ because she judged it expedient to aug-
 “ ment her forces, and also to declare that a
 “ solemn treaty should be broken, because

replied, that Mr. Chauvelin was no otherwise accredited to his Britannic Majesty than from the late King of France, and that he was not formally enough authorized to treat as an agent of the new Government of France; consequently Mr. Chauvelin's communication of the note, to which Lord Grenville here replied, was, in diplomatic strictness, no *official* communication: and as this was avowed by the Executive Council itself, no one could censure a British Minister for using the same language. Indeed it is obvious, that, if the British Government had been ever so inclined to acknowledge, at that early period, the French Republic, it could not consider any individual as the accredited Ambassador of that republic, till credentials from the part of those, who had the administration of it, had been both delivered and received. But (as Lord Grenville had already explained to Mr. Chauvelin) the issue of the negotiation depended, not on the *form*, but on the *substance* of it. (See Note 4 to the present chapter.)

“ England

“ England adopted, for her own safety, such
 “ precautions as already exist in France, (116)
 “ would only be considered, both the one
 “ and the other, as new grounds of of-
 “ fence (117), which, as long as they

(116) It has been proved, that the French naval preparations preceded those, which were made in Great Britain, by three whole months, and that the number of ships of war, which were ordered by the British Government to be put in commission in the latter half of December, and the former part of January, was inferior to the number of those which France had already in commission, to which was now to be added the considerable reinforcement of ships of the line and frigates, ordered by the National Convention on the 13th of January. See Ch. x. Note 5. Ch. xi. Note 44. and Ch. xii. Notes 59—61.

(117) To complain about preparations, which were not only mere measures of defence, but were still less extensive than those already adopted by the menacing power, and, while the motives which had given rise to the preparations of the menaced nation still continued, to insist on the cessation of those preparations, and lastly, when the causes of alarm were openly avowed, to accompany the demand with a new menace, that, unless it
 were

“ should subsist, would prove a bar to every
“ kind of negotiation.

“ Under this form of extra communica-
“ tion, I think I may yet be permitted to
“ tell you, not in a tone of haughtiness, but
“ firmness, *that these explanations are not con-*
“ *sidered as sufficient, and that all the motives,*
“ *which gave rise to the preparations, still con-*
“ *tinue.* These motives are already known
“ to you by my letter of December 31, *in*
“ *which I remarked in precise terms what those*
“ *dispositions were, which could alone maintain*
“ *peace and a good understanding.* (118) I

were instantly complied with, a declaration of hostilities would be the consequence, was, in fact, to treat the menaced nation with the utmost insolence and contempt.

(118) On the precise terms, in which Lord Grenville had marked to Mr. Chauvelin the dispositions, which alone could maintain peace and harmony between the two nations. (See Note 66 to this chapter.)

“ do

“ do not see that it can be useful to the ob-
 “ ject of conciliation, to enter into a discus-
 “ sion with you, on separate points, under
 “ the present circumstances, as I have al-
 “ ready acquainted you with my opinion
 “ concerning them. If you have any expla-
 “ nation to give me under the same extra-
 “ official form, which will embrace all the
 “ objects contained in my letter of the 31st
 “ of December, as well as all the points,
 “ which relate to the present crisis with
 “ England, her allies, and the general system
 “ of Europe, *I shall willingly attend to them.*

“ I think it, however, my duty to in-
 “ form you in the most positive terms, in
 “ answer to what you tell me on the subject
 “ of our preparations, *that, under the present*
 “ *circumstances, all those measures will be con-*
 “ *tinued, which may be judged necessary to*
 “ *place us in a state of protecting the safety,*
 “ *tranquillity, and the rights of this country,*
 “ as

“ as well as to guarantee those of our allies,
 “ and to set up a barrier to those views of am-
 “ bition and aggrandizement, dangerous at all
 “ times to the rest of Europe, but which become
 “ still more so, being supported by the propaga-
 “ tion of principles destructive of all social
 “ order.

(Signed) “ GRENVILLE.”

When we examine the several parts of the preceding negotiation, we must confess, that the motives which had induced the British Government to have recourse to a naval armament, were far from being removed by it, and that those causes of alarm, which have been described at large in the tenth chapter, continued to operate in full force. And in the middle of January, 1793, were now to be added those additional causes which have been related in the twelfth chapter, causes which necessarily produced so much the more striking effects, as they arose

at

at the very time that the French Executive Council was pretending to remove the former causes of complaint, and, during negotiations, of which the apparent object was the preservation of peace. For the decree of December 15, the new address to all nations in favour of insurrection, the menace in the National Convention of an appeal to the British people, and the decisive refusal on December 24, to except Great Britain from the decree of November 19, succeeded Mr. Pitt's conference with Mr. Maret, and took place about the period, when the French Executive Council must have been engaged in preparing instructions for Mr. Chauvelin. It was only four days after Mr. Chauvelin had delivered his note of December 31, and on the very day on which Lord Grenville replied to it, that the Marine Minister, Monge, wrote the circular letter to the French sea-ports, threatening England with an invasion, and fifty thousand

send caps of liberty. It was only one day after the Executive Council had, in the note of January 7, solemnly pledged its word to respect the independence both of England and its allies, that this same Council instructed its commissaries, that the French Republic considered every nation as an enemy, which, however unanimous in the resolution, was determined to preserve its ancient form of government. Lastly, it was only three days after the solemn pledge to respect the allies of England had been given, and even before any reply either was or could be made by the British Government, that positive orders were sent to General Miranda for an invasion of Holland. It lies not, therefore, within the power of sophistry itself to deny, that the French Executive Council entered into the negotiation with the sole view of amusing the British Government, till the plan, which had been laid for the destruction of the British empire,

was

was fully ripe for execution. But the British Government had more penetration than the French Government imagined, and was too wise to be decoyed into a snare, which, within the compass of a few years, has proved the ruin of millions. (119)

(119) The readiness to give credit to the protestations of the French rulers, till the iniquitous invasion of Switzerland at last opened the eyes of all who chose to see, and rendered the truth, that the actions of these pretended benefactors of mankind were uniformly at variance with their specious professions, as palpable even to the illiterate in politicks, as it had been from the very beginning to the intelligent, appears from the following passage of a letter written from Paris in the autumn of 1798, and published in the Annals of the Prussian Monarchy (*Annalen der Preussischen Monarchie*) November, 1798, p. 272—276. “The (French) Government sent to Germany, some time ago, a man of
 “great talents and information, who expresses himself
 “with spirit and fluency, in order to probe the public
 “opinion, and, if possible, to work upon it. He is lately
 “returned, and has informed me that he has made the
 “following report to the Government: *That before the*
 “*events in Switzerland foreigners were still inclined to*

Besides, the negotiation itself, even without any reference to those facts, which place the systematic deception of the French rulers in the clearest point of view, proved, beyond a doubt, that they preferred the gratification of their ambition, and a war with England, to moderation and a continuance of peace. For, if they had preferred the latter, they would have readily accepted the conditions which were offered by the British Government, since these conditions were nothing more than, first, that France should renounce its views of aggression and aggrandizement, and secondly, that it should cease to interfere in the internal concerns of neu-

“suffer themselves to be deceived in regard to the real views of the French Government, but, that after those extortions and excesses, all attempts to justify its conduct were without effect.”—This passage proves, likewise, what indeed wants at present no proof in England, that the French Government still sends revolution-professors abroad, *to work on the public opinion.*

tral nations. (120) Without a compliance with these conditions^o on the part of France, it would have been madness to have desisted from the preparations which were making

(120) Not only were these conditions distinctly specified in Lord Grenville's note of December 31, but the conduct of the National Convention, as being contrary to what was required in those conditions, had, on the 13th of December, been alledged in his Majesty's speech as the cause of the British armament. "I have carefully observed (said his Majesty) a strict neutrality in the present war on the continent, and have uniformly abstained from any interference with respect to the internal affairs of France: *but it is impossible for me to see, without the most serious uneasiness, the strong and increasing indications, which have appeared there of an intention to excite disturbances in other countries, to disregard the rights of neutral nations, and to pursue views of conquest and aggrandizement, &c.*"—Great Britain, therefore, had recourse to an armament, as to a measure of defence, because France had displayed views of conquest and aggrandizement, and had interfered in the internal concerns of neutral nations, particularly of Great Britain itself. And, when that armament became a subject of negotiation, the question, whether it should cease or be continued, depended entirely on the ques-

in the ports of Britain. For, in regard to the former, it was certainly not to be expected, that, after the conquest of Holland, and the great accession of sea-coast and nation, whether the French rulers would abandon or retain their plan of interference and aggrandizement, whether they would accept or reject the proposed conditions. The whole negotiation turned on this single point, and therefore it is sheer sophistry, when the adversaries of the British Ministry intermix other questions, such as the new form of government in France, to which the negotiation had not the most distant reference. The French rulers themselves were conscious, that it was their views of conquest and aggrandizement which occasioned the British armament, and that they were determined, under no conditions, to abandon those views: for, on the day which preceded the declaration of war, Danton said in the National Convention: “*Les limites de la France sont marquées par la nature: nous les atteindrons dans leurs quatre points, à l’Ocean, au Rhin, aux Alpes, aux Pyrenées.—On vous menace de l’Angleterre! Les tyrans de l’Angleterre sont morts: vous avez la plénitude de la puissance nationale.*” *Moniteur*, 1 Fev. 1793. From this passage we see, likewise, the reason why the conditions, proposed by the British Government, were rejected by the rulers of France. They supposed, namely, in consequence of the

val power, which would accrue from it to France, the government of that country would not take the earliest opportunity of attacking Great Britain with double force. It was surely not to be expected, that a nation, which has ever been the great rival of France, a nation, which, on account of its power and wealth, is envied by all Europe, would alone remain unmolested. Nor could it be supposed, that the desire of humbling Britain, which is necessarily inherent in the French, would diminish with the increase of their power, and that this desire would at length vanish, when they had acquired the means of controlling us according to their pleasure. The renunciation, therefore, of conquest and aggrandizement on the part of the expected rebellion, that the British Constitution was at its last gasp : in the heat of their imagination, they represented royalty in Britain as even expired : and disdained, therefore, to be re-conducted within the limits of moderation by a government, which, on account of its imagined debility, they despised.

France was a condition essential to the salvation of Britain. Equally necessary was the acceptance, and even the most punctual fulfilment of the other condition: for it was wholly impossible, that Great Britain should preserve its internal tranquillity, while the decrees of November 19, and December 15, continued in force, while the French Government continued to encourage those societies, who, by their own avowal on the 28th of November, had formed the resolution of overturning the British Constitution, and while it still persevered in infesting our country with its apostles of rebellion.

(121) It is clear, therefore, that France had no right to expect a cessation of the warlike preparations on the part of Britain, unless the former would condescend to accept of conditions which were indispensibly necessary for the preservation of the latter. This

(121) See Ch. x. p. 203—231.

matter was represented very perspicuously by Mr. Miles on the 11th of January, 1793, in a letter addressed to his friend Mr. Maret, who was then become *Chef du Département pour les Affaires Etrangères*, and consequently, the principal person in that department, after the Minister himself. Mr. Miles pointed out the impossibility, that the British Government should remain tranquil, unless the Executive Council would consent to fulfil what was required in the proposed conditions: and, at the same time, he positively assured Mr. Maret, *that if the Executive Council would comply with them, a war would not take place.* (122) To the French Mini-

(122) As this letter was written to a man in an official capacity, and is a document of some importance, it is necessary to quote the following extract from the original.

A Londres, le 11 Janvier, 1793.

La dépêche envoyée par Monsieur Chauvelin, Lundi, 31 Décembre, vous est certainement parvenue, cependant vous ne m'en accusez pas la réception. Vous me

ster for Foreign Affairs himself Mr. Miles had already written on the 2d of January, on

parlez de l'ardeur du peuple Français et de ses ressources immenses; hélas! mon cher Maret, il n'est question ni de l'une ni de l'autre. Après les griefs détaillés dans la réponse de Milord Grenville à la note de Monsieur Chauvelin, quel autre parti y a-t-il à prendre pour la France, que *de reculer ou se battre?* Je n'en connais aucun. Vous me direz, peut-être, que ce qu'on a exigé est trop humiliant; mais mon cher ami, *il n'est pas question d'orgueil, mais de justice.*—Si l'Assemblée Nationale dans un moment d'ivresse fait des bêtises ou des injustices, il convient qu'elle corrige les uns et répare les autres. Permettez que je vous répète ce que vous avez déjà lu dans la réponse de Milord Grenville, que les ordres donnés à vos officiers généraux de poursuivre l'ennemi sur les terres neutres est une atteinte contre l'indépendance des puissances qui ne sont point en guerre avec vous. L'arrêté du Conseil sur l'ouverture de l'Escaut est une infraction des traités. L'appropriation de la Savoie est contre vos propres principes; vous avez renoncé à toutes conquêtes, et vous en faites! Comment se fier à une nation qui ne respecte ni ses traités ni ses sermens? Le décret du 19 Novembre, ainsi que celui du 15 Décembre, étant conçus en termes généraux, et invitant, pour ainsi dire, les peuples de tous les pays à se révolter contre leurs gouvernemens respectifs,

the same subject, and had assured him, *that the fate of Britain and France depended on the decision of the Executive Council.* (123) If

respectifs, en leur promettant du secours, sont des griefs trop évidens et trop sérieux pour ne pas indigner le Gouvernement Britannique, et justifier ses craintes, surtout après que l'Assemblée Nationale a accueilli, avec un empressement aussi peu décent que peu politique, les adresses de quelques clubs factieux en Angleterre, qui ne dissimulaient pas leurs intentions de tout bouleverser. *Voilà donc, mon cher Maret, où nous sommes; si vous pouvez engager le Conseil Exécutif à revenir sur ses pas, relativement aux articles ci-dessus, la guerre n'aura point lieu.* Il faut convenir que l'Angleterre, ne peut que se sentir comprise dans les décrets qui offrent ce que vous appelez fraternité à tous les peuples du monde. Il est évident aussi que notre existence politique ne permettra nullement que la France s'aggrandisse: et vous ne pouvez nier que le traité de 1788, nous oblige à garantir la fermeture de l'Escaut, et que vous y êtes tenu par le traité de 1786. Il est aussi vrai, que pendant qu'un traité existe on doit le respecter. Répondez le plutôt possible à ma lettre, etc. Authentic Correspondence, etc. Appendix, p. 106—108.

(123) The words of the original are, "*C'est au Pouvoir Exécutif à décider:*" and a few lines after, "*Vous êtes*

this Council then had been really desirous of peace, it would have decided in favour of the acceptance of the proposed conditions, especially as they contained nothing more than the proposal, that France should remain true to the principles which, from the commencement of the revolution, it has uniformly professed. No alteration was required in the new form of government: the subjects of negotiation related solely to the *external* power of France: and if this power had continued in the hands even of Louis XVI., and he had acted towards Great Britain in the same manner as the National Convention did, the British Government would have been equally obliged to insist on the same conditions, and, in case of their rejection, to persevere in the preparations of war. But we have seen that the Executive Council, instead of accepting these conditions, which

êtes maître de leur destin. Authentic Correspondence, Appendix, p. 97, 98.

his Majesty had mentioned in his speech to the British Parliament on the 31st of December, and which Lord Grenville, in his first note to Mr. Chauvelin, had very distinctly proposed as the only possible basis of peace, (124) still insisted on the right of ap-

(124) The proposition was in fact so clear (See the Notes 66 and 120 to this chapter), that it creates just matter of surprize, that an eminent leader of Opposition could venture, on the 18th of February, 1793, in the House of Commons, to lay the following charge to Ministry: “ That in the late negotiation—they never “ stated distinctly to the French Government any terms “ and conditions, the accession to which, on the part of “ France, would induce his Majesty to persevere in a “ system of neutrality.” See *New Annual Register*, 1793, *British and Foreign History*, p. 57. But another leader of Opposition does not rest satisfied with this charge: for he seems, at least, to deny the existence of the negotiation itself, saying in his late popular pamphlet, “ We neither made war upon these aggressions, which might have led to a termination of it upon their removal, nor would we consent to put their removal into a train of amicable negotiation.”—It is true, that whoever derives his knowledge of British and French politicks from this eminently superficial, though highly eloquent, pamphlet,

plying the decree of November 19 in certain cases, that is, in fact, of interfering at its own pleasure in the internal concerns of Great Britain. (125) On the right of violating existing treaties, of depriving the allies of England of privileges guaranteed to

pamphlet, might be induced to suppose it were true that no negotiation was conducted between the two governments, since the author has thought proper, if we except a few specious promises in the note of the Executive Council, which he calls *conciliatory declarations*, to pass over the negotiation in total silence. On the other hand, as he acknowledges that a *correspondence* was carried on between Lord Grenville and Mr. Chauvelin, he appears in reality to object only to the *term* negotiation. But as this very term was used not only by Mr. Fox, in the above mentioned charge, but likewise by the French themselves, who spake of “*négociations avec l’Angleterre*” (Ch. x. Note 49); and as it is not the name, but the thing, which demands our attention, I leave it to the reader to give whatever appellation he thinks proper to the diplomatic communications between Great Britain and France. In *verbis simus faciles*.

(125) See Notes 82—84 to this chapter.

them by almost all the powers of Europe, and of occupying the Netherlands with a French army till the liberty, as it was called, of the Belgians was consolidated, that is, for ever, (126) was likewise formally insisted. Consequently the two conditions of peace, proposed by the British Government, were unequivocally rejected. Thus was the negotiation brought to a crisis: for, without the acceptance of these conditions, Great Britain *could not* desist from the preparations then making in the ports, and these conditions France *would not* accept. The former, therefore, *was obliged* to continue its preparations, as Lord Grenville explained to Mr. Chauvelin, in his note of January 18, on this very ground. And as the French Executive Council formally and positively declared, that they would commence hostilities, if the explanations given in the note of January 7 were not deemed satisfactory, and

(126) See the Notes 106—109 to this chapter.

the preparations in the British ports were not consequently discontinued, we have an irrefragable proof, *that it was not in the power of the British Cabinet to prevent a rupture with France.* (127)

(127) On the 18th of January, therefore, Mr. Miles closed his correspondence with the French Minister, Le Brun, with the following letter: “ Un événement m'est arrivé qui m'ôte à jamais la douce espérance d'être utile à la chose publique. J'aurais voulu écarter la guerre, ce terrible fléau du genre humain: *mais enflé d'un orgueil très déplacé, vous n'écoutez ni la prudence ni la justice.* Je me trouve tracassé et estropié de tout côté et de toute manière. Je n'en puis plus. Il y a bien des années que vous connaissez mes principes: mes démarches ont été dictées jusqu'à présent par l'amour de la vérité et de la liberté, non pas d'une liberté effrénée et sans bornes comme la vôtre, mais d'une liberté bien entendue, bien raisonnée, et qui rend le monde un paradis terrestre. Mais que faire? *L'enthousiasme vous aveugle et vous ne voyez plus ni la justice ni la prudence.* Quant il était question du traité de commerce, j'exprimai mes vœux dans une lettre adressée à Mr. Pitt, que ce traité pût devenir la base d'une alliance entre les deux nations, qui assurerait à l'Europe et au monde entier la douce jouissance d'une paix éternelle. Mais au lieu de

la paix, c'est la guerre que je vois prêt à s'éclater et engloutir les deux nations? *Le Brun!* vous allez vous charger d'une terrible responsabilité. Songez y bien; il est encore tems; vous pouvez tout réparer; j'ai le cœur gros et obsédé par des idées tristes et lugubres; la vie commence à me peser furieusement." *Authentic Correspondence*, Appendix, p. 113. But this last warning was of no more avail than the preceding: the resolution, once formed, was not altered: and *Le Brun's* obstinacy, of which *Mr. Miles* had already complained in a letter to *Mr. Maret* of the 4th of January,* rendered him insensible to the calamities in which he and his colleagues were wantonly involving Great Britain and France.

* "J'ai le cœur navré de voir que tous mes efforts pour écarter la guerre n'aboutissent à rien, et ça à cause de l'opiniâtreté de *Le Brun*, qui est assurément très mal instruit de la situation intérieure de ce pays." *Ib.* p. 89.

CHAP. XIV.

Proof that the French Rulers had fully resolved on a War with Great Britain some Time before the Middle of January, 1793. Investigation of the Motives which induced them to undertake it.

WE have seen, in the preceding chapter, that the question, whether a rupture should take place between Great Britain and France, was fully decided before the middle of January, 1793, (1) and that this decision was founded on the refusal of the French Executive Council to accept the con-

(1) It was on the 13th of January that the ultimatum of the French Executive Council was delivered to Lord Grenville.

ditions of peace which had been proposed by the British Government. Now, as the note, in which the refusal was signified, was signed by Le Brun on the 7th of January, the Executive Council must, at least, on that day, if not sooner, have come to a resolution of engaging in a war with England, because they knew from Lord Grenville's express declaration, in his note of the 31st of December, that, without the acceptance of the proposed conditions, a rupture would be unavoidable. But they had undoubtedly formed this resolution at a still earlier period, and even before the answer of the British Court to Mr. Chauvelin's note of December 27 was known to them: for it was on the very day on which Lord Grenville replied to it, namely, December 31, that the Marine Minister, Monge, sent his celebrated circular letter to the sea-port towns of France, and it is evident that no Minister would take so open and decisive a step before war had been re-

solved on in the cabinet. (2) The date of the circular letter deserves, likewise, in an-

(2) This is so obvious, that the circular letter of the Marine Minister was considered by the inhabitants of the sea-ports as the signal of an immediate attack on England. The following answer, returned by the municipality of St. Malo, dated 17th January, and printed in the Journal de Paris, 28th January, 1793, may serve as an example.

Lettre du Conseil Général de la Commune de St. Malo, au Ministre de la Marine, le 17 Janvier.

A l'instant où nous avons reçu votre lettre, avec la délibération du Conseil Exécutif en date du 7 Janv. nous nous sommes empressés, de concert avec l'Ordonnateur civil, de lui donner la plus grande publicité par la voie de l'impression, bien certain que nos concitoyens feraient jaloux de prouver leur patriotisme, *en entrant dans les vues du Pouvoir Exécutif*, et faisant leurs efforts pour coopérer de tous leurs moyens, à anéantir les tyrans, et les hordes d'esclaves ligués contre notre liberté. Nous n'avons point été trompés dans notre attente, Citoyen Ministre, et déjà nous vous annonçons que nos armateurs travaillent avec grande activité, à disposer les objets nécessaires à l'armement de six corsaires, dont trois montent 28 canons en batteries et trois autres plus petits. Vous pouvez compter, qu'ils seront prêts à l'instant où la Convention Nationale ouvrira sur les
mers

other respect, to be particularly noted, because it shews that the resolution of engaging in a war with England was formed by the Executive Council, even before they knew the conditions under which the British Government was willing to preserve peace with France, and consequently, that they were determined on a rupture at all events, whatever might be the terms required as the

mers un nouveau champ d'honneur aux Français régénérés."—The contents of the *deliberation of the Executive Council bearing date 7th of January*, which is mentioned in this letter, have, I believe, never been made known to the public: but it is evident, from the manner in which the municipality of St. Malo spake of it, that its tendency was the same as that of the letter written by the Marine Minister, namely, to rouse the people to a war with England. The circumstance, therefore, that it was signed by the Executive Council on the *very same day* on which the note of the Executive Council to the British Government was signed, affords a new and very striking proof of that glaring duplicity, which characterizes the rulers of modern France.

price of peace. Though the question, therefore, whether a rupture must take place between Great Britain and France could not be brought to its final issue before the tribunal of the public, till the ultimatum of the Executive Council had been delivered on the 13th of January, yet their private determination had been irrevocably made, without the least regard to the result of a negotiation. Indeed the whole conduct of the French rulers, from the middle of November to the middle of January, afforded one continued proof of this assertion: and Mr. Miles, who, in consequence of his connexions with Le Brun, and other leading men in France, was intimately acquainted with their secret views, has testified, that the Executive Council had formed a decided resolution on the part to be taken in regard to England, not four weeks only when the circular letter of the Marine Minister was issued, but even

ten weeks before the open declaration of hostilities. (3)

That the resolution, to engage in a war with England, was taken by the Executive Council, at least before the negotiation was finished, if not before it commenced, appears likewise from the confessions of General Dumouriez. In the first volume of his Memoirs, where he speaks of his own residence in Paris during the former part of January, and the measures which were then concerting for the next campaign, he says, in positive and unequivocal terms, that Le Brun, the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, desired him to pay no regard to the negotiation with Great Britain, and that this negotiation was not made even a subject of the least inquiry. (4) We have here, also, an ad-

(3) Compare p. 87 with p. 88 of the Authentic Correspondence with Le Brun and others.

(4) "Le Brun pria même le général d'écarter tout ce qui concernait les négociations avec l'Angleterre, et

ditional proof, that the Executive Council, of which Le Brun, in all matters relative to foreign countries was the chief, was resolved *at all events* on a war with England; and that the negotiation, which was then carrying on, had no other object than to amuse its government till the plan of attack was ripe for execution. Further, General Dumouriez informed General Miranda, in a letter dated Paris, 10th January, that the war between England and France appeared to be decided. He said, indeed, to Miranda, “decided on the part of England,” (5) being too prudent to betray the secrets of the Executive Council: but that he himself was convinced the British Government had at that time *not* determined on a war with France, is manifest from the circumstance,

la Hollande: *il n'en fut pas du tout question.* Mémoires de Dumouriez, tom i. p. 108.

(5) La guerre de la part d'Angleterre paraît à-peu-près décidée. Correspondance du Général Miranda, etc. p. 30

that

that in a passage of his Memoirs, where he had just before expressly spoken of the *fifteenth* of January, (6) he says *it would have been extremely easy for France to have avoided a war with England.* (7) Dumouriez, therefore, certainly did not believe on the *tenth* of January, that the English Cabinet had determined on a war with France: for in that case he could not have supposed, that the French Government, on the *fifteenth* of that month, might so easily have avoided a rupture: nor could he have at all ima-

(6) Tom. i. p. 103. “ Nous étions déjà au 15 du mois de Janvier.

(7) “ La Clos, qui venait d’être nommé commandant dans l’Inde proposait, qu’on le fit partir avec quinze mille hommes et quinze vaisseaux de guerre, ce qui supposait nécessairement la guerre avec les Anglais et les Hollandais, guerre qui n’était point déclarée, et qu’il eût été *très-facile* et *très-nécessaire* d’éviter. Ib p. 105. He says also p. 128: “ De Maulde en arrivant à Paris pour se justifier vint trouver le général, et lui dit, que si on voulait garder la neutralité avec la Holland et l’Angleterre, *rien n’était plus facile.*”

gined, that the decision of war and peace depended on the will of the Executive Council, unless he had been thoroughly persuaded, that the designs of the British Government were pacific. The expression, therefore, *guerre de la part d'Angleterre*, must be considered as synonymous to *guerre avec l'Angleterre*: the use of it must be ascribed to the caution which he thought was necessary in writing to Miranda, but which no longer operated when he published his Memoirs: and the decision in favour of war must be understood of the French Government, a construction, of which the justness is demonstrated, not only by Le Brun's acknowledged resolution, to pay no regard to the negotiation with England, but likewise by the order sent to General Miranda, on the same 10th of January, to make an immediate attack on the United Provinces. And it receives still further confirmation, from the declaration made by Lord Auckland in the House

House of Lords, on the 9th of January, 1798, whence it appears, that at the time when preparations were making (8) to open a negotiation between Lord Auckland, then Ambassador at the Hague, and General Dumouriez, the General himself acknowledged, that the French Executive Council had determined on a war with England. His Lordship further added, that he had not mentioned the matter before, but that he then felt himself at liberty to state it. (9)

(8) Of these preparations, which commenced only a few days before the declaration of war, more will be said in the following chapter.

(9) See the Parliamentary Debates on Jan. 9, 1798.—As no personal interview, if I mistake not, took place between Lord Auckland and General Dumouriez, the negotiation having been stopped at the very outset by the declaration of war on the part of the National Convention, the secret, which his Lordship has revealed, must have been contained in some written or verbal message, either to himself or to some other person. Now Dumouriez relates in his *Mémoires*, tom. i. p. 142, that he sent a confidential letter to his friend De Maulde, who was then at the Hague, and that De
Maulde

BUT whatever may be the period at which the French Cabinet came to a settled resolution in regard to the war with England and Holland, the *fact* that it did come to this resolution, and that too before the middle of January, 1793, has been so fully demonstrated in the tenth and twelfth chapters of the present work, that it would be a waste of time to say any thing further on the subject. Indeed, the positive order sent to General Miranda on the 10th of January, for an immediate invasion of Holland, and the considerable augmentation of the French marine, which was ordered only three days afterwards, expressly to act against England, though the French had a greater number of ships already in commission than were at

Maulde shewed this letter to Lord Auckland. But whether the acknowledgment of General Dumouriez was contained in this confidential letter, or in some other dispatch, his Lordship can best determine. As the information, however, was really communicated, the vehicle is of no great consequence.

that

that time fitting in the English ports, (10) would alone demonstrate the truth of the assertion. Lastly, Mr. Miles says in the work, (11) which has been frequently quoted, “ I have other documents in my possession, “ which all tend to prove, that France was “ too much intoxicated with her success, and “ too confident that she was invincible, to “ keep any measures with a nation whom it “ was her misfortune to behold in no other “ light than as a very powerful neighbour “ and rival, and whom she thought it was “ necessary to humble, if not to crush.” Perhaps the documents, of which Mr. Miles here speaks, will hereafter be laid before the public: however, they are unnecessary for our present purpose, as we have already evidence enough.

To this war with Great Britain the republican rulers of France were induced by

(10) See Ch. xii. Note 61.

(11) Pag. 98.

various motives, which, unfortunately for human kind, derived their origin from the French revolution.

The completion of it, as it was called, had already induced the National Assembly, in April 1792, to declare war against Austria: (12) they had deemed it expedient to employ their forces abroad, that they might be more at liberty to execute their projects at home, and to divert the general attention from the cabals in the centre of the kingdom to the military operations on the borders, that their own secret machinations might less attract the notice of the public. When hostilities were once commenced, the same motives urged both the continuance and extension of them: for the Minister of the interior declared, in the summer of 1792, that, as there were three hundred thousand men in arms, it was necessary to make them

(12) See Ch. vii. Note 3.

march as far as their legs would carry them, or they would return and cut the throats of their employers. (13) War, therefore, was considered as a national benefit, and peace, as Brissot himself acknowledged, (14) was regarded as the only evil which the republican rulers of France had to dread, because, as Louvet observed, it was destructive to the republic. (15) The successful campaign of 1792, and the advantages which had been obtained over Austria and Prussia, opened new fields of action to the French armies, which were daily increasing both in numbers and in military prowess: and to men accustomed to subsist by rapine, nothing more inviting could be offered, than the plunder of a commercial country, whose wealth is proverbial. And, as it was deemed expedient

(13) Ch. vii. Note 36.

(14) *Ib.* Note 7.(15) *Ib.* Note 12.

to find employment for the French sailors as well as for the soldiers, a war with Great Britain was not only an alluring object, but appeared to the National Convention to afford the means of securing its authority at home.

As the war, however, with Austria and Prussia already answered the ends of the French rulers to a certain degree, it is probable that the declaration of hostilities against Great Britain would have been deferred to a somewhat later period, unless other causes, of which the effects were more rapid, had operated at the same time. These causes were partly general, or such as applied to other countries beside Great Britain, and partly especial, or such as applied to Great Britain alone. To the former class is to be referred the resolution of the French republicans to extirpate monarchy not only in France,

France, but throughout all Europe, a resolution which was formed by degrees, and which may be traced in the several stages of the French revolution.

The rational sense of liberty, which had long prevailed in Britain, was scarcely awakened in France, when, in consequence of the impetuosity of the French character, it began to degenerate into wild enthusiasm. From the original design of establishing a monarchy, limited by a proper intermixture of democracy and aristocracy, (16) which is the happiest constitution

(16) I purposely say the *design* of establishing such a monarchy, for the framers of the constitution of 1789, or, as it is more usually called, of 1791, because it was then formally accepted, entirely failed in the execution; they by no means introduced a just mixture of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy, and on that very account it was impossible that the constitution should be of long duration. The grand fault consisted in this, that the States of France, which had been formerly divided

for a great empire, a sudden transition was made to all the horrors of anarchy: and the

divided into three houses, or chambers, were melted into *one*. Thus the equilibrium of the state-machine, which it is the first object of a good legislator to preserve, was totally destroyed: and it was easy to foresee, that with such an institution, aided by the spirit of the times, the King would be degraded to a mere Commissary of the National Assembly, and that for want of a separate aristocratic power, to form a counterpoise, the monarchical part of the constitution would soon be annihilated by the daily increasing power of the democratic part. The States should have been divided into *two* houses: the heads of the principal noble families, with the higher orders of the clergy, should have been placed in the one, and the representatives of the people in the other. The reciprocal action of aristocracy and democracy would then have preserved an equilibrium: the prerogatives of the King, and the liberties of the people, would have been guaranteed at the same time: tranquillity would have been secured to France, and the miseries, which have been inflicted on the neighbouring countries, would have been avoided. The faultiness of a *single* legislative body has been since discovered by the French themselves, and, therefore, in the latest of their constitutions they have introduced *two* Councils, in imitation of the two Houses of the British Parliament.

But

Constituent Assembly, in which were many very respectable members, was scarcely dif-

But the imitation falls greatly short of the original: for the Council of Elders, and the Council of Five Hundred, can never answer the purpose which is attained by the House of Lords, and the House of Commons. The House of Lords, which forms the aristocratical part of our constitution, is admirably devised to keep the monarchical and democratical parts within their due limits. It has an equal interest with the Commons in preventing a too great increase in the power of the one, and an equal interest with the King in preventing a too great increase in the power of the other. And as it is placed immediately between both, it can keep the constitution in a proper poise, by siding with the one, if encroachments are made by the other, and by supporting both, when they preserve the limits marked out by the constitution. But no such advantage attends the French Council of Elders. They are representatives of the people, and, consequently, belong to the democratical part of the French Constitution, as well as the Council of Five Hundred: the two Councils are, in fact, nothing more than parts of the *same* house, and whether seven hundred and fifty representatives assemble in *one* hall, as they did before, or whether one room be allotted to five hundred of them, and another to the remaining two hundred and fifty, as at

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solved, when the Legislative Assembly, which met in the autumn of 1792, and consisted present, the difference in the result is not so great, as the authors of the last French Constitution imagined. Both Councils consist of men of the very same description; the members of each have an equal interest in all cases, whether they be inclined to oppose or to support the Directory, to which the executive power is entrusted; and their ability or inability must be likewise in all cases the same. The present French Constitution, therefore, has established oligarchy (the Directory), on the one hand, and democracy (the two Councils), on the other, without any intermediate power, to prevent mutual incroachments. Consequently, as from the natural desire, which all men have to increase their authority, the one part of the constitution must have always a tendency to oppress the other, the whole can never be kept in equilibrium. Either the Directory will render the two Councils, and with them the whole nation, subservient to its absolute will; or the two Councils will infringe on the executive power, and impede the necessary operations of Government. The former case has already taken place: for ever since the 4th of September, (18th of Fructidor, as they call it) 1797, the Directory has governed France with a rod of iron, and their unhappy slaves might say with Tacitus, *memoriam quoque ipsam cum voce perdidissemus, si*

chiefly of violent democrats, formed the secret resolution of dethroning the King of France, and of raising *themselves*, under the

tam in nostra potestate esset oblivisci, quam tacere. But if a change of circumstances from without should occasion discontents in the interior, and the two Councils be enabled to resume the power which is allotted them by the constitution, they will, probably, go as much beyond the constitutional exercise of it, for want of an intermediate check, as the Directory has hitherto done, and thus reduce the Executive Power to a state of debility, unless, in imitation of the National Convention, they take the whole into their own hands, and destroy the constitution at one stroke. Though the British Constitution, therefore, is adapted to all cases, the present Constitution of France is adapted to none: under the latter there is always danger either of despotism or anarchy, under the former there is danger neither of the one nor of the other: the former has stood the test of a whole century, the latter was shaken to its foundation before it had existed even two years. A comparison, then, which so illustrates the excellencies of the British original, and the defects of the French imitation, must excite in Britons, of every description, the sincere desire of transmitting, unaltered, to posterity the constitution which they have inherited from their ancestors.

specious and alluring title of friends of the people, to the dignity of all-potent sovereigns. In the Jacobin Club, especially, where all subjects of importance were discussed and arranged before they were introduced into the National Assembly, the plan was already settled at the beginning of the year 1792, not only for the establishment of a republic in France, but for the introduction of the same form of government in every quarter of Europe. The spirit, which animated the Club of the Jacobins, operated on almost every member of the National Assembly: and to the National Convention, which met in September, 1792, it was transmitted in all its vigour. A hatred of Kings, which, without distinction either of their political power, or of their private character, were denominated tyrants, betrayed itself in every harangue: and Sovereigns of all descriptions were openly branded, in what was called the senate of a great nation, with the opprobrious
appellation

appellation of public robbers. (17) And this hatred displayed itself not merely in detached

(17) *Les rois ne savent combattre les peuples qu'en brigands*, said Barbaroux, in the National Convention, on the 8th of December, 1792. See the *Moniteur*, 10th December, 1792. And whoever consults the *Moniteur*, not to mention the *Journal des Jacobins*, with the view of discovering other expressions of the same kind, will find them in abundance. I will not trouble the reader, therefore, with many extracts: but I cannot avoid quoting a passage from a letter, written by a very celebrated member of the Convention, Thomas Paine, whose principles, as is well known (for he was afterwards imprisoned) were deemed by the Jacobins *too moderate*. This letter, which was read in the National Convention on the 14th of January, 1793, begins thus: “*Citoyen Président, mon mépris et ma haine pour le gouvernement monarchique sont assez connus; ma compassion pour les infortunés, amis ou ennemis, est également profonde. J’ai voté pour mettre Louis Capet en jugement, parcequ’il était nécessaire de prouver à l’univers la perfidie, la corruption, et l’horreur du système monarchique. La masse des preuves, que vous avez sous les yeux, le constate suffisamment. Il en résulte que la monarchie, quelque forme qu’on lui donne, despotique ou limitée, devient nécessairement le centre autour duquel se forment et se rassemblent tous les*

speeches, or in the opinions of only a few orators, but was so generally adopted, that it

genres de corruption, et que le métier de *roi* détruit aussi certainement toute moralité dans un homme, que le métier de *bourreau* toute sensibilité. Je me rappelle que pendant mon séjour en Angleterre je fus extrêmement frappé d'un mot de M. Anthoine aux Jacobins, lequel est parfaitement conforme à l'idée que j'énonce : *Faites moi Roi aujourd'hui, disait-il, et je serai demain un brigand.*—*Moniteur*, 18 Janv. 1793.—Of expressions, abusive of the English Government in particular, the following may serve as specimens : “Voyez par quels moyens *perfides* le Gouvernement Anglais à tout-à-coup aliéné la nation Anglaise.—Faire ici le tableau de la comédie joué par les *machiavelistes* que dirigent l'Angleterre, c'est peindre les *forfaits* de presque toutes les puissances de l'Europe.” These words were uttered in the National Convention, on the 1st of January, 1793, by Brissot, who was afterwards called *Allié de Pitt*. See the *Moniteur*, 3d Jan. 1793. A similar expression, “un acte de *perfidie*,” was used, likewise, in a letter to Lord Grenville by the *temperate* Mr. Chauvelin, as he has been termed. See Note 38 to Ch. xi. On the 31st of January, 1793, Danton represented royalty as already extinguished in England, saying : les *tyrans* de l'Angleterre sont morts ; vous avez la plénitude de la puissance *nationale*. *Moniteur*,

1 Fev,

became an essential ingredient in French politicks. *Principles* (said the President of the National Convention, Gregoire, on the 28th of November, 1792) are waging war against royalty, which will fall under the blows of philosophy : (18) and, five days afterwards, another President, Barrere, with his gorgeous eloquence, declared, that *their principles, and their hatred of Kings*, were

1 Fev. 1793. On the day, on which the National Convention declared war, Ducos said: “ *Le peuple Anglais trompé par les proclamations mensongeres et les terreurs hypocrites de son gouvernement, etc.* : and in the public manifesto, with which the entry of the French army into Holland was accompanied, about ten days afterwards, was said, “ *le peuple Anglais se laisse égarer—par les mensonges de son roi.*” See the *Moniteur*, 3d and 20th of February, 1793. These, with numberless other passages of the same import, merit the particular attention of those gentlemen, who have taken so much offence at the warmth with which Mr. Burke censured the conduct of the French rulers.

(18) See Ch. x. Note 19.

their ministers plenipotentiary (19) But, should any one still entertain a doubt, whether this hatred extended itself to the French rulers in general, it will certainly be removed by the following exclamation of the *whole* National Assembly, on the 4th of September, 1792: *We all swear hatred to Kings and to Royalty.* (20)

(19) *Nos principes et notre haine contre les tyrans, voilà nos ministres plénipotentiaires.* Moniteur, 6th Dec. 1792. It is never to be forgotten, that in the language of the French Convention the words *roi* and *tyrant* are always synonymous.

(20) Dites au peuple Français (said Chabot) que vous avez trop appris à connaître les vices des rois, et de la royauté, et que vous les détestez. Oui, oui, s'écrient tous ensemble les députés: *Nous le jurons.* Journal de Paris, 1792, p. 941. And this hatred was carried to such a length, that Jean de Brie, who was afterwards appointed by the Directory to negotiate with Kings and Princes, proposed to the National Convention to establish, for the more easy propagation of French principles, a corps of twelve hundred knights-regicide.

This

This hatred, however, which had never been accompanied with fear, was gradually converted, before the declaration of war against England, into profound contempt; and the name of King was become, in the National Convention, a subject of jest and ridicule. “Another Bourbon (exclaimed Treilhارد, then President of the Convention, on Jan. 8, 1793, when the King of the Two Sicilies had been forced, by the French fleet in the Mediterranean, to submit to an indignity) another Bourbon in the number of the vanquished: *Kings are here the order of the day.* (21) And the contempt of the French rulers for the kingdom of Great Britain in particular was so great, that, according to their own declarations, they cared for it as little, as for the republic of Ragusa. (22) This contempt

(21) Encore un Bourbon au nombre des vaincus: *les rois sont ici à l'ordre du jour.* Moniteur, 9 Janv. 1793.

(22) Authentic Correspondence, Appendix, p. 58.

arose in some measure from the pride, with which the successful campaign of 1792 necessarily inspired them, but more particularly from their conviction, that French principles had every where taken such deep root, that the neighbouring nations were become ripe for rebellion, were prepared to depose their sovereigns, and to open their gates to the pretended deliverers of humankind. Of the English nation in particular they entertained these sentiments: (23) whence they supposed, that the English Government was not only in a state of debility, but approaching to its final dissolution. And so confident were they in their expectations of universal insurrection, that the impending execution of Louis XVI. was openly represented in the National Convention as a prelude to similar executions in the other kingdoms of Europe. “Teach the nations (said Remi, on the 2d of December, 1792) to punish

(23) See the latter part of Ch. x.

their tyrants in the manner which becomes them: (24) and, two days afterwards, the celebrated orator Carra, said, likewise, to the National Convention, “ ye know, that the stroke, by which the head of Louis is about to fall, *will make the heads of the other despots totter.*” (25) And, after the fatal catastrophe had taken place in France, Danton, speaking of Kings in general, said, only two days before the declaration of war against Great Britain: “ You have thrown them the gauntlet; this gauntlet is the head of a King: *it is the signal of their approaching death.* (26)

(24) Apprenez aux peuples à punir leurs tyrans d'une maniere digne d'eux. *Moniteur*, 6 Dec. 1792.

(25) Vous sentez que le coup, qui va faire tomber la tête de Louis XVI. *va faire chanceler celles des autres despotes.* *Moniteur*, 8 Dec. 1792.

(26) Vous leur avez jetté le gant: ce gant est la tête d'un Roi: *c'est le signal de leur mort prochaine.* *Moniteur*, 1 Fev. 1792.

Even so early as the 21st of November, the President of the National Convention, Gregoire, in a speech, which was translated into all languages, (27) and was published, two days after the celebrated decree, as a manifesto of all nations against their Sovereigns, had declared, “ It was a glorious day *for the universe*, when the National Convention of France pronounced these words, “ *royalty is abolished.*”

That, in making these, and numerous other declarations of the same kind, the rulers of France had their eyes directed particularly to Great Britain, is too apparent to stand in need of additional proof, since the whole of the preceding history contains one continued demonstration of it. All doubts, however, on this subject, should any really

27. An English translation of it is printed in Rivington's Annual Register, 1792, part ii. p. 356.

remain, will be removed by the speech, which was uttered by Carra, in the National Convention, on the 2d of January: a speech, which is so much the more remarkable, as it was not only insolent in the extreme toward the British Government, but was delivered at the opening of the negotiation between Lord Grenville and Mr. Chauvelin, and proved, therefore, or at least might have proved, at that very time, to the world at large, that it was not the object of the National Convention, to produce a reconciliation with the British Cabinet. (28) “Your
 “ courage (said Carra) will rouse all nations,
 “ and they will soon wish to have their
 “ 10th of August, their Convention, and
 “ their Republic. Already has George III.

(28) Brissot's insolent speeches of the 1st and 12th of January, which were likewise delivered during the negotiation, afford an additional proof of this assertion. See the *Moniteur*, 3d and 15th Jan. 1793. Specimens of these speeches have been already given in Ch. xii. Note 34, and in Note 17 to the present chapter.

“ commanded

“ commanded the Tower of London to be
 “ fortified. Need we more, to enable us to
 “ predict the destruction of this new Bas-
 “ tile? Need we more, to enable us to fore-
 “ see the overthrow of royal and noble ty-
 “ ranny in England. The human species
 “ commenced with infancy: it now ap-
 “ proaches toward manhood. Form not
 “ then your judgment of what you have to
 “ fear by the preparations in England, and
 “ by the comedy now played by the Parlia-
 “ ment in concert with the Court: and be
 “ assured, that it is not the real intention of
 “ the Court to make war on us, but mere-
 “ ly to intimidate the National Conven-
 “ tion. (29) Let, therefore, the head of
 Louis fall; and George III. with his Minis-

(29) This acknowledgment, that it was not the in-
 tention of the British Cabinet to make war on France, from
 one of its most violent enemies deserves particular at-
 tention, and, above all, the attention of those, who have
 represented Ministers as taking every opportunity, be-
 fore the war broke out, of *repelling* peace. With re-
 gard

“ *ter, Pitt, will feel if their heads rest firm on*
 “ *their shoulders.* (30) Then will the Par-
 “ *liament of England* (31) no longer hesitate
 “ *to demand an alliance with the French*
 “ *Republic. The same fate will attend the*
 “ *other despots: and shortly will every na-*
 “ *tion say; the head of our tyrant is not*
 “ *more divine than that of Louis; let us*
 “ *strike it off, therefore; let us abolish roy-*
 “ *alty; let us imitate the French in every*
 “ *thing; and cries of vive la liberté! vive*
 “ *l'égalité! vive la république! shall re-*

gard to their alledged endeavours to intimidate the National Convention, every Briton, who loves his country, must thank them for attempting to prevent the execution of its avowed projects.

(30) Fortunately for Great Britain, their heads have rested firm on their shoulders, long since the heads of Carra and his associates have fallen to the dust.

(31) Namely, when metamorphosed into the National Convention, announced on the 28th of November.

found in every quarter of Europe." (32) By speeches like these, and still more by actions,

(32) "Votre courage donnera l'éveil à toutes les nations, et tous voudront avoir bientôt leur 10 Août; leur Convention et leur République. Déjà George III. a fait fortifier la Tour de Londres. En faut-il davantage, pour prédire, la destruction de cette nouvelle Bastille? en faut-il davantage, pour prévoir le renversement de la tyrannie royale et nobiliaire en Angleterre? Le genre humain a commencé par être enfant; il commence aujourd'hui à devenir, un homme. Ne jugez donc point de ce que vous devez craindre par les préparatifs de l'Angleterre, et la comédie qui s'est jouée dans le parlement de concert avec la cour: et croyez que l'intention de la cour n'est réellement pas de nous faire la guerre, mais seulement d'intimider la Convention Nationale. Que la tête de Louis tombe; et George III. et le Ministre Pitt tâteront si la leur est encore sur leurs épaules; alors seulement il n'y aura plus de difficulté dans le parlement d'Angleterre pour demander l'alliance de la République Française. Il en sera de même des autres despotes: bientôt chaque peuple se dira mais la tête de notre tyran n'est pas d'une nature plus divine que celle de Louis; abbattons-là donc; abolifons la royauté; imitons en tout les Français: et vive la liberté! vive l'égalité! vive la république dans toute l'Europe! Moniteur, 4 Janv. 1793.

which

which corresponded to them, the republicans of France, republicans who, as Louvet said, were worthy of the name, “aspired at
 “the lasting renown, at the immortal honour of abolishing royalty itself, of abolishing it for ever, at first in France, and then
 “throughout the world.” (33)

The confident expectation of the French rulers, that the neighbouring nations were prepared to rebel against their sovereigns, and to make a common cause with those who, under specious and alluring protestations, endeavoured to conceal the infamy and destructiveness of their designs, brought at last the torch of their ambition into open flame. To whatever quarter they directed their attention, they foresaw in imagination the struggles of a civil war: they rejoiced at the combat of parties, which, by weakening

(33) Words of Louvet. See Ch. vii. Note 13.

or destroying the power of both, prepared the way for Gallic despotism: and regarding with a smile of malevolence the folly of devoted victims, who, seduced by all the arts of systematic deception, were operating their own destruction, anticipated the triumph over the expected prey. When ambitious monarchs attempt to gratify their thirst of conquest, they seldom think of subduing more than one country at a time: but such narrow projects of aggrandizement afforded much too little nourishment for the mighty minds of these republican rulers, and before *they* could be gratified, it was necessary, that all Europe should lie prostrate at their feet. Already was Savoy both conquered and incorporated into France: already had they made themselves masters, and even determined on the incorporation, of the Austrian Netherlands: already had they vanquished a considerable part of Germany, had commenced hostilities, as well against the republic

lic

lic of Geneva, as against several states of Italy; and preparations were already made for the conquest of the Swiss cantons. (34) Already had they treated the British Government as an open enemy: (35) and, while they endeavoured to excite insurrection within, had destined a formidable fleet and army

(34) This last fact, though not generally known, admits of no doubt; for General Dumouriez (*Mémoires*, tom. i. p. 110), speaking of Colonel Weifs, and of the events of January, 1793, says: “*Son coup d’œil sur les relations politiques de la République Française et du Corps Helvétique, lancé à propos au moment de l’éruption, acheva de déjouer les projets hostiles; et il est très probable, que sans lui la guerre eût été déclaré avant la fin de Février; divers préparatifs secrets étant déjà en activité. Ils se dirigeaient d’après le plan assez mal combiné par Robert, Claviere, et quelques émigrés Suisses, qui déterminaient l’attaque sur trois points à la fois.*”

(35) The conduct of the French Convention on the 28th of November, was equivalent to a formal declaration of hostilities against the British Government: and to their conduct on that day every measure, which was afterwards taken, perfectly corresponded.

to support their projects from without. (36) And the allies of England, the States General, were not merely threatened, but the order for actual invasion had been already given. Nor was all this sufficient to satisfy the ambitious projects of the French rulers: for Brissot, who considered France, in January, 1793, as more powerful than all Eu-

(36) That thirty ships of the line were ordered on the 13th of January to be put in commission, in addition to the twenty-two already commissioned, has been related in the twelfth chapter. And that the menace of a landing in England, made by the Marine Minister on the 31st of December, was not a mere gasconade, but the result of a serious and deliberate plan, appears from the *Rapport sur l'organisation générale des armées*, delivered in the National Convention on the 25th of January, in which, where the subject relates to England, there occurs the following passage: "Toujours cette puissance a craint une descente; jamais le projet ne s'en est effectué, et il n'a jamais été sérieusement préparé. Mais il sera sans doute suivi avec plus de force et d'énergie sous le régime de la liberté: vous y destinerez 40,000 hommes d'embarquement." *Moniteur*, 27 Janv. 1793.

rope, (37) and not wholly without reason, on account, as well of the general fermentation which then prevailed, as of the want of confidence and union among the cabinets themselves, had formed the plan of conquering likewise, at the same time, Italy and Spain. (38) And, as if Europe were too

(37) In his address, à ses Commetans, p. 75, speaking of the inhabitants of France, he says: “ Ces vingt-cinq millions se trouvaient, même au mois de Janvier dernier, avec des moyens matériels et pecuniaires bien supérieurs à tous ceux des puissances étrangères, même à ceux de cette Angleterre si fière de ses richesses. Ils avaient une masse de ressources, telle que jamais aucune nation n'en a possédée, masse qui se doublait encore, si l'on avait pu faire régner l'ordre; car tout se tenait dans notre plan.”

(38) “ Brissot y étala ses projets de conquérir l'Espagne et l'Italie.” Mémoires de Dumouriez, tom. i. p. 108. Further, says Dumouriez, p. 105, Kellermann, en prenant congé de la Convention, pour aller commander l'armée du Dauphiné, fort d'à-peu-près vingt-mille hommes, indépendamment de celle du comté de Nice aux ordres du Général Biron, qui éta

small a theatre for the exercise of the French arms, expeditions were in agitation to the distant regions of Asia and Africa. (39) Even at that time, therefore, the French rulers claimed for France the title which has been since assumed, the title of the *Great Nation*, for which purpose, as Briffot observed, “ it “ was necessary to have vast ideas, grand de- “ signs, and an object sublime and diffi- “ cult.” (40)

à-peu-près dix à douze mille, *avait reçu l'ordre d'aller conquérir Rome*, et avait répondu gravement qu'il allait à Rome.

(39) “ Il s'agissait dans cette expédition de La Clos, (qui venait d'être nommé commandant dans l'Inde) de s'emparer du Cap de Bonne-Espérance et de Ceylon, pour ensuite se joindre à Tippoo Saib, et tomber sur le Bengale.” *Mémoires de Dumouriez*, tom. i. p. 105.

(40) “ Pour former des hommes, *une grande nation*, il faut de vastes idées, de grands objets, un but sublime et difficile.” *A ses Commetans*, p. 76.

The rage of conquest, which animated the republican rulers of regenerated France, was distinguished likewise as much by its *kind* as by its *magnitude*. The zé^l of converting all mankind to their political and supposed philosophic creed, which, in minds destitute of religion, can operate as fervently as religious zeal in the most determined bigot, excited an enthusiasm, of which modern ages furnish no example, and which can only be compared with that of the followers of Mohammed in the seventh century. Conscious too, like these, of their military prowess, and of their ability to propagate their doctrines by the sword, they had recourse to the measures which had been applied by the Saracens, and determined to impose the system, adopted by themselves, on a conquered world. They formed accordingly the resolution “ of breaking with *all* the cabinets, “ of setting all Europe at defiance, of setting

“the four corners of Europe on fire.” (41)
And, in the heat of their enthusiasm, they

(41) These expressions, which were vauntingly used by the French rulers themselves, have been quoted in the original, Ch. vii. Notes 14, 15, 16. The well-known Camille Jourdan, likewise, in his address, à ses Commettans, which was written in October, 1797, has made, p. 88, the following remarkable confession: “*Quel fut le grand principe de la guerre, le grand obstacle à la paix? Ne fut-il pas dans nos doctrines révolutionnaires, dans cet insensé projet de renverser tous les trônes, de bouleverser tous les empires?*” Yet a celebrated opposition writer, speaking of the 24th of January, 1793, says: “*Before this time, France was undoubtedly solicitous for peace.—The arguments by which he endeavours, in defiance of the French rulers themselves, to support this notion, are founded, partly on the fine and pathetic expressions which were used in the note of the French Executive Council of the 7th of January, 1793, and partly on the proposal which had been made by Mr. Chauvelin to the British Cabinet as long ago as June, 1792, to act as mediator between France and Austria. Now of those fine and pathetic expressions enough has been already said in the preceding chapter, to place their falsity in the clearest point of view. And of the mediation which was proposed before the depo-* sition

were so confident of success, that, in the decree of the 15th of December, they proposition of Louis XVI., and in his name, it has been shewn in the seventh chapter, that if it be regarded as a request of the National Assembly, it affords a proof of the blackest hypocrisy. But even had it been true, that the republican rulers of France wished for peace in June, 1792, it would surely be very absurd to conclude, therefore, that they entertained the same sentiments six months afterwards, when they were become all potent conquerors. To corroborate his opinion, the same writer says further, that the National Convention, at least before the meeting of Parliament, on the 13th of December, could have done nothing which even the British Cabinet considered as a ground of war, because war was not proposed in his Majesty's speech. Now, from the circumstance that war was not proposed in his Majesty's speech, we may conclude that it was the intention of the Cabinet to act only on the defensive: but to infer, that, because it did not instantly commence hostilities, there was no reason to suspect an aggression on the part of France, is the very summit of sophistry. We may justly wonder, therefore, that a pamphlet, containing *such* arguments, could meet in Great Britain with so rapid a sale, and make such an impression on a nation, which reasons in general on political subjects more justly than any nation in Europe.

claimed to the whole world their system of universal revolution.

The motives which induced the rulers of republican France to attempt the destruction of all kingly governments, affected the kingdom of Great Britain in an equal degree with any other kingdom in Europe: for kings of every description, whether absolute or limited, (42) were considered by those political zealots as monsters which it was necessary to extirpate. And nothing was at that time more common in the National Convention, than to declaim on the slavery of Britons, and the benefits to be conferred on them by the communication of French freedom. But, beside the *general* motives

In fact, it affords a confirmation of that melancholy truth, that even men of sense may be deceived by the most futile reasoning, when that futile reasoning is veiled in eloquent and spirited language.

(42) See Note 17 to this chapter.

in which Great Britain was included, *particular* reasons induced the French rulers, at the close of the year 1792, to a war with their ancient rival. In the first place, the internal fermentation at that time, which they themselves assisted to the utmost of their power, the numerous addresses from seditious societies, and the civic feasts which were held before their own eyes in Paris, (43) led them to believe, that the insurrection, which they expected in all countries, would break out in Britain. Secondly, the number of ships of war, which France had actually in commission, was superior to the number of those which were ordered to be commissioned in the British ports: and it was imagined, that republican enthusiasm would so animate the French sailors on the one hand, and that disaffection would so pre-

(43) An example of this kind has been quoted in the preceding chapter, Note 76.

vail among the British failors on the other, that the former would gain an easy victory. Thirdly, the land forces in England, if we except the militia, for which it was supposed the expected insurrection would furnish sufficient employment, did not amount at that time to twenty thousand men: and from the immense army then in the pay of France, twice or thrice that number could be spared, which, if once conducted across the Channel, a matter supposed in France to be very feasible, (44) might, perhaps, under the peculiar circumstances of the time, have succeeded in the attempt to overturn the government, the constitution, and the power of Great Britain. Lastly, till the empire of the sea was wrested from Great Britain, it was impossible that the ambition of the French rulers should ever be gratified: and,

(44) See Note 32 to this chapter, and Note 39 to chapter xii.

on the other hand, it was obvious, that, as soon as the British naval and commercial power was transferred to France, the conquest of the Continent would be rendered easy, and that all Europe would soon lie prostrate at her feet.

CHAP. XV.

Events of the last fourteen Days before the Declaration of War. Mr. Chauvelin's Demand, on the 17th of January, to be acknowledged as Ambassador of the French Republic. Answer of the British Government, that under the existing Circumstances it thought proper not to comply with the Demand. Order sent to Mr. Chauvelin, by the French Executive Council, to return to France. Similar, but later, Order on the Part of the British Government: with the Motives thereto. Copies of the Papers relative to the late Negotiation laid before the States General by Lord Auckland, the British Ambassador at the Hague, who accompanied them with a Memorial on the Conduct of the French Rulers. Message from his Majesty

to the two Houses of Parliament. Apparent Preparations for a new Negotiation made by General Dumouriez. De Maulde's Journey to the Hague, to propose a Conference between Lord Auckland and General Dumouriez on the Frontiers of Holland. Mr. Maret's Departure from Paris, on the 26th of January, for London, where he remained eight Days; but, for want of Instructions from the French Executive Council, again produced no Effect. Departure of Dumouriez from Paris on the same Day, to hold the proposed Conference with Lord Auckland, to which the British Government had consented, but which did not take Place, because the National Convention refused to await the Issue of it, and declared War against Great Britain and Holland on the 1st of February.

THE history of the politicks of Great Britain and France has been already brought down to the middle of January,

1793, and the relative conduct of the two powers, from the time of the conference at Pillnitz, has not only been clearly represented, but the representation has been every where supported by unanswerable documents. It has been proved, on the one hand, that the British Cabinet was so far from acceding to a coalition against France, that it had acted toward that country according to the rules of the most strict neutrality, and even with the utmost friendship. (1) On the other hand it has been shewn, that the French Government repaid this friendship with the blackest ingratitude, that it endeavoured to excite an insurrection in Great Britain, with a view of destroying, not only our constitution, but our existence as an independent

(1) It was impossible for one government to shew a stronger proof of friendship for another, than the firm refusal of the British Cabinet, till war had been declared, to accept the offers made by the French planters in St. Domingo to surrender that valuable colony to Great Britain. See the latter part of Ch. ii.

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nation, and that, while the secret machinations were conducted with all the arts of systematic deception, a formidable armament was prepared in France itself. It has been further shewn, that the measures adopted by the British Government were merely measures of self-defence, that they were not taken till after the French Convention had *openly* avowed its design of overturning the British Constitution, (2) and that the naval preparations in the ports of Britain were not less than three months posterior to the naval preparations in the ports of France. (3) We have seen, likewise, that, when the relative conduct of the two countries became a subject of negotiation, and the British Cabinet insisted on conditions, which alone could insure the safety of Britain, the French Government not only refused to comply with those conditions, but declared, at the same

(2) See Ch. x. Note 24.

(3) See Ch. x. Note 5, and Ch. xi. Note 44.

time, in the most positive manner, that if, notwithstanding this refusal, the preparations in the British ports were continued, it was determined to commence hostilities. Lastly, it has been proved, in the preceding chapter, that the French rulers, whose measures, during more than two months, had uniformly tended to a war with England, came to a final resolution on the subject, at least before the middle of January, 1793: and the various motives which induced them to it, motives which operated before the period in question, have been fully assigned. As the fate of the two countries, therefore, was now determined, the events of the last fourteen days, before the public declaration of hostilities, which took place on the 1st of February, cannot possibly be reckoned among the *causes* of the war. The real causes had already produced their full effect; and the events which followed could serve only as *pretexts*, or as sophistical arguments to palliate

ciate an act of injustice, to which they gave not birth. In a review, then, of the *causes* of the war, they might be safely passed over in silence: but, since whatever concerns the relative conduct of Great Britain and France till the public declaration of war against the former, belongs to the present history, it will be necessary to relate the events of the last fourteen days with the same exactness as the preceding.

On the 17th of January, 1793, though the question of war or peace was fully determined, and the residence, therefore, of a French Minister in London was become wholly useless, Mr. Chauvelin, by order of the Executive Council, demanded, that the Court of Great Britain should formally receive him as the accredited Ambassador of the French republic. (4) Never, perhaps,

(4) That Mr Chauvelin's letter to Lord Grenville, in which this demand was made, was dated the 17th of

was a favour demanded by one government of another at a more unseasonable period than this: for a favour undoubtedly it would have been, if Great Britain, which no power could have forced to a compliance, had given so early an example of a formal acknowledgment of the new republic. To have acquired a claim to such an expression of friendship, this republic should have itself acted with friendship toward Great Britain, should have rested satisfied with the revolution which had been effected at home, and should not have attempted to disturb the tranquillity of its neighbours. If the French republic had really acted in this manner, and, instead of endeavouring to overturn all the kingdoms of Europe, had behaved with becoming moderation, it is not improbable

January, appears from Lord Grenville's answer, which begins thus, "I have received your letter of the 17th instant." But I have not been able to find it in the *Moniteur*, nor in the *New Annual Register*.

that

that the British Government would have acknowledged the French republic, if not in January, 1793; at least as soon as it was settled on so firm a basis as to promise durability to any engagement with it. (5) It is

(5) As the republic of France acted with avowed hostility toward the kingdom of Great Britain, and thus forfeited all pretensions to a formal recognition on the part of the British Government, it is, in fact, unnecessary to inquire whether the latter would have acknowledged the French republic in the year 1793, provided this republic had acted with friendship toward Great Britain and its allies, and had renounced all views of conquest and aggrandizement. No one, however, can assert that the British Government, in that case, would have refused: and the expression used by Mr. Pitt to Mr. Maret, "that it would give him great pleasure to treat with him, *as a confidential person of the French Executive Council,*" (Ch. xiii. p. 22.) and the assurance given by Lord Grenville to Mr. Chauvelin, "*that outward forms would be no hinderance to his Britannic Majesty, whenever the question related to explanations, which might be satisfactory and advantageous to both parties,*" (Ib. p. 4) lead rather to the conclusion, that if satisfactory explanations had been really given by the rulers of the French Republic, the British Government

true, that in a political light the British Ministers, if they had had the choice, must necessarily have preferred the continuance of a monarchical government in France to the establishment of a republic, not only because great republics, like that of France, are naturally inclined to be both restless in themselves, and to disturb the peace of their neighbours, (6) but because the ambition of government would *not* have refused to acknowledge it. But without such satisfactory explanations, no acknowledgment of this kind could at that time be expected.

(6) It was a strange notion entertained by many in the year 1792, that the conversion of France into a republic would secure the tranquillity of Europe, though the notion is contradicted by the experience of all ages. We need only appeal to the Roman and Carthaginian republics, which displayed a greater thirst of conquest and aggrandizement, than perhaps any monarchy ever did. The instances which have been alleged of the Republics of Holland and Switzerland, are foreign to the purpose. For, in the first place, they were merely federate republics, formed, therefore, only for self-defence,

the new rulers of that country, aided by the energy with which the revolution inspired the French in general, who fondly imagined they were fighting for the establishment of their political liberty, (7) unavoidably rendered France a much more dangerous neighbour to England, than it had ever been un-

fence, whereas the republic established in France was one and indivisible, formed, therefore, for aggression; and, in the next place, they were surrounded with neighbours more powerful than themselves, whereas the very reverse took place in regard to France.

(7) The inhabitants of France, however, have since discovered, that they have been fighting for no other purpose than to establish the power of a new set of governors, whose tyranny is insupportable: and that their efforts have produced no other effect than the exchange of a virtuous sovereign, who loved his subjects, for despots, who treat them as slaves. The enthusiasm, therefore, of the French armies, unless the fertility of invention, which is characteristic of the French rulers, furnishes new means of inflaming it, will hardly be equal in future to that which was displayed at the commencement of the war.

der its ancient government. And his Majesty in particular, as every man in his situation would have done, necessarily felt a certain degree of indignation at the deposition and condemnation of an innocent sovereign. But neither those political reasons, nor this personal indignation, would have occasioned a declaration of war on the part of Great Britain; of war, which arose from totally different causes, as has been fully proved in the preceding chapter, and was not only declared, but *provoked*, by the rulers of France. Besides, had the British Ministry, as their adversaries contend, resolved on a war with France, merely because France was become a republic, (8) they would not have entered

(8) When a certain opposition writer, in order to extort a confession from Government itself, that the war was its own work, and that too, because France was become a Republic, quotes a passage from his Majesty's speech of the 21st of January, 1794, and not only suppresses the words "*an attack was made on us and our allies,*" but even interpolates the verb "*to oppose,*"

into a negotiation with the agents of that republic, and still less would they have proposed conditions under which they were ready to remain in peace with it. They demanded not that the republic should cease, but merely that it should conduct itself with moderation and friendship: and, from the very first establishment of it, had armed neither by land nor by sea, till Great Britain itself was threatened with destruction. When the British Ambassador departed from Paris after the deposition of the King of France, in August 1792, he was particularly charged to declare, that his Britannic Majesty meant to observe the principles of neutrality in every thing which regarded the arrangement of the *internal government of France*: and Le

pose," so as to give the whole passage a different sense, we can hardly ascribe his conduct to mere ignorance. But as it has been already very justly exposed by a sensible and well-informed opponent, it is unnecessary to take further notice of it.

Brun was so satisfied with the declaration, that he said a few days afterwards, in his report to the National Assembly, the British Ambassador had left *a satisfactory testimony of the sentiments of his Court.* (9) On the 18th of December Mr. Miles, in a letter to Le Brun, again reminded the French Minister, that the British Cabinet was determined not to interfere in the internal affairs of France, and, speaking of Mr. Pitt in particular, he said, “I dare refer you to all the
 “ public and avowed declarations of the
 “ English Minister, to convince you that,
 “ from the beginning of the revolution, he
 “ has made it a point not to meddle with
 “ the internal affairs of your government;
 “ that he has always rejected with firmness
 “ every proposal made to him for attacking the
 “ French, (10) and always refused to be con-

(9) See Ch. ix. Notes 1—12.

(10) That the British Cabinet positively refused to join a coalition against France in 1791, appears from

“*cerned in any project for a counter-revolution.*
 “ As he has made it his duty not to meddle
 “ with your affairs, so he has made it his
 “ glory to remain attached to his own wise
 “ and equitable principles.” (11) The same
 system of neutrality, and the determination,
 not to interfere in the internal affairs of
 France, prevented, likewise, the English from
 interceding in behalf of Louis XVI. though
 the fate, which awaited him, could not possi-
 bly be a matter of indifference to them,
 either in a moral or in a political view. (12)

Ch. i. Note 2: and that the same proposal was re-
 newed by various courts of Europe during the summer
 of 1792, but that the British Cabinet uniformly an-
 swered in the negative, was asserted by Mr. Dundas,
 in his speech in the House of Commons on the 14th of
 December, 1792.

(11) *Authentic Correspondence, Appendix, p. 80.*

(12) Even if the British Government had interceded
 in behalf of Louis XVI. it is certain, that the interces-
 sion would not have produced the desired effect: it
 would

Lord Grenville, likewise, in his note to Mr. Chauvelin of the 31st of December,

would only have given rise to complaints of an officious and unwarranted interference, and thus have furnished the National Convention with an additional pretext for colouring the aggression, on which it had already resolved. For Danton said in the Convention, on the 16th of January, 1793, of the intercession attempted by the King of Spain, and which ended, as every man acquainted with the declarations of the French rulers (see Ch. vii. xiv.) expected, “Quant à l’Espagne, je l’avouerais je suis étonné de l’audace d’une puissance, qui ne craint pas de prétendre à exercer son influence sur votre délibération. Si tout le monde était de mon avis, on voterait à l’instant, pour cela seul, la guerre à l’Espagne.” *Moniteur*, 21 Janv. 1793. Even the more moderate Vergniaud said, on the 31st of December, “J’aime trop la gloire de mon pays, pour proposer à la Convention, de se laisser influencer dans une occasion aussi solennelle par la considération de ce que feront ou ne feront pas les puissances étrangères.” *Moniteur*, 2 Janv. 1793. And Brissot, on the 19th of January, said of England in particular, “Je m’indignerais sans doute, de voir qu’on épargnât le Roi, pour arrêter la flotte Anglaise.” *Moniteur*, 24 Janv. 1793. This note may serve, therefore, to justify the conduct of the British Government, not only with the friends of Louis XVI. who might otherwise

left the question, whether the British Cabinet would acknowledge the French republic, wholly undetermined, and said, that, when it came to a decision, “the King
 “would have the right to decide according
 “to the interests of his subjects, his own
 “dignity, and the regard which he owed to
 “his allies, and to the general system of Eu-
 “rope.” (13) That his Britannic Majesty
 wife imagine, that its intercession might have been of service, but, likewise, with the friends of the opposite party, some of whom, with a strange inconsistency, have, likewise, censured the neglect of intercession. Perhaps, however, no argument will satisfy the latter, since their passion for finding fault with the British Ministry carries them so far, as to condemn a conduct, which, on *their* part, at least deserves commendation.

(13) The words of the original are, “La proposition de recevoir un ministre accrédité de la part de quelque autre autorité ou pouvoir en France serait une question nouvelle, laquelle, au moment où elle se présenterait, sa Majesté aurait le droit de décider d’après les intérêts de ses sujets, sa propre dignité, et les égards qu’elle doit à ses allies, ainsi qu’au système général de l’Europe.” *Moniteur*, 14 Janv. 1793.

possessed this right, there can be no doubt : and it is equally clear, that a republic, which threatened destruction to Europe in general, and to Great Britain in particular, had no right to expect to be formally acknowledged. For, it would be the height of folly to contribute voluntarily to the energy of a power, which had already declared itself hostile ; it would be madness for a man to strengthen wantonly the arm which was raised to destroy him. But it has been proved, that the republic of France had determined to annihilate the kingdom of Great Britain, and that the question of war or peace was fully determined before the middle of January. The other question, therefore, whether the French republic should be acknowledged by Great Britain, or not, which, on the 31st of December, had been left undetermined, and subordinate to the issue of the negotiation, was, on the 20th of January, after the negotiation was ended, and the designs of the
French

French Government had been fully confirmed, necessarily answered in the negative. Indeed, *under the existing circumstances*, an affirmative answer would have been absurd: and, therefore, Lord Grenville, in his note to Mr. Chauvelin of the 20th of January, said, (14) “ I have already apprized you, (15) “ that his Majesty has reserved to himself “ the right of deciding, according to his “ judgment, upon the two questions of ac- “ knowledging a new form of government in “ France, and of receiving a Minister, accre- “ dited on the part of some other authority “ in France, than that of his Most Christian “ Majesty. In answer to the demand you

(14) The original French note is not printed in the *Moniteur*: but the English translation, which was laid before the two Houses of Parliament, on the 28th of January, 1793, and is therefore as good authority as the original itself, is printed in the *New Annual Register* for 1793, *Public Papers*, p. 75.

(15) Namely, in the note of December 31.

“ now make, whether his Majesty will re-
 “ ceive your new letters of credence, I have
 “ to inform you, that, *under the present cir-*
 “ *cumstances*, his Majesty does not think pro-
 “ per to receive them.”

On this refusal, the republican rulers of France had no right to complain; for not only were they conscious, that their plan of revolutionizing all Europe was known to the British Ministry, (16) but they had declared, on their parts, five weeks before the period in question, *that they acknowledged no kingly*

(16). Brissot, in his report to the Convention on the 12th of January, speaking of the British Ministers, said, “ *Ils prévoyaient que cette république pouvait se consolider, et porter le flambeau des révolutions en toute l'Europe.*” *Moniteur*, 15 Janv. 1793. As it was avowed, then, that the British Ministers foresaw this, (and their foresight, at a time when so many thousands were struck with blindness, does them great honour) it was, undoubtedly, their duty to avoid a step which would have given additional force to the engine of destruction.

government, (17) and, at the same time, had issued a proclamation, in which they asserted, in unequivocal terms, that it was their design to *expel all Kings*. (18) If under these circumstances, if after the design of overturning the British Constitution had been formally announced in the National Convention, (19) if after the King of Great Britain had been publicly threatened in the same Assembly, with the fate which was

(17) See the Introduction to the decree of December 15th, quoted in Ch. xii. Note 2.

(18) *Ib.* Note 22.—From what has been already said in the present and two last chapters, the reader will easily determine whether the assertion be true, that the British Government refused to receive Mr. Chauvelin's new credentials, *merely* because France was become a republic. It was not the *bare existence* of that republic, but its *destructive character*, which determined the conduct of Administration.

(19) Ch. x. Note 24.

then impending over the King of France, (20) and after the late negotiation had ratified both these and numerous other injuries and insults, if under *such* circumstances, the British Government had acknowledged the republic of France, its rulers would have ascribed the acknowledgment, not to a desire of preserving peace, but to the dictates of fear; (21) and Treilhard would have again exclaimed, *Another King in the number of the vanquished! Kings are here the order of the day!* (22) In fact, the French rulers themselves could not seriously expect, that the republic, which was no more dreaded by Great Britain at that time, than it is at present, would be acknowledged, under such

(20) Ch. xiv. Note 28.

(21) We have already seen (Ch. ciii. p. 11.) in what manner Le Brun interpreted Mr. Pitt's willingness to confer with Mr. Maret.

(22) See Ch. xiv. Note 17.

circumstances, by the British Cabinet. Unless, therefore, they had been desirous of seeking pretexts for a quarrel, they would not have then proposed the question, but would have left the decision to the effects of time: and hence we may safely infer, that the demand was made with no other view, than on the presumption that it would be answered in the negative, to furnish themselves with at least one plausible argument, and thus colour an aggression, on which they had long resolved. (23)

The refusal, given by the British Cabinet, on the 20th of January, to acknowledge the French republic in the person of Mr. Chauvelin, could hardly have been known many hours to the Executive Council, before they

(23) Mr. Chauvelin made no secret of declaring, that if he was not received at St. James's, *it would be the height of his ambition to leave this country with a declaration of war.* See the Authentic Correspondence, p. 84.

sent him an order to return to France: for Dumouriez, in a letter to Miranda, dated Paris, 23d January, speaks of the order for Chauvelin's recall, as already given. (24) Dumouriez, indeed, says nothing in this letter of the above-mentioned refusal of the British Government, and assigns another motive for the recall of Chauvelin, namely, that Dumouriez himself intended to go to England, in order to open a new negotiation. (25) But, whatever was the motive, which induced the Executive Council to recall Mr. Chauvelin, the *fact*, that they did recall him, though it is not generally known, and, moreover, that they signed the order, at the latest, on the *twenty-third* of January, is

(24) His own words are: "*On à donné ordre à notre Ambassadeur Chauvelin de revenir.*" Correspondence du Général Miranda, p. 15.

(25) Of this design, which was not put in execution, more will be said in the latter part of this chapter.

proved, beyond contradiction, by Dumouriez's letter of that day to Miranda.

On the *twenty-fourth* of January, though the order, which had been given by the Executive Council, could not have been known in London, a similar order was sent to Mr. Chauvelin by the British Government. To this measure the British Government was induced by various and weighty motives. In the first place, after the negotiation was at an end, and the question of war or peace was finally decided, Mr. Chauvelin's residence in London could be of no further use. This was virtually admitted by the French Government itself, in having *already* ordered Mr. Chauvelin to return. (26) It is,

(26) If it be objected, that, according to Dumouriez's letter to Miranda, though Chauvelin was recalled, a new negotiation was intended to be conducted by Dumouriez, it may be replied, that the French Executive Council was so far from taking any part in the new

likewise, the usual practice with all Governments, when a negotiation is ended, and either a rupture, or the continuance of hostilities is already settled, to order the Minister of the hostile power to depart from its territories, because his further residence would enable him to furnish his own court with information, which must be detrimental to the other power. But, beside this general motive, there existed a very particular reason for dismissing Mr. Chauvelin, as soon as all hopes of a reconciliation were at an end: for his *personal* conduct was of such a kind, that no Government, under any circumstances, and much less in such a general ferment as then prevailed in England, could have suffered his residence, without exposing itself to imminent danger. Every one must admit, that it is the duty of a foreign ambassador, in a negotiation, that they took every possible measure to counteract it, in which they fully succeeded, as will appear in the sequel.

bassador

ambassador to confine his political communications to the court to which he is accredited, and that it is an insult, as well as an injury, to that court, if he forms political connections with persons who act in opposition to it. It is true, that an Opposition party in England, if it conducts itself with moderation and dignity, and, setting aside all chicanery and sophistry, examines with candour the measures of Ministers, is not only entitled to respect, but is a real benefit to the nation. Yet, even to *such* an Opposition party, no foreign Minister has a right to attach himself, and to make the members of it his confidential friends on *political* subjects, since, by virtue of his office, he must confer on matters of state with Ministers, and Ministers alone. But Mr. Chauvelin, soon after his arrival in the spring of the year 1792, formed a close alliance with the members of Opposition, and the longer he staid, the

more close was the connection. His intimacy with the Opposition party appears from his own letter of the 17th of July: (27) and when he was recalled by the Executive Council, at the end of August, he obtained a revocation of the order, by using the following argument: “*that though he was not well with the English Minister, yet he was perfectly so with Mr. Fox and some other members of Opposition, and that it would not be prudent in France to lose the fruit of his labours with these gentlemen, and their subsequent services, for a vain form of diplomatic etiquette.*” (28) And, before the negotiation commenced, which has been described in the

(27) In this letter he said: “*D’après tous les renseignements que je me suis empressé de prendre dès le premier moment que j’en ai eu connaissance, j’ai partagé à ce sujet, et partage encore, la securité de tous les Anglais, même les plus jaloux du gouvernement.*” See Ch. viii. Note 3.

(28) *Authentic Correspondence, Appendix, p. 83.*

thirteenth

thirteenth chapter, he went so far as to communicate his secret instructions, (in which was positively stated, that the Scheldt would *not* be given up, and yet that an acknowledgment of the French republic should be demanded) to an intimate friend of Mr. Fox. (29)

A conduct like this, even in times of perfect tranquillity, would have excited the suspicion, that it was Mr. Chauvelin's intention, not to preserve peace, but, by secret cabals, to do injury to Government. At a period then, when London was overrun with French apostles of rebellion, when the disaffected party in England spoke loudly and vehemently against the Government, when seditious societies publicly proclaimed their design of establishing a British National Convention, and this design was as publicly

(29) Authentic Correspondence, p. 84.

encouraged

encouraged by the Convention of France, Mr. Chauvelin's union with men who acted in opposition to Government, whether the object of those gentlemen, considered by itself, were reprehensible or not, afforded an unequivocal proof, that Mr. *Chauvelin's* object was to encourage the insurrection, which was confidently expected by his employers. Nor did his employers make it a secret, that they regarded him as an instrument of sedition: for they commissioned him, first, "to embrace every opportunity of assuring the English nation, that, notwithstanding the ill humour of its government, the French desired nothing more ardently than to merit *its* (the English nation's) esteem; (30) and, secondly, to threaten the British Government with an *appeal to the people.* (31)

(30) See Ch. xii. Note 27.

(31) *Ib.* Notes 29. 32. See also Ch. xiii. Notes 47, 52.

Now,

Now, when Ministers have condescended to negotiate with a man of this description, (32) and have patiently born with his insulting language, till the negotiation was brought to a crisis, and till it had ceased to be in their power to prevent a rupture, they are so far from deserving censure for *then* dismissing the negotiator, that we should rather commend their moderation, in having

(32) Even without any regard to the personal character of Mr. Chauvelin, it was only the desire of leaving nothing untried, which might prevent a rupture, that could have induced Ministers to commence a negotiation at all with the French rulers, as it was not to be expected, that any Convention, made with so fluctuating an Administration, would produce a lasting effect. Besides, as there was not only a continual struggle between the ruling parties, but each party, when fallen, was branded with the appellation of a faction, the British Government, by negotiating with the rulers of the day, exposed itself to the danger of being accused by the next ruling party of having treated with factionists. To all these inconveniencies the British Government submitted, at the end of the year 1792, when Great Britain was threatened with an attack, in order,

if

suffered him to stay so long. (33) If a British Ambassador had conducted himself in Paris, as Mr. Chauvelin, conducted himself in London, the French Government would certainly not have awaited the issue of the negotiation, but would either have answered his very first note with an order to quit the territories of the republic, or, since the persons of foreign Ambassadors are no more respected by the modern rulers of if possible, to prevent it. But, on the 20th of January, 1793, it was clear, that its efforts were, and must be, fruitless.

(33) Yet it has been said: that the dismissal of Mr. Chauvelin shut the door to all negotiation. Now, when a negotiation has been kept open, till the questions in dispute have been brought to a decision, as has been fully proved in the thirteenth chapter, *that* party alone can be justly said to have shut the door to the negotiation, which rendered the issue of it fruitless. But we have already seen, that it was the French Executive Council, which rendered the negotiation fruitless, by refusing to accept the conditions proposed by the British Government. Besides, if an order sent to Mr. Chauvelin

France, than by the Dey of Algiers, (34) they would have arrested him, as an exciter of sedition, and have searched his papers. In fact, any government whatsoever, which was not anxious to leave nothing unattempted, that might avert hostilities, would have refused Mr. Chauvelin, who was much more an apostle of rebellion than a minister of peace, to remain, after he had threatened an appeal to the people in his note of the 27th of December. How much more then was it allowable, to dismiss him on the 24th of January, when all means of reconciliation had been exhausted, and the fixed determination of his employers, to attack Great Britain at all events, had been fully proved?

Chauvelin to return to France be called shutting the door to the negotiation, the charge will again fall on the Executive Council, because they ordered Mr. Chauvelin to return, even *before* the British Government did.

(34) Witness the imprisonment of the Portuguese Ambassador in Paris.

Nor could it be said, that the British Government dismissed a French *Ambassador*: for Mr. Chauvelin, at that time, had no claim whatsoever to the title. He had been accredited by Louis XVI. and, as long as the King of France was still alive, Mr. Chauvelin, by virtue of the credentials which the British Government had received, might at least pretend that he was the accredited Minister of France. But, after the death of the King of France, who was executed on the 21st of January, those credentials had ceased to be valid, and Mr. Chauvelin, therefore, could be considered only as a part of the general mass of foreigners resident in England. The new letters of credence from the Executive Council, which he had offered on the 17th of January, had been refused for the reasons already assigned. His forfeited diplomatic character, therefore, was not restored: for, before any individual acquires the privilege of an *Ambassador*, his
letters

letters of credence must be first accepted by the government, to which he is designed to be accredited. (35) Consequently, by the death of Louis XVI. the sole hinderance to the dismissal of Mr. Chauvelin, after the negotiation had been ended, was removed : and the cogent motives, which induced the British Government, at that time, to send away every stranger, which endeavoured to excite insurrection, operated unrestrained.

Lastly, *under the existing circumstances*, after it was certain that Great Britain would be attacked at all events, the British Government might surely be permitted to express its indignation at a cruel and wanton execution which filled all Europe with horror. It was surely allowable to remove, even with tokens of displeasure, the agent of those who had not only brought their own sove-

(35) The modern rulers of France have, of all men, the least right to call this position in question.

rcign to the block, but openly threatened his Britannic Majesty with a similar fate, (36) and Great Britain itself with destruction. It was allowable, not indeed to engage in a war with France, *merely* because the French had executed their king, (37) but certainly to censure the cruelty of his judges, when those very judges were determined to engage in a war with Britain. And it was not only allowable, but even necessary, to render popular a war which could no longer be avoided, to place the actions of the French rulers in the light which they deserved, to contribute to the indignation which was generally excited by their cruel conduct, and, by directing the sentiments of Britons to their proper channel, rouse them to a vigorous re-

(36) Ch. xiv. Note 28.

(37) Of this charge, which has been very falsely laid to the British Ministry, the present work contains a complete refutation, by proving that the French rulers not only declared war, but provoked it.

sistance against an implacable enemy, which had resolved “to set fire to the four corners of Europe.” When, to these reasons, we add the urgent motives which at that time induced the British Government to remove every foreigner who acted like Mr. Chauvelin, we shall no longer be surpris’d at the following note which was sent to him by Lord Grenville on the 24th of January: “I am charged to notify to you, Sir, that the character with which you had been invested at this court, and the functions of which have been so long suspended, being now entirely terminated by the fatal death of his Most Christian Majesty, you have no longer any public character here. The King can no longer, after such an event, permit your residence here. (38) His Majesty has thought fit to order, that you

(38) It is remarkable that this passage was omitted in that copy of the French original which appeared in the *Moniteur*, 31st January, 1793, and runs thus: “Je suis chargé de vous notifier que le caractère dont vous

“ should retire from this kingdom within the
“ term of eight days; and I herewith trans-

avez été chargé auprès du Roi vient d'être terminé par la mort funeste de S. M. T. C. Sa Majesté juge à propos que vous sortiez du royaume dans l'espace de huit jours. Je vous envoie un passeport pour vous et votre suite. Je prendrai toutes les précautions pour que vous entriez en France avec les égards dus à un Ministre qui avait été accrédité auprès du Roi par sa Majesté très-chrétienne.”

The passage, however, which the French rulers thought proper to omit, has, together with a similar one in his Majesty's message to the two Houses of Parliament, been used in Great Britain as an argument, that Mr. Chauvelin was dismissed merely in consequence of the execution of Louis XVI. That he was dismissed in consequence of that event is certain: but we must not, therefore, conclude, that he was dismissed *merely* in consequence of that event, since it has been shewn that, independently of that event, there existed very urgent motives for his dismissal, and that it was the death of the king of France which removed the only obstacle to their operation. The execution of the King of France, therefore, may in *this* sense be said to have occasioned the removal of Mr. Chauvelin. But even if this argument be deemed inconclusive, and it be still asserted that Mr. Chauvelin was ordered to leave England for no other reason, than because the King of France had been put to death, we can deduce no other inference,

“ mit to you a copy of the order which his
 “ Majesty, in his Privy Council, has given to
 “ this effect. I send you a passport for your-
 “ self and your suite: and I shall not fail to
 “ take all the other necessary steps, in order
 “ that you may return to France with all the
 “ attentions which are due to the character
 “ of Minister Plenipotentiary from his Most
 “ Christian Majesty, which you have exer-
 “ cised at this court.” After all, should the
 arguments alleged in justification of the or-
 der, communicated to Mr. Chauvelin on the

inference, than that the British Government *unneces-*
sarily furnished its enemy with a pretext for declaring
 war, as, on the other hand, if the validity of the above-
 assigned reasons for his dismissal be admitted, the pre-
 text was not unnecessarily afforded, to which the British
 Government, in other respects, had no great necessity
 for attending, since they who are resolved on war, as it
 has been proved that the French rulers were long before
 the 24th of January, are seldom at a loss for pretences,
 and in the list of grievances, with which the declaration
 of war was accompanied, the dismissal of Mr. Chau-
 velin really made only *one* among *eighteen*.

24th of January, be thought unsatisfactory, and should any one be still of opinion, that the British Ministry would have acted more prudently, if they had waited till hostilities had been formally declared, which, from the reasons assigned in the fourteenth chapter, it was easy to foresee would soon take place, yet the dismissal of Mr. Chauvelin can in no case be numbered among the *causes* of the war, because it has been unanswerably proved, that the French rulers had determined on a war with England and Holland *before* that event. (39)

(39) Yet a certain Opposition writer, in defiance of all documents, has ventured to assert that, before the dismissal of Mr. Chauvelin, "France was, undoubtedly solicitous for peace," whence, in order to throw the whole blame of the war on the British Ministry, he would have his readers conclude that it was that event which *first* excited the idea of a war with England in the minds of those *pacific* rulers of republican France. On this subject, however, I beg leave to refer his readers to the seventh, tenth, twelfth, and fourteenth chapters of the present work, which relate to a period

prior

On the 25th of Jânuary, copies of all the notes, which had been exchanged during the late negotiation between Lord Grenville and Mr. Chauvelin, were laid before the States General by Lord Auckland, the British Ambassador at the Hague, as the issue of it affected Holland in an equal degree with Great Britain. It was necessary to inform the government of that country, which was the most exposed to an attack, that the French Executive Council had rejected the conditions of peace which had been offered by

prior to the dismissal of Mr. Chauvelin. When the same writer says in another place, that Mr. Chauvelin was dismissed, because Ministers were resolved to accept of no conditions of peace from France, he must have forgotten that it was the British Government which offered conditions of peace, and that it was the French Government which rejected them. See the latter part of Ch. xiii.—It must be granted, however, that the dismissal of Mr. Chauvelin has found a very proper place in the pamphlet in question, because it is so far from being a view of the *causes* of the war, that it is literally a view of the *pretexts* for it.

the British Government, that it still insisted as well on the opening of the Scheldt, as on the occupying the Austrian Netherlands with a French army during its own pleasure, and that it had given, as its ultimatum, the assurance that, if the naval preparations in the British ports were continued, which Great Britain had commenced in self-defence, and which, as the proposed conditions were rejected, could not possibly be stopped, *it would prepare for war.* (40) The copies of the papers, relative to the negotiation, were accompanied, likewise, with a note, in which Lord Auckland arraigned the conduct of the French rulers. He complained that, though they assumed the title of philosophers, they endeavoured to destroy the received notions of subordination, manners, and religion, which had hitherto founded the security, the happiness, and the consolation of the human

(40) See the latter part of the note of the Executive Council of Jan. 7.

race. He complained that, though the British Government, as well as the States General, had observed the most strict neutrality, and had carefully avoided all interference in the internal affairs of France, the rulers of that country endeavoured to excite an insurrection both in England and in Holland, while they were taking every measure for an invasion with a French army. But he assured the States General, that the British Government was determined to support its allies, to fulfil the conditions of the treaty of 1788, and to protect, to the utmost of its power, the United Provinces from the depredations of France. He reminded them of a small squadron which had lately sailed from the Downs to protect the coast of Zealand, (41) and then declaring the readiness

(41) This small squadron consisted of a ship of 50 guns, two frigates of 36 guns, and four vessels of inferior force, and left the Downs at the beginning of January, under the orders of Commodore Murray.

of the British Cabinet to co-operate with the States General in the defence of the United

That it was designed merely to act on the defensive, was admitted in the Journal de Paris, 12 Janv. 1793, where, after mention had been made of some Dutch ships, which had been ordered to join it, was added, “ Cette petite armée navale combinée a le double but, de garder la Zélande, et de défendre l’ouverture de l’Escaut.” That this small combined Squadron was not designed to act on the offensive, appears further from the order sent by the States General to the Dutch Commodore, which in the words of the Moniteur, 30 Janv. 1793, ran thus. “ Que dans le cas où des navires français armés se présenteront pour *descendre* la riviere il les *laisse passer*; mais en protestant, que si quelque navire prétend la *monter*, il tâche d’abord de l’en dissuader avec douceur, que cette voie se trouvant infructueuse, il montre de la fermeté; qu’enfin, au besoin *il repousse la force par la force.*” It was this small Squadron to which Dumouriez alluded in his letter to Miranda of the 10th of January, in which, speaking of the French gun vessels, which had already sailed up the Scheldt, and then lay before Antwerp, he gave Miranda the following information: “ Le Ministre de la Marine donne ordre de préparer des fourneaux et des grils sur chacune des trois chaloupes cannonieres pour pouvoir tirer à boulets rouges. Ces trois batimens ti-

rent

Provinces, he concluded in the following words: “Your High Mightinesses have acknowledged these dispositions of his Majesty in what he has done already. You will not find them abated in the preparations that are now making. In consequence of which his Majesty is persuaded that he will continue to experience, on the part of your High Mightinesses, a perfect conformity of principles and conduct. That conformity can alone give to the united efforts of the two countries the necessary energy for their common defence, which will also oppose a barrier to the

rent peu d'eau, et chasseront facilement les frégattes, par la supériorité de leur calibre de vingt-quatre, et par leurs boulets rouges.” Correspondence du Général Miranda, p. 5. Miranda, however, replied on the 15th of January, (*Ib.* p. 8.) that the French gun vessels would not be able to beat off the combined squadron; and the intended attack on Zealand was deferred. The assistance, therefore, sent to the Dutch arrived at a very seasonable juncture.

“ evils with which Europe is threatened,
“ and secure from every attempt the safety,
“ tranquillity, and independence of a state,
“ the happiness of which is insured by your
“ High Mightinesses, through the wisdom
“ and energy of its government. (42)

(42) Certain Opposition writers, who have extolled the *temperateness* of the language used by the French rulers toward the British Government, have not only severely censured some expressions in this note of Lord Auckland, but have applied them to palliate, at least, if not to justify, the declaration of hostilities against Great Britain. More wretched sophistry, however, cannot well be devised: for when the National Convention declared war on the 1st of February, it had no knowledge of this note. Consequently, it cannot be reckoned even among the *pretexts* for war, much less among the causes of it. That the note was unknown to the National Convention, when war was declared on the 1st of February, is evident from the circumstance that no mention whatsoever was made of it, either in the debates, or in the list of grievances. See the *Moniteur*, 2d and 3d Feb. 1793. Nor did it appear in the *Moniteur*, at that time the official paper of the French Government, before the *sixth* of February. On the other hand, if a copy of it had really reached

Three days after the British Ambassador at the Hague had delivered to the States Paris before the first of February, the omission of it in the list of grievances will prove that the French rulers themselves had no objections to make it. In either case, therefore, it cannot be numbered among the pretexts for war.—That it contains some warm expressions, which it is prudent to avoid in all diplomatic communications, cannot be denied: but then it must not be forgotten, that it was delivered to the States General after the negotiation with France was at an end, after war was fully decided, though not openly declared, after the British Government had been loaded with a series of injuries and insults, after the most opprobrious language had been used by the French rulers, even while the negotiation was pending, and lastly, that it was drawn up under the impression of the intelligence just arrived at the Hague of the condemnation of Louis XVI. To enable the reader, however, to judge whether it contains any thing, which bears the most distant resemblance to the menacing language, which had been already repeatedly used by the French rulers, I will subjoin the *whole* note in the French original, as printed in the *Moniteur*, 6th Feb. 1793.

Hauts et Puissans Seigneurs,

Le soussigné Ambassadeur Extraordinaire et Plénipotentiaire de S. M. Britannique, s'empresse en conséquence

General the papers relative to the late negotiation, the following message was sent from his Majesty to the House of Commons :

quence des ordres exprès du Roi, de mettre sous les yeux de vos Hautes Puissances des copies de toutes les pieces qui ont été échangées depuis le 27 Décembre, dernier jusqu'au 20 de ce mois, entre Lord Grenville, Secrétaire d'Etat de S. M. et M. Chauvelin. Le Roi, Hauts et Puissans Seigneurs, est dans la ferme persuasion que les sentimens et les principes, exprimés au nom de la Grande-Bretagne, sont parfaitement conformes à ceux qui animent votre république, et que vos Hautes Puissances sont disposées à concourir pleinement aux mesures que la crise actuelle exige, et qui sont une suite nécessaire de ces sentimens et de ces principes. Les circonstances qui nous ont menés à cette crise, sont trop récentes, et la conduite du Roi est trop connue, pour que le soussigné soit dans le cas d'entrer dans de longs détails. Il n'y a pas encore quatre ans, que quelques malheureux, se qualifiant du nom de philosophes, ont eu la présomption de se croire capables d'établir un nouveau système de société civile. Afin de réaliser ce rêve de la vanité, il leur a fallu bouleverser et détruire toutes notions reçues de subordination, des mœurs, et de religion, qui ont fait jusqu'ici la sûreté, le bonheur et la consolation du genre humain. Leurs projets de destruction n'ont que trop réussi; mais les effets

“ His Majesty has given directions for lay-
“ ing before the House of Commons, copies

effets du nouveau système qu'ils ont voulu introduire, n'ont servi qu'à démontrer l'ineptie et la scélératesse de ses auteurs. Les événemens qui se sont si rapidement succédés depuis lors, surpassent en atrocité tout ce qui a jamais souillé la page de l'histoire. Les propriétés, la liberté, la vie même, ont été les jouets de la rage effrénée des passions de l'esprit de rapine, de la haine, de l'ambition la plus cruelle et la plus dénaturée. Les annales du genre humain ne présentent pas d'époque, où dans un aussi court espace de tems on ait commis tant de crimes, causé tant de malheurs, fait verser tant de larmes : enfin, dans ce moment même, ces horreurs paraissent être parvenues à leur comble. Pendant tout ce tems, le Roi environné de son peuple, qui jouissait par la protection divine d'une prospérité sans exemple, n'a pu voir les malheurs d'autrui qu'avec un pressentiment profond de pitié et d'indignation ; mais, fidelle à ses principes, S. M. ne s'est jamais permis de s'immiscer dans les affaires intérieures d'une nation étrangere. Elle ne s'est jamais écartée du système de neutralité qu'elle avait adopté. Cette conduite que le Roi a vu avec plaisir observée également par vos Hautes Puissances, dont toute l'Europe a reconu la bonne foi, et qui aurait dû être respectée à tant d'autres titres, n'a pas réussi à mettre sa Majesté, ses peuples et cette ré-
publique,

“ of several papers which have been received
“ from Mr. Chauvelin, late Minister Pleni-

publique, à l'abri des trames les plus dangereuses et les plus criminelles. Depuis quelques mois, des projets d'ambition et d'agrandissement, alarmans pour la tranquillité et la sûreté de l'Europe entière, ont été publiquement avoués. On s'est efforcé de répandre dans l'intérieur de l'Angleterre, et de ce pays, des maximes subversives de tout ordre social, et l'on n'a pas même eu honte de donner à ces détestables tentatives le nom de pouvoir révolutionnaire. Des traités anciens et solennels, garantis par le Roi, ont été enfreints ; et les droits et les territoires de la république ont été violés. Sa Majesté a donc cru dans sa sagesse devoir faire des préparatifs proportionnés à la nature des circonstances. Le Roi a consulté son parlement, et les mesures que sa Majesté avait trouvé bon de prendre, ont été accueillies par l'assentiment vif et unanime d'un peuple qui abhorre l'anarchie et l'irreligion, qui aime son Roi et qui veut sa constitution. Tels sont, Hauts et Puissans Seigneurs, les motifs d'une conduite, dont la sagesse et l'équité ont assez prouvé jusqu'ici au Roi votre concert et votre co-opération. Sa Majesté, dans tout ce qu'elle a fait, a constamment veillé au maintien des droits et de la sûreté des Provinces Unies. La déclaration que le soussigné a eu l'honneur de remettre à vos Hautes Puissances le 13 Novembre dernier, et l'arrivée d'une petite
escadre

“ potentiary from the Most Christian King,
 “ by his Majesty’s Secretary of State for Fo-
 “ reign Affairs, and of the answers returned
 “ thereto ; and likewise the copy of an or-
 “ der made by his Majesty in Council, and
 “ transmitted by his Majesty’s commands to
 “ the said Mr. Chauvelin, in consequence of
 “ the accounts of the atrocious act recently

escadre destinée à protéger les parages de la république, pendant que ses propres forces se rassemblaient, en fournissent la preuve. Vos Hautes Puissances ont reconnu ces dispositions du Roi dans tout ce que sa Majesté a déjà fait. Elles ne les retrouveront pas moins dans les mesures qui se préparent. En conséquence, sa Majesté se persuade qu’elle continuera à éprouver de la part de vos Hautes Puissances une parfaite conformité de principes et de conduite. Cette conformité peut seule donner aux efforts réunis des deux pays, l’énergie nécessaire pour leur commune défense, opposer une barrière aux maux dont l’Europe est menacée, et mettre à l’abri de toute atteinte, la sûreté, la tranquillité et l’indépendance d’un état dont vos Hautes Puissances assurent le bonheur par la sagesse et la fermeté de leur gouvernement.

AUCKLAND.

Fait à La Haye, le 25 Janvier, 1793.

“ perpe-

“perpetrated in Paris. In the present situa-
“tion of affairs, his Majesty thinks it indif-
“ferently necessary to make a further aug-
“mentation of his forces by sea and land ;
“and relies on the known affection and
“zeal of the House of Commons to enable
“his Majesty to take the most effectual mea-
“sures, in the present important conjunc-
“ture, for maintaining the security and
“rights of his own dominions ; for support-
“ing his allies ; and for opposing views of
“aggrandizement and ambition on the part
“of France, which would be at all times
“dangerous to the general interests of Eu-
“rope, but are peculiarly so, when connected
“with the propagation of principles which
“lead to the violation of the most sacred
“duties, and are utterly subversive of the
“peace and order of all civil society.” (43)

(43) A similar message was sent at the same time to the House of Lords.

While

While the British Government was thus engaged in preparing new measures of defence, and daily expected to hear of a declaration of war against Great Britain and Holland, General Dumouriez formed, or appeared to form, the resolution of attempting a new negotiation. It has been already related in the twelfth chapter, that the order of the Executive Council, for the immediate invasion of the United Provinces was communicated by General Dumouriez, on the 10th of January, to General Miranda: and, it is evident, from his whole letter, that the project of invasion, if not proposed by him, had at least his complete approbation. (44)

(44) See Ch. xii. Notes 51, 52, where two long extracts are quoted from his letter, which clearly prove his approbation of the intended attack on the United Provinces, though every one who reads the first chapter of his Memoirs, without being acquainted with his private correspondence, would suppose the contrary. In his letter to Miranda, he even called the plan *his own*, and said immediately after the passage quoted in Ch. xii.

We have seen, likewise, that the only reason why the project was not executed in the middle of January, was the want of magazines, which prevented Miranda from putting his troops in motion at the instant; and that the Executive Council, on Miranda's representations, entered into a resolution on the 18th of January, by which it was not aban-

Note 52: "Je vous développerai *mon plan* de jour en jour." In the same letter he gave, likewise, to Miranda the following advice, in order to defray the expences of the expedition: "Faites vous donner une liste des capitalistes d'Anvers; appelez-les nominativement à l'hôtel de ville, faites-les y garder, et ne les relâchez pas, qu'ils n'aient pris une résolution et rempli l'emprunt, ou de bon gré ou forcément. Si c'est de bon gré, *touchez tout de suite deux millions de florins, pour les frais de l'expédition.* Si c'est forcément, imposez-les; l'un à cinquante mille florins, l'autre plus, l'autre moins, selon leurs facultés; et *faites-les payer sous huitaine*, en les faisant garder à vue chez eux." An additional proof, that Dumouriez wholly approved of the invasion of Holland, is contained in his letter to Miranda of the 19th of January, which will be quoted presently.

donec,

done, but only deferred. (45) That *part* of it, indeed, which related to Zealand, a province consisting entirely of islands, had, in consequence of the seasonable arrival of a fleet of English and Dutch frigates, from which Miranda apprehended effectual resistance, (46) been so far altered, that it had been determined, either to make a false attack only on that quarter, or to leave the invasion of Zealand to the persons who called themselves Dutch patriots. But this partial arrangement had not affected the general plan; for the resolution to invade the United

(45) See Ch. xii. Note 53.

(46) In his letter to Dumouriez of the 15th of January, he said: “ Si vous laissez dehors de votre plan l’entreprise de la Zélande, il serait beaucoup plus praticable, à ce qu’il me parait, et nous n’aurions pas à nous compromettre avec les forces maritimes de l’Angleterre et de la Hollande, qui ne laisseraient pas de nous arrêter au commencement même de notre entreprise, n’ayant pas de notre part des forces maritimes à leur opposer.” Correspondance du Général Miranda, p. 8.

Provinces remained unaltered. On the 19th of January, Dumouriez, who was then in Paris, had written to Miranda, “ I am of
 “ opinion that, if the war with England
 “ and Holland is determined, (47) only a
 “ false attack must be made on Zealand, that
 “ we must make ourselves masters of Maef-
 “ tricht, Venlo, Geldres, and Emmerick,
 “ take the route of Nimeguen and the
 “ heights of Amersfort, turn Utrecht, gain
 “ the sluice of Muyden, in which Marshal
 “ Luxembourg failed in 1672, and thus we
 “ shall arrive without difficulty at Amster-
 “ dam. In this campaign, which ought to
 “ be very rapid, *and on which I have long me-*
 “ *ditated,* (48) we must consider the patriots
 “ only as a trifling accession, and we must
 “ trust to our own forces alone, and to the

(47) Dumouriez well knew at that time that it *was* determined, though he did not *say* so to Miranda. See the former part of Ch. xiv.

(48) This passage deserves particular notice.

“ means

“ means of conquest. (49) Zealand then
 “ falling of itself, with the Isle of Walche-
 “ ren, however strongly it may be fortified,
 “ becomes a poor retreat for the House of
 “ Orange, and the Administration of the
 “ country, because we shall join the Dutch
 “ marine to our own artillery, to penetrate
 “ thither, when nothing more remains.” (50)

(49) Yet in the manifesto, with which the invasion of Holland was soon afterwards accompanied, it was asserted that the French came merely as *friends and deliverers*.

(50) “ Je crois que si la guerre est décidée entre nous et la Hollande et l’Angleterre, il ne faut faire qu’une fausse attaque sur la Zélande, que nous devons occuper Maestricht, Venlo, Gueldres, Emmerick, nous rabattre sur Nimégué et par les hauteurs d’Amersfort, tourner Utrecht, gagner l’écluse de Muyden que le Maréchal Luxembourg a manqué en 1672, alors nous arrivons sans difficulté à Amsterdam. Dans cette campagne, qui doit être très prompte, et que j’ai long-tems méditée, il ne faut compter les patriotes que comme un léger accessoire, et ne se fier qu’à ses propres forces

On the 23d of January Dumouriez again wrote to Miranda, and likewise from Paris: “ I have informed you, my dear Miranda, that I have abandoned, as well as yourself, the project of Zealand: but this is an additional reason for pushing, with the utmost vigour, that of the attack on Maestricht, Venlo, and Nimeguen. I shall give, however, to Caock and Bendels (51) the small succour which they require, in the opinion they entertain of succeeding with three or four thousand men, which is all that they have demanded of the Executive

et aux moyens de conquêtes. La Zélande alors tombée d'elle-même et l'Isle Walcheren, fût-elle rendue inexpugnable, devient une pauvre retraite pour la Maison d'Orange et pour les administrations du pays, parceque nous joindrons tous les moyens de la marine Hollandaise à tous nos moyens d'artillerie, pour y pénétrer, lorsque nous n'aurons plus que cela à faire.” Correspondance du Général Miranda, p. 11.

(51) Is not this an erratum for Daendels?

“ Council.

“ Council. In a few days I myself shall examine the whole matter on the spot.” (52)

Such were the circumstances under which the resolution, in other respects apparently meritorious, of commencing a new negotiation with Great Britain and Holland, was formed by General Dumouriez; (53) in

(52) “ Je vous ai mandé, mon cher Miranda, que j’abandonnais, comme vous, le projet de la Zélande; mais c’est une raison de plus pour pousser très-vigoureusement celui de l’attaque de Maëstricht, Venlo et Nimègue. Je donnerai cependant peut-être à Caock et Bendels le petit secours qu’ils réclament, dans l’opinion où ils sont de réussir avec trois ou quatre mille hommes, qui est tout ce qu’ils ont demandé au Conseil Exécutif. J’examinerai cela moi-même sur les lieux sous peu de jours.” *Ib.* p. 14.

(53) It was in the letter of the 23d of January, in which he so strongly recommended to Miranda, vigorously to push the sieges of the Dutch fortified towns, Maëstricht, Venlo, and Nimeguen, that he gave Miranda the first intelligence of the intended negotiation, and at the same time mentioned, that he himself was the person who was to conduct it. The circumstance,

which, if the National Convention had permitted the execution of it, we should undoubtedly have heard as many gasconades about *pacific dispositions and purity of intentions*, as in the late negotiation with Mr. Chauvelin. The whole project was evidently the work of Dumouriez alone: for the Executive Council took so little part in it, that of the five Ministers, Le Brun, Garat, Claviere, Pache, and Monge, of which it was then composed, (54) the three last opposed it with all their force; (55) and Le Brun, that in the same letter (*Ib.* p. 16), he desired Miranda to keep the matter a profound secret, looked likewise mysterious.

(54) Roland, the Minister of the Interior, was at that time on the point of retiring, and no longer took part in public affairs, at least not in what related to foreign countries. See that chapter of the *Memoirs of Dumouriez*, which is entitled *Retraite de Roland*.

(55) Dumouriez, speaking of the proposal of it, which he made to the Executive Council (*Mémoires*, tom. i. p. 130), says: "Claviere, Pache, et Monge s'opposèrent de toute leur force à cette proposition."

though

though he was too fine a politician to *declare* himself against it, in which case, as he was Minister for Foreign Affairs, it could not have been set on foot, took care, however, as we shall presently see, that it should produce no effect. And as to Garat, who was the man that read the sentence of death to Louis XVI, and has since behaved with uncommon insolence to the sister of the late Queen of France, a *sincere* desire to promote a work of moderation and peace, would have been wholly inconsistent with his character. Nor does Dumouriez himself appear to have had any other object in view, than to amuse a little longer the English and Dutch Governments, (56) as, toward the end of January, some obstacles presented themselves to the intended invasion of Holland. (57)

(56) This will be rendered, at least, highly probable in a following note.

(57) This will presently appear from his own description.

To set, however, the negotiation, or rather pretended negotiation, on foot, two persons, De Maulde and Maret, (58) were dispatched from Paris, the one to the Hague, the other to London. “It was determined,” says Dumouriez, (59) “that De Maulde, “under the pretence of settling his personal “affairs, should repair to the Hague, that “Noel should be recalled and placed else- “where, and that the General (Dumouriez) “should furnish De Maulde with a letter to “Lord Auckland, signifying, that he should “arrive at Antwerp on the 1st of February, “to inspect the winter quarters of his army, “and that, as he had learnt from his friend, “De Maulde, that his Lordship had spoken “of him with respect and confidence, it “would be very agreeable to him if an op-

(58) De Maulde had been French Ambassador at the Hague, whence he was lately returned. With Mr. Maret the reader is already acquainted.

(59) Mémoires, tom. i. p. 130.

“portunity

“ opportunity presented itself of conferring
“ with Lord Auckland on the frontiers, be-
“ cause the conference might be beneficial
“ to human kind in general, and to the two
“ nations in particular. It was determined,
“ likewise, that if Lord Auckland, as was
“ expected, gave his consent, the General
“ should hold a conference, and that he
“ might thence, in case it were necessary,
“ even go over to England. As soon as De
“ Maulde (says Dumouriez further) (60) ar-
“ rived at the Hague, at the latter end of Ja-
“ nuary, he immediately waited on Lord
“ Auckland, and delivered to him the letter
“ of General Dumouriez. *This Minister ex-
“ pressed great pleasure at the proposal*, and said
“ to De Maulde that, as the interests of
“ England and Holland were inseparable, he
“ would communicate the proposal to the
“ Grand Pensionary, Van Spiegel, and deli-

(60) *Ib.* p. 138.

berate with him on the subject. The latter likewise consented to take part in the conference with Lord Auckland and General Dumouriez. His Lordship sent three successive packet boats to England: and De Maulde sent his Secretary to Antwerp, where the General, after having visited the coast from Dunkirk to that place, arrived on the 2d of February. Having every where found the greatest disorder on his whole journey from Paris (as Dumouriez further relates) (61) and perceiving that his embarrassments were daily increasing, the General greatly rejoiced at the progress which De Maulde had made in the negotiation. He sent immediately a courier to Le Brun with the original answer of Lord Auckland, who had informed him, that the Grand Pensionary of Holland, and himself, were agreed to come

(61) *Ib.* 140.

“ to the borders, in order to hold the con-
 “ ference with the General ; that he had dif-
 “ patched several packet boats to England,
 “ *to obtain the consent of his Court, and in-*
 “ *structions relative to the conference;* (62)

(62) Pour en obtenir la permission et des instructions relatives à cette conférence. The circumstance that Lord Auckland, before he could hold the conference, was obliged to send to England, not only for instructions, but even for *permission* to hold it, sufficiently proves, that the British Ministers were not the movers of the new negotiation. It is true that, according to the account of Dumouriez (*Mémoires*, tom. i. p. 128), before De Maulde had given up his former embassy at the Hague, he had been assured by Lord Auckland, that the British Cabinet would have no objection to negotiate with General Dumouriez: and it appears, likewise, (*Ib.* p. 128) that Mr. Pitt himself had expressed himself to the same purpose. On what particular occasions these declarations were made, or what was the conversation which gave rise to them, Dumouriez has not related: but in regard to the time, they cannot have been made later than the end of December. For De Maulde, on his return from his former embassy at the Hague, arrived at Paris within a few days after Dumouriez, who arrived there on the 1st of January (*Ib.* p. 39, 128);

“ that the answer would soon arrive, and
“ that it was by no means his design to
128): and the French agent, Benoit, who had brought
the account, that Mr. Pitt would have no objection to
negotiate with General Dumouriez, arrived there at
the same time (Ib. p. 128). This precise determination
is not superfluous, because, after the 13th of January,
the day on which the ultimatum of the Executive
Council was delivered, all hopes of preserving peace
had vanished. *After that time*, therefore, it could not
occur to the British Ministry to *propose* another negotia-
tion, though, at the end of the month, when De Maulde
himself proposed it, they very prudently consented, not
only because a refusal would have exposed them to the
reproach of having neglected an opportunity to prevent
a rupture, but because, however well founded the ex-
pectations of a war may be, yet, till it has been actually
declared, there always remains at least a *possibility* of the
contrary. Mr. Pitt, however, declared in the House of
Commons on the 1st of February, (see the debates of
that day) that he considered it as in the highest degree
improbable, that a new negotiation would produce any
effect: and experience proved how rightly he judged,
for it was on that very day that the National Conven-
tion, refusing to wait the issue of the negotiation, de-
clared war on Great Britain and Holland.

Since then the British Government acted a mere
passive

“ amuse the General, or to delay his plans
 “ and preparations for the next campaign.

passive part in this business, all suspicion of a design to amuse the French Government, by the negotiation, must fall of itself to the ground; and it is obvious that, when preparations are made for a negotiation, it is the party only which makes those preparations, and not the party which simply gives its assent, that can be exposed to such a suspicion. It is very extraordinary, therefore, that Dumouriez, could venture to write (*Mémoires*, tom. i. p. 137) “ on pourrait croire que le Ministre Pitt n’aurait voulu qu’amuser le Général Dumouriez :” and his pretended proof is still more extraordinary, namely, “ le traité de la cour de St. James avec celle de Turin, *qui est de la même époque*, confirme cette opinion.” This assertion, which other writers, British as well as French, have faithfully copied without enquiring into its truth, contains so gross an error, as is hardly to be expected from any man who lays claim to the character of an historian. For so far was the treaty with the Court of Turin from being *of the same epoch*, that not even the *preliminaries* were signed till *twelve weeks afterward*. They are dated 25th April, 1793, and, as appears from Art. 5, the ratification was to take place within two months after *that time*. Further, the preliminaries were signed, not at Turin, but in London, which obviates the objection which might otherwise

“The dispatch of De Maulde, with which
 “that of Lord Auckland was accompanied,
 otherwise be made, that the order given by the British
 Cabinet for signing them preceded, by some time, the
 signature itself. Lastly, that hostilities had been de-
 clared against Great Britain before the preliminary ar-
 ticles were even drawn up, appears from the first ar-
 ticle, which begins thus: “Leurs Majestés le Roi de la
 Grande Bretagne et le Roi de Sardaigne, *se trouvant en-
 gagés dans une guerre contre la France, en consequence des
 actes les plus injurieux de violence et d’agression.* See
 Martens’ Recueil des Principaux Traités.” Tom. v.
 p. 144—149.

Having shewn that the charge of duplicity, which
 Dumouriez has very artfully laid to the British Minis-
 ters, is wholly unfounded, we will next examine,
 whether he himself was not guilty of that very fault,
 which he has unjustly laid to his opponents. His letter
 to Miranda, of the 23d of January, in which he recom-
 mended to him, vigorously to push the sieges of several
Dutch fortified towns, is certainly not to be reconciled
 with the supposition, that the negotiation, which he was
 planning *at that very time* (See above, Note 53) was
 seriously intended by him as the means of *preventing*
 a war with England and Holland. What other object
 then could he have had in view, but to amuse a little
 longer the English and Dutch Governments, that they
 might

“ explained every thing which had passed
 “ between them. Great indignation had
 might be the less prepared for the intended attack?
 And this is further confirmed by the letter, which
 he wrote to Miranda from Antwerp on the fifth of
 February. On this day, strange as it may appear,
 Dumouriez had no knowledge of the declaration of
 war: for he himself relates (*Mémoires*, tom. i. p. 142,
 143) that Le Brun sent him no information of it, that
 he first learnt it from the public newspapers, and that
 not before the *seventh* of February. On the seventh,
 Miranda, likewise, had received no official intelligence
 of it, as appears from his letter of that day to the War
 Minister, Pache. (See *Correspondance du Général*
Miranda, p. 20.) Consequently, as Dumouriez, on
 the 2d of February had received intelligence from Lord
 Auckland, that he had sent to London for instructions,
 the interval between the *second* and the *seventh* of Fe-
 bruary was to Dumouriez a state of uncertainty, in
 which the dictates of strict integrity certainly enjoined
 him to abstain from every, at least, unconditional order
 for the invasion of Holland. Yet, on the *fifth* of Febru-
 ary, he wrote from Antwerp to Miranda, and gave him
 the most positive and unconditional order to take Venlo
 immediately by surprise, and added, “ je ferai l’investisse-
 ment de Maestricht avec le reste de la grosse artillerie,

“ been expressed at the atrocious act lately
 “ perpetrated in Paris : but as De Maulde
 “ assured both Ministers (the English and
 “ the Dutch) that General Dumouriez him-
 “ self was penetrated with the same senti-
 “ ments, and felt equal indignation, that

pour brusquer cette place, comme vous brusquerez Venlo, où vous ne devez pas trouver de resistance, n’y ayant point de garnison.” Correspondance du Général Miranda, p. 18.—These circumstances I mention, not so much with the view of accusing General Dumouriez, who well knew the resolution of his government, to attack England and Holland at all events, and therefore thought it necessary to act accordingly, as of shewing how very ill it becomes him, to transfer the charge of duplicity to those who acted with the utmost integrity. With equal injustice has he accused, likewise, the British Government of irritating that of France, by dismissing Mr. Chauvelin, even after the negotiation was begun: for the very first proposal of it was made by De Maulde at the Hague, *after* the order had been sent to Mr. Chauvelin in London. Consequently the inference, which Dumouriez thence deduces, “ *on peut donc leur reprocher autant qu’aux Français,*” falls of itself to the ground.

dreadful

“ dreadful catastrophe presented no obsta-
 “ cles to the negotiation. It was decid-
 “ ed, therefore, without difficulty, that, as
 “ soon as Lord Auckland received the an-
 “ swer from his Court, the conference should
 “ be holden at Moerdyk, on board a yacht
 “ of the Prince of Orange, which was or-
 “ dered to be fitted up for the reception of
 “ the General.”

During the time that De Maulde was on his journey to the Hague, Mr. Maret was dispatched to London, to propose the intended negotiation to the British Ministry. The object of Mr. Maret's mission, as Dumouriez himself, who was the mover of the whole business, relates, was merely to inquire, whether Mr. Pitt was really desirous of treating with General Dumouriez, (63) and, in

(63) “ Il fut décidé que Maret, qui avait déjà fait plusieurs voyages en Angleterre, y serait renvoyé pour

case he were, to procure for Dumouriez a passport to come over to England. (64) The

savoir de Mr. Pitt, si réellement il souhaitait traiter personnellement avec le Général Dumouriez." Mémoires de Dumouriez, tom. i. p. 131.

(64) In his letter to Miranda of the 23d of January, he said: "On envoie demain un agent secret fort connu de M. Pitt et de M. Fox, pour demander aux deux partis, c'est-à-dire à la nation toute entière, un sauf-conduit pour moi, et l'assurance d'être bien venu, quelque succès qu'ait la mission." Correspondance de Miranda, p. 15.—Of what use a *sauf-conduit*, from the Opposition party, could be to a French Ambassador, it is not easy to determine: but thus much is clear from the passage, that the French rulers never lose sight of their favourite maxim, and that they must always have *something* to do with those, who act in opposition to Government. In fact, the whole conduct of the negotiation is involved in mystery. If Dumouriez really intended to go over to England, and to negotiate with the Cabinet Ministers in person, what necessity was there for a conference with the British Ambassador at the Hague? And, on the other had, if he intended to negotiate on the frontiers of Holland with the British Ambassador at the Hague, what necessity was there for
 sending

twenty-fourth of January was the day, which had been appointed for Mr. Maret's departure from Paris: (65) but Le Brun, under the pretence of giving previous information to Mr. Pitt by means of a person, who had already acted as mediator between him and Mr. Maret, (66) but in reality, as Dumouriez himself believes, with the view of counteracting the negotiation, (67) proposing a person to pave the way for his reception in London? To negotiate in both places was useless. How then is the enigma, that a person was sent to London, as well as to the Hague, to be solved? Perhaps, by the supposition, that it was deemed expedient to amuse *both* governments at the *same* time.

(65) This appears from the passage quoted in the preceding note.

(66) Mémoires de Dumouriez, tom. i. p. 133. The person here meant is probably Mr. Milès.

(67) *Ib.* But the *motive*, which Dumouriez assigns for Le Brun's conduct is certainly false: for he says, "Dans le fait, le Général a eu lieu de presumer, que Le Brun, piqué de ce que la cour de St. James ne voulait

tracted Mr. Maret's departure, and, in consequence, Mr. Maret did not leave Paris till

pas traiter avec lui comme Ministre des affaires étrangères de la république, ni avec la Convention, n'était pas fâché de faire manquer cette négociation sans y paraître." That Le Brun was resolved to counteract the negotiation, may be readily admitted; but this resolution must be ascribed to the motives alleged in the fourteenth chapter of the present work, and certainly not to any supposed refusal on the part of the British Government to treat with Le Brun. On the contrary, it was Le Brun, from whom Mr. Maret, at Mr. Pitt's own request, had desired instructions to negotiate, and which Le Brun had refused: it was Le Brun who communicated the instructions to Mr. Chauvelin: it was Le Brun who had signed with his own hand the note of the Executive Council on the 7th of January. Besides, Dumouriez himself, had the proposed negotiation been carried into effect, must likewise have been first empowered by Le Brun, as the Minister for Foreign Affairs: for, though the character of General might enable him to enter into a *military* convention with another General, yet he could not conclude a *political* treaty with an Ambassador, till he had received full powers from his own Government. The consent of the British Cabinet, therefore, to negotiate with Dumouriez, was again a consent to negotiate with those,

the *twenty-sixth* of January. (68) As soon as he had landed at Dover, (69) he formed the in whose name, and in whose name alone, he did or could act.—Hence, also, another objection is removed, which, as well as the former, has been made to the British Cabinet by a writer of our own country, namely, that it was absurd to think of treating with a General, as if a treaty with a General, when he assumes the character of *Ambassador*, were not as much a treaty with his Government, as when that character is assumed by a person in the civil line.

(68) That Mr. Maret did not leave Paris till the *twenty-sixth* of January, appears from a comparison of the following passages in the *Memoirs of Dumouriez*. “Le départ de Maret fut retardé assez mal-à-propos, et n'eut lieu que le jour même du départ du Général.” *Le Général Dumouriez partit le 26 Janvier.*” Tom. i. p. 133, 134. He says the same also, p. 142. Again he says of himself, p. 39, arrivé dans la capitale le *premier* Janvier: and p. 94, le Général Dumouriez traita les affaires pendant les *vingt-six* jours qu'il a passés à Paris. This precise determination of the day, when Mr. Maret left Paris, is of great importance, as will appear in the sequel.

(69) All that is here said of Mr. Maret, after his arrival in England, is grounded on the authentic relation

resolution of writing to Le Brun, to demand fresh instructions, probably (as he was now in England, and recollected his former favourable reception with Mr. Pitt) with the view of acting for himself: for we have seen that, when he left Paris, he had no other commission, than to pave the way for Dumouriez. (70) But, whatever was his mo-

of Mr. Miles, who was an intimate friend of Mr. Maret, who saw him every day during his stay in London, and at whose house Mr. Maret appears to have lodged, as Mr. Miles in a letter, which he had lately written to him, had said, *venez donc sans crainte, descendez chez moi, et considerez ma maison comme la votre.* Authentic Correspondence, Appendix, p. 109. Mr. Miles's relation is given in the just-mentioned work, p. 101—104, and contains partly facts, to which he himself was eye-witness, and partly facts, for which, as he expressly attests, he had Mr. Maret's own authority. Consequently, all random reports, which agree not with Mr. Miles's relation, must be declared fabulous.

(70) See Notes 62, 63. Mr. Miles likewise represents Mr. Maret's mission as only *preparatory to the projected embassy of Dumouriez.*" Authentic Correspondence, p. 102.

tive, whether he really intended to act for himself, or whether the dismissal of Mr. Chauvelin, whom he met on the road, suggested to him the necessity of an alteration in his instructions relative to Dumouriez, it is certain that he *did* write, and in very pressing terms, for fresh instructions, and, moreover, that he declared, in his letter to Le Brun, “*that he should not desire an interview with the English Minister, until fresh instructions arrived.*” (71) As soon as he had written to Le Brun, he went immediately from Dover to London: but having determined to demand no interview, or to discuss any matters of state, till his fresh instructions should arrive, he did not make any overture to the British Ministry, even in regard to the embassy of Dumouriez. It is true, that he sent a short note to Lord Grenville: but this note contained nothing more than the notification, “*that he had come over to take*

(71) Ib.

charge of the diplomatic papers in the house of the French Envoy." (72) In the mean time he waited for his fresh instructions from Le Brun, which he had so pressinglly solicited: yet, though he staid in London *eight days*, (73) and, therefore, at least, till the *fourth* of February, (74) he not only received not the expected instructions, but not even a *single line or direction*. (75) But on the

(72) *Ib.*

(73) Mr. Miles expressly says, p. 102. "His stay in London was *eight days*."

(74) It has been already shewn that Mr. Maret left Paris on the 26th of January. He could not possibly, therefore, have reached London before the 28th. Consequently, as he staid *eight days* there, we cannot fix his departure at an earlier day than the *fourth* of February, even if we include, likewise, the day of his arrival. But as Mr. Miles says, p. 103, that they took leave of each other at midnight, he departed, at the *soonest*, in the night between the fourth and the fifth of February.

(75) This, says Mr. Miles, p. 103, Mr. Maret expressly declared at the time of their taking leave.

fourth

fourth of February, the declaration of war, which had taken place on the first, was known in London: and after that time it was useless to think of negotiations. Mr. Maret, therefore, sent a letter to Lord Grenville, to take leave, and returned to Paris.— (76) Thus ended the celebrated mission of Mr. Maret, which would afford an additional proof, if additional proof were necessary, that the French Government was determined, at all events, to avoid a reconciliation

(76) This letter, and the above-mentioned note, constituted the whole of Mr. Maret's negotiation, if it can be so called. Mr. Miles's own words, p. 103, where he speaks of the above-mentioned note, are: "This was all the intercourse that passed, and all the communication that was made to any of his Majesty's Ministers, except a letter which was sent by Mr. Maret at the instant of his final departure from London."—Mr. Pitt, likewise, on the 12th of February, 1793 (See the Parliamentary Debates), declared in the House of Commons, *that Mr. Maret, during his whole stay in London, had proposed to his Majesty's Ministers no questions of state whatsoever.*

with

with Great Britain: for, otherwise, it would not have refused to grant to an agent who was already on the spot, to an agent with whom Mr. Pitt had already expressed a readiness to negotiate, the instructions which that agent required. A compliance, however, with Mr. Maret's request was not to be expected, since, among the members of the Executive Council, Claviere, Pache, and Monge, were from the very beginning inimical to the whole negotiation, and Le Brun, though he did not declare himself against it, secretly counteracted its operation. (77)

(77) On Mr. Maret's mission to England at the end of January, 1793, were propagated as many false reports as on the conference which he had holden with Mr. Pitt in December: and these false reports, in defiance of Mr. Pitt's declaration in the House of Commons on the 12th of February, 1793, have been adopted and repeated by his adversaries, both writers and orators, as unquestionably true. Immediately after the passage, which has been quoted in Ch. xiii. Note 32, relative to the pretended instructions of Mr. Maret on

the

While Mr. Maret was in London, in vain expecting instructions from the Executive the former occasion, is added. “As the first mission of Mr. Maret was, however, not attended with any effect, he was sent again from the Executive Council with *enlarged powers*. It was asserted, at that time, that his object was to propose to the British Ministry *the cession of some of the most valuable West India islands, and the annexing of the Netherlands to the Dutch republic*, provided this arrangement should mutually prove agreeable to the States General and the Belgic Congress. Mr. Maret was, however, we believe, *never permitted to produce his credentials*.”—Now the notion that the French Government was ready to give up the Netherlands, and still more so, that it was ready to abandon some of the most valuable of the West India islands, is in itself so absurd, and is so completely contradicted by the avowed principles of the French rulers, and by the notes which had been already delivered to Lord Grenville, that nothing but the height of party prejudice could have induced any man, who was the least acquainted with the history of the times, to believe in it. And that Mr. Maret really had no such instructions, is evident, not only from the relation of Mr. Miles, but from the account given by Dumouriez himself, who represents Mr. Maret as a person sent merely to pave the way for *his* reception. To
the

Council, the British Government received the intelligence from Lord Auckland, that

the passages already quoted may be added Mr. Miles's declaration, p. 103, that *Mr. Maret had very little to say*: and what *that little* was has been shewn in the notes 63, 64. As to the assertion, that he never was permitted to produce his credentials, we have already seen, that even if he had any, he never once *offered* to produce them. To the passages above-quoted may be added the following declaration of Mr. Miles, p. 101.

“ That all intercourse with him was refused by the
“ King's servants, I positively deny, and for the best of
“ all possible reasons, because *it had never been solicited.*

“ On the same authority that I contradicted the former
“ assertion, I deny this: *the authority of Mr. Maret,*

“ who may, certainly, be allowed to know as much of
“ the matter as those who, on such little foundation,
“ have repeatedly urged it in Parliament, &c.” Even,

therefore, if the report had been true, that Mr. Maret was authorized to make advantageous proposals, yet as none *were* made, nor even *offered* to be made, no blame could have attached to the British Ministry. Lastly, as

to the notion, which was likewise propagated with great assiduity, that Mr. Maret, as soon as he landed in England, received an order from Government to quit the country, a notion, which even Dumouriez, (who after the 26th of January, 1793, never returned to

Paris,

De Maulde was arrived at the Hague, and had proposed a negotiation between his Lordship and General Dumouriez. Now, though the conduct, both of the National Convention and of its Executive Council,

Paris, never again saw Mr. Maret, and, therefore, had no certain intelligence of what happened to him in England) has credulously adopted from the rumours of the day, it is confuted at once by the indisputable fact, that Mr. Maret remained eight days in London, and till after the intelligence arrived of the declaration of war.—It is true, that since the publication of the *Authentic Correspondence*, by Mr. Miles, in the year 1796, no one has ventured to say any thing more about Mr. Maret and his pretended instructions: but as, on the other hand, I know of no one who, having related those idle reports as indisputable facts, has afterwards had the generosity to inform his readers or hearers, that those reports are the mere inventions of party malevolence, and as the *Authentic Correspondence* does not appear to be so generally known, as a work of such high importance deserves, the above-quoted extracts from it are not superfluous, because not every one, who had heard of those reports, has likewise heard of their confutation.

had been uniformly such, as demonstrated the firm resolution of the French rulers to engage in a war with Great Britain, and, consequently, the improbability, if not impossibility, that they seriously intended to effect a reconciliation, yet the British Government, to avoid the reproach which would have resulted from a refusal, immediately consented to the negotiation, and authorized Lord Auckland to treat with General Dumouriez. (78) On the receipt of his instructions, Lord Auckland dispatched a courier to the General, who was then at Antwerp, and proposed the tenth of February for the day of holding the first conference. (79) But no conference whatsoever took place: for the National Convention, which, instead of awaiting the issue of the negotiation, resolved from the very beginning to

(78) See the *Mémoires de Dumouriez*, tom. i. p. 143.

(79) *Ib.*

pay not the least attention to it, (80) had already, on the first of February, unani-

(80) What little attention the French Government paid to the negotiation even from the beginning of it, may be collected from the circumstance, *that it was on the very day on which the proposal was made to the British Minister at the Hague, that the order was issued to lay an embargo on all British vessels in the French ports.* (See Lord Grenville's speech in the House of Lords on the 12th of February, 1793.) What a contrast does this conduct form with the behaviour of the British Government, which consented to the proposal of Dumouriez, though the intelligence of the embargo arrived in London on the very same day with the first courier from Lord Auckland. (See Mr. Pitt's speech in the House of Commons on the 12th of February.) It requires, therefore, a more than usual want of either knowledge or of integrity to represent, on the one hand, the French Government as candid and solicitous for peace, and to accuse the British Government, on the other hand, of duplicity and a desire for war. The authentic documents, which have been produced in the present work, sufficiently demonstrate that the charge must be inverted. Indeed the question may be fairly asked: Is it possible that men of talents and reading,

◦mously decreed war against Great Britain and Holland.

professed speakers or writers on political subjects, should have remained wholly ignorant of all these documents? But if they were not, how could they venture to set them at open defiance, to substitute romance for history, and calumny for justice?



CHAP. XVI.

State of Parties in France at the Beginning of the Year 1793. Junction of Robespierre's Party with that of Brissot, on the Subject of the War with Great Britain. The Decree for War voted without one dissenting Voice. Eighteen Prettexts alleged in Justification of it. Confutation of those Prettexts. General Recapitulation, and Conclusion.

THE two great parties, into which the National Convention was divided at the beginning of the year 1793, were headed, the one by Robespierre, the other by Brissot. The former were denominated sometimes by the name of Jacobins, at other

times by the appellation of Anarchists; (1) the latter, though originally only a younger branch of the Jacobin family, had assumed the title of Girondists, because many of the members of it were from the department of the Gironde; and they were distinguished likewise by the title of Brissotines, from the name of their leader. (2) The principal members of the Girondist party were men of talents and education; whereas the Jacobins, though many of them were not devoid of natural abilities, were, for the most part, unlettered enthusiasts. The one had been educated in the school of French philosophy, and in the tenets of the encyclopedists; the

(1) This last title was usually given them by their opponents.

(2) Beside these two *great* parties, there were indeed some inferior factions and subdivisions; but they were either of no importance, or they arranged themselves under the standards of the two principal parties.

other had learnt no other maxims than those which were suggested by anarchy and brutal violence. In regard to morality, there was this only difference between them, that the Jacobins set all honour and religion at open defiance, while the Girondists, who in their hearts possessed as little of either, had acquired from their education the habit of concealing their sentiments, and of veiling their iniquity under the mask of probity. The former were the Iconoclasts; the latter, the Jesuits of the revolution.

These two parties had divided the power of France since the deposition of the King, and had been engaged in one continual struggle for the supreme ascendancy. But on the subject of the war with Great Britain and Holland they formed a perfect junction, (3) and were animated with simi-

(3) " Les deux factions se réunirent, pour prendre sans réflexion, sans délibération, sans discussion, le

lar principles and similar desires. The motives to this war, which have been assigned in the fourteenth chapter, operated equally on every member of the Convention, and the hope of ruining the ancient rival of France smothered for a while their habitual animosity; nay, so completely unanimous were the members of the Convention on this occasion, that though seven members, out of the seven hundred and fifty, had voted against the war with Austria, yet the war with Great Britain and Holland was decreed *without one dissenting voice*. (4) Equally remarkable is it, that this union of the two parties was soon converted into the most violent enmity; for, no sooner did they

partie le plus violent et le plus téméraire.—Mémoires de Dumouriez, tom. i. p. 143.

(4) On demande de toutes parts à aller aux voix. Le décret est porté à l'unanimité.—Moniteur 3d. Feb. 1793.

find themselves disappointed in their expectations of the conquest of Holland as a preparatory step to the conquest of England; no sooner had Dumouriez, instead of carrying all before him, as in the preceding campaign, been obliged, by the defeat at Neerwinden, to abandon the Austrian Netherlands, than they began to make each other the most bitter reproaches. “ Who
 “ was it that provoked the war? the *Anar-*
 “ *chists alone*;—yet *they* lay the charge
 “ to *our* door,” said Brissot in his address to his constituents. (5) And not only was

(5) “ Qui donc a *provoqué* cette guerre? *Les Anarchistes seuls!* Et cependant ils *nous* en font un crime.” Brissot à ses Commettans, p. 71.—Dumouriez likewise, though he had left the party of the Jacobins, says of Brissot and Le Brun, “ Ils ont, l’un et l’autre, *provoqué* la déclaration de guerre contre l’Angleterre et la Hollande.” Vie de Dumouriez, tom. iii. p. 385. He does not, however, confine the blame to the Girondists alone, for he ascribes an equal share of it to the Jacobins. “ Quant à Brissot, il profitait de l’occa-
 T 4 sion,

the accusation reciprocal, but the means which each party adopted to render the other odious to the nation, in consequence of the declaration of war, were equal. For Briffot asserted that the Anarchists or Jacobins were instruments in the hands of foreign powers, (6) while the same ridiculous charge was laid by the Anarchists to Briffot. (7) But as the Girondists, through

fon, pour insulter, comme à son ordinaire, les rois et les peuples ; en quoi il était bien secondé par Barrere, et par le parti des Jacobins."—Mémoires de Dumouriez, tom. i. p. 143.

(6) He calls them (A ses Commettans, p. 58) ces meneurs, qui sciemment ou inscivement étaient *les instrumens des puissances étrangères*.

(7) They gave him the title of Allié de Pitt. See what was said on this subject in Ch. i. Note 6.—In fact the two parties were so liberal in the application of these titles, that even the monster Robespierre was called a *Royalist* ; for a philippic published by Louvet, who was of the Gironde party, was entitled, A Maximilien Robespierre et à ses *Royalistes*.

causes

causes which it would be foreign to the present history to investigate, (8) were soon

(8) The author of a popular pamphlet, published in the year 1797, ascribes, with his usual accuracy, the fall of Brissot, and the ascendancy of Robespierre, to the part which Brissot took in the declaration of hostilities, a part which this author himself cannot deny, though he endeavours to palliate it by saying, “ the part that *even* Brissot, &c.” He had probably never heard that Robespierre voted for the war with England, as well as Brissot; that in this respect, therefore, they were *perfectly equal*; and, consequently, that the fall of the one, and the ascendancy of the other, must be owing to some other cause. He had heard, probably, the exclamations of the victorious party alone, which overwhelmed the exclamations of the conquered party; not because they had a greater share of justice on their side, but merely because they were victorious. A minute investigation of the causes, which gave the Jacobins the advantage over the Girondists, lies, as already observed, without the limits of the present history; but, perhaps, it will not be superfluous, cursorily to remark, that the two following were the principal. First, the wavering and inconsistent

overpowered by the opposite party, it was the natural consequence that they alone

sistent conduct of the Girondists on the trial of the King; for, though the principal members of this party voted, with only one or two exceptions, for his death, they insisted that, before he was executed, the sentence should be confirmed by the primary assemblies. But in this attempt they failed, and thus they gave the advantage out of their own hands, of which the Jacobins, who were *consistent* in their infamy, and exposed, therefore, no weak side to their adversaries, knew how to make a proper use; for, in a struggle between two unprincipled parties, that party which goes the greatest length will generally succeed. The other grand cause of the ascendancy of the Jacobins was, their almost unlimited influence at the beginning of the year 1793 over the sections of the city of Paris, which at that time were vested with so much power, that the party supported by them was certain of governing the whole nation. This influence the Jacobins acquired partly by their intrigues, which enabled them to fill the principal offices in the sections with their own creatures, and partly by the system of terrorism, in which the Federates, as they were called,
rendered

suffered for the common crime (9); and Brissot, with his associates, ended his life on rendered them essential service. Prepared in this manner, the Jacobins found no difficulty, in the spring of 1793, of overthrowing their adversaries, even on the most futile pretext. But cause and pretext are very frequently confounded by superficial observers, especially if he who uses the pretext is successful. It is not extraordinary, therefore, that, during the long reign of Robespierre and his associates, the notion that they were innocent in regard to the war with England was gradually propagated, and adopted by superficial writers, who knew not that the war was *unanimously* decreed. On the other hand it must be admitted, that Opposition writers act with perfect consistency, in endeavouring to remove the blame of the war from any party in France; because if they could succeed in the attempt, they would find it so much the more easy to transfer the blame to the British Government.

(9) When the Jacobins brought Brissot with his associates to the bar, one of the principal charges laid to him was, *that he had involved France in a war with England*; to which Brissot very properly replied, *it was the Assembly of the Nation, not I, who decreed the war.*

the scaffold, while Robespierre and his accomplices ascended the throne. (10) Which of the two parties was most deserving of the guillotine it is unnecessary at present to examine : but thus much at least is obvious, that the reciprocal accusation of having involved France in a war with Britain, is a tacit acknowledgment from *both* parties, that not to the British, but to the French Government alone its origin must be assigned.

The proposal of it in the Convention fell to the lot of Brissot ; not because Brissot was more inclined to a war with England than Robespierre, but solely because Brissot happened to be at that time the orator of the Diplomatic Committee, and of the

See the *Moniteur*, October 27th, 1793. Supplement, 2de. feuille. But this argument could not prevail against the *jus fortioris*.

(10) *Committunt eadem diverso crimina fato ;*

Ille crucem sceleris pretium tulit, hic diadema.

Com-

Committee of General Defence, which two united Committees the National Convention on the 30th of January had ordered to present within two days a report relative to Great Britain, (11) or, as the Committees well understood, to propose a declaration of war. And it cannot be denied, that the orator of the Committees executed his commission with fidelity; for his whole speech contained one continued invective against the British Government, which undoubtedly gratified the ears of the whole Assembly. (12) As soon as he had ended his speech,

(11) *Moniteur*, 31st January 1793.

(12) His speech is printed at full length in the *Moniteur*, 2d February, 1793. The following passage may serve as a specimen. “*La nation Anglaise une fois éclairée par notre exemple, fera justice aussi de ses conspirateurs en place. La comédie de l'éternel procès de Hastings ne se renouvellera plus, et les échaffauds serviront encore une fois aux Straffords et aux Lauds du régime actuel, comme aux simples brigands.*” But unfortunately for this Allié de Pitt, who
spake

he completed the execution of his trust by proposing, in the name of the Committees, a declaration of war against Great Britain and Holland. Ducos seconded the motion: (13) and, as no one in the whole Assembly spake against it, the cry of *vote, vote*, resounded from every quarter, and the war was immediately decreed without one dissenting voice. (14) Further, as the favourite maxim of the French rulers, “the governed must be excited to rebel against their governors,” never forsakes them, was voted, on the proposal of Fabre d’Eglantine, and on the recommendation of Barrere, an address to the English nation, spake so respectfully of his friends, the prophecy, like most other prophecies of the French rulers, was fulfilled only in the prophet himself.

(13) The speech of Ducos, which was delivered in the same strain with that of Brissot, is printed in the *Moniteur* of the 3d of February.

(14) See Note 4.

which

which was ordered to be drawn up by Barrere, Fabre d'Eglantine, Condorcet, and Thomas Paine. (15)

But as the real causes of the war, which have been assigned in the fourteenth chapter, were not such as had justice on their side, it was deemed expedient to seek a number of pretexts, which might palliate the aggression with the unthinking populace, and furnish their advocates with sophistical arguments in their defence. Nor were their endeavours in this respect unsuccessful; for they were so fortunate as to discover not less than *eighteen* pretexts, (16) all of which, however, were of such a nature, that no rational Council of State, unless other motives had operated, would have been induced by them to a declaration of war. The first article is of general import,

(15) *Moniteur*, 3d February 1793.

(16) *Ib.*

and contains the charge, that the British Government, after the 10th August 1792, had given many indications of being ill-affected toward France: and in the seventeen following articles the particular actions are specified, chiefly in chronological order, in which this evil disposition was supposed to have displayed itself. (17) These seventeen articles, therefore, must be particularly examined.

The first of them relates to the recall of the British Ambassador from Paris on the 17th of August: but this charge has been already repelled in the ninth chapter. In the second article is asserted, that the Bri-

(17) It is to be observed, that even the sophistry of the National Convention was unable to discover any pretext for accusing the British Government, before the 10th of August, 1792, whence it appears that the advocates of the French have gone still greater lengths than their clients themselves.

tish Government had, ever since the 10th of August, suspended all communication with Mr. Chauvelin. Now this charge is absolutely false, as is evinced by the negotiation described in the thirteenth chapter. It was only *official* communication with Mr. Chauvelin which had been suspended, of which the fault had not lain with the British Government; for it was the deposition of the King of France which rendered Mr. Chauvelin's former credentials of no value, and it was not before the 17th of January, when the question of war or peace was already decided, that he had even offered to produce new credentials. The third and fourth articles relate to the refusal of the British Government, to acknowledge the French Republic in the person of Mr. Chauvelin, a refusal which has been already justified in the preceding chapter. In the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth articles, complaints are made about

the acts of parliament, mentioned at the end of the eleventh chapter, where it has likewise been shewn that those complaints are ungrounded. In the ninth article the British Government is accused of having given a reception to French emigrants, as if hospitality to persons in distress were a crime. And this charge, in another respect, ill became those who had not only from the very commencement of the French Revolution uniformly encouraged and corresponded with the disaffected party in England, (18) but on the 28th of November had received, with every mark of friendship and every token of applause, the addresses of those societies, who on that day signified their intention of overturning the British Constitution. Besides, whatever might be the private views of the French

(18) See the documents on this subject in Rivington's Annual Register for 1793, Part. II. p. 128—155. The first has so early a date as Nov. 4, 1789.

emigrants, who were permitted to reside in England, it is a known fact that they were not permitted to act an open part, or to assemble in a military corps, till after the declaration of war: whereas the French Executive Council had not only already formed the Dutch patriots, to the amount of ten thousand, into a separate legion, but had placed them on the frontiers of Holland, as a preparatory step to its invasion. It required, therefore, more than usual audacity, to accuse the British Government of having granted an asylum to the French emigrants. Another charge in the ninth article relates to the emigrants from the island of St. Domingo. Now it is undoubtedly true, that even before the close of 1791, a great part of the French colonists in the island of St. Domingo, highly dissatisfied with the conduct of the National Assembly, to which they justly ascribed the insurrection of the negroes, sincerely wished to submit the co-

only to the crown of Britain, and that several of the colonists came to London, with the view of inducing Ministers to send out an armament and take possession of the country. But equally certain is it, that the British Government, true to the principles of neutrality, which it had determined to maintain, rejected the offer, and that no attention was paid to the colonists till after war had been declared. (19) Its upright conduct, therefore, deserved not the censure, but the thanks of the National Conven-

(19) The words of Mr. Bryan Edwards, whose authority on this subject is not to be questioned, and who certainly cannot be accused of an unjust partiality in favour of Administration, are as follow: "To these representations *no attention at that time was given*; but at length, *after* the National Assembly had thought proper to declare war against Great Britain, the English Ministry *began* to listen with some degree of complacency to the overtures, which *were again* made." Historical Survey of St. Domingo, p. 140.

tion. (20) The three following articles relate to the naval preparations in England, the necessity of which has been so fully demonstrated in the eleventh chapter, that it would be a waste of time to say any thing further on the subject. They contain also a complaint, that certain friends in England were ill treated by the Government. Now, though it cannot be denied, that the measures taken by the British Government to counteract the machinations of those who acted in concert with the National Convention, necessarily gave offence to that venerable body, yet in converting those measures into a subject of complaint, it really outdid its *usual* outdoings. In the thirteenth article a complaint was made about the English ships which had been sent to Flushing at the beginning of January: and it was

(20) This is not the only instance in which the integrity of the British Cabinet has been strangely abused, and that not by the French alone.

made under the pretence that those ships had been sent "to disturb the operations of France in Belgia." (21) But it has been shewn in the preceding chapter, (22) that the object of the squadron was merely to act on the defensive, and, in case of an attack on the part of France, to protect the coast of Zealand. The presence of this squadron was likewise absolutely necessary; for on the 10th of January the attack on Zealand had been already ordered by the Executive Council, but was abandoned in consequence of the obstacles which this very squadron presented to the undertaking. (23) The charge, therefore, brought in the thirteenth article is totally without

(21) Pour troubler les opérations de la France dans la Belgique.

(22) Note 41.

(23) See Miranda's letter on this subject quoted in Ch. xv. Note 46.

foundation. (24) The fourteenth article relates to the dismissal of Mr. Chauvelin, a

(24) A celebrated Opposition writer has objected to the assistance sent to the Dutch, on *another* ground, namely, that it was sent without being previously requested by the Dutch Government. Now whether Baron Nagel, the Dutch Ambassador in London, formally demanded of Lord Grenville the succour stipulated by the treaty of 1788, is a question which I cannot determine by official documents, as the communications which passed between Lord Grenville and Baron Nagel have never been laid before the public: though I have been informed from very good authority, that the Dutch Ambassador really did make the demand, but requested that it might be kept a secret, lest the bare act of concerting measures of defence should be distorted by the National Convention into a combination *against* France, and thus expose the Dutch to a still greater danger than that with which they were already threatened, when the demand was made: and that the Dutch Government, whose preservation depended on the co-operation of England, really did make the demand is so highly probable in itself, that it seems to be unnecessary to attempt a proof of it. Be this, however, as it may, it is cer-

subject which has been fully discussed in the preceding chapter, where it has been proved,

tain that the States General had formally declared to the British Ambassador at the Hague on the 16th of November, 1792, *that nothing could more effectually conduce to the happiness and mutual interests of the two nations, than the continuance of that intimate union which had been established between them*: and equally certain is it, that fourteen days afterward they formally protested against the opening of the Scheldt. See Ch. ix. After these declarations the States General might certainly expect, that, as soon as the United Provinces were in real danger of an invasion, the British Government would fulfil its duty to its ally, without being further reminded of it: and no one can deny, that when the Squadron in question, which was the first succour sent to the Dutch, arrived off the coast of Zealand, that province was threatened with very imminent danger. Further, that the arrival of the British ships was agreeable to the desire (whether formally expressed or not) of the States General, is evident from the circumstance, that Dutch ships of war were ordered to join them. See Ch. xv. Note 41. And this very junction was made a subject of complaint against the Stadtholder in the National Convention,

when

that though it may find a place in a view of the *prettexts* for the war, it can have no place when war was declared against Great Britain and Holland. See the *Moniteur*, 3d February, 1793. Lastly, after the war was openly declared, and the States General had ceased to be under the influence of the motive alleged above, they declared to the whole world, in an official note presented to Lord Auckland on the 20th of March, their sincere desire that the British Government would make *their* cause its own. The notion, therefore, that we assisted the Dutch without being desired to do so, is ungrounded.

But suppose, for the sake of argument, it were true, that the States General had neither directly nor indirectly, neither on the 16th of November nor at any other time, signified a desire of assistance, yet the protection of Holland was a duty which Great Britain owed to itself, if not to its ally. When two houses are so connected, that the one cannot be destroyed without endangering the fall of the other, and the master of the latter, while his neighbour is asleep, sees an enemy approaching to destroy the house of the former, he would certainly be considered as a downright idiot if he determined to wait till his neighbour awakened

in a view of the *causes* of it. In the fifteenth article the British Government is accused of an attachment to the traitor, as he is there called, Louis XVI, and of having given orders, immediately after his execution, to augment the preparations both by sea and by land. Now of the attachment to Louis XVI, it has been shewn in the preceding chapter that the British Government remained perfectly neutral, that it did not even intercede for him, and that it took no other part than that which every honest awakened and demanded assistance. Nothing, therefore, could be more absurd than the reproach made to the British Government of having sent succour to the Dutch, even if the premises on which the reproach is founded were true. Besides, what shews the inconsistency of the Opposition party on the 15th of March, 1793, in a debate relative to the succour by land, which was not sent till *after* the declaration of war, it was objected to Ministers, that the measures for the defence of Holland were not taken *sooner*. See the New Annual Register for 1793, British and Foreign History, p. 75.

man must take in the cause of an innocent sufferer. And in regard to the augmentation of the military preparations which was ordered in the latter part of January, it was the necessary result of the refusal which had been made by the Executive Council, to accept the conditions of peace proposed by the British Government. In the sixteenth article the British Government is accused of having entered into a treaty of alliance with the Emperor, during the month of January which was just elapsed. But this charge is absolutely false; for since the 10th of August, 1790, two years and a half therefore before the declaration of war, Great Britain had made no treaty whatsoever with Austria; and even that treaty was nothing more than a Convention relative not to France but to the Austrian Netherlands. (25) In the interval, which

(25) Marten's *Receuil des Principaux Traités*,
t. iii. p. 342.

elapsed between the 10th of August, 1790, and the 1st of February, 1793, not even a forged treaty between England and Austria has ever been produced, though the history of the last ten years furnishes many examples of the kind: nor is it possible that the genuine treaty, had any such existed, should have remained to this very hour a profound secret. But what puts the matter out of all doubt is the positive declaration of Lord Grenville in the House of Lords, and of Mr. Pitt and Mr. Dundas in the House of Commons, on the 12th of February, 1793, who, in consequence of the charge brought by the National Convention, were called upon to explain themselves, and all three solemnly declared that no such treaty existed. (26) The seventeenth and last article contains a falsehood which is equally gross with the preceding:

(26) See the Parliamentary Debates of that day.

for it is there said that the British Government had drawn the Stadtholder into a coalition against France. (27) Now it is true that the British Government acted in concert with the Government of Holland: but it has been so fully demonstrated, that all its measures were purely defensive, that it would be an affront to the reader to add another syllable on the subject.

The History of the Politicks of Great Britain and France, from the time of the conference at Pillnitz to the declaration of war against Great Britain, is now brought to a conclusion. The principles and the conduct of the two Governments, during this im-

(27) This charge has been echoed even in England by a well-known Opposition writer, who has ventured to assert, that "*we* involved Holland in all the horrors of war."—If by *we* he means the British Government, the assertion is confuted by every page of the present history.

portant and decisive period, have been delineated with historical accuracy, the representation has been every where founded on authentic documents, and every assertion has been supported by unquestionable testimony. In the narration of the manifold events, strict attention has been paid to the order of time, the relation between cause and effect has been thus uniformly preserved, and hence every action has been traced up to its real source. Nothing of the least importance, whether favourable or unfavourable to either party, has been omitted: no fact, however disadvantageous to the British Cabinet it might appear, when considered by itself, has been suppressed, and on the other hand, every thing which, under the same circumstances, appears advantageous to the French rulers, has been scrupulously observed. Consequently, the measures adopted by the two parties being

being completely represented, and placed as it were in parallel, they appear in their true light. Lastly, the account which has been given both of the actions and the declarations of the French rulers, has not been derived from a second-hand source, but has been *immediately* taken from their own writings, and their own official journals, from which there lies no appeal. Nothing, therefore, now remains than to bring the heads of the preceding history, of which the vouchers have been already given into one view, in order to enable the public to decide with greater facility on the grand question: Who were the aggressors?

1. In the celebrated conference at Pillnitz in August, 1791, the British Government took not the most distant part: and if any treaty was concluded there, which is itself a matter of great doubt, the British
Govern-

Government not only never acceded to it, but was never apprised even of its contents. Further, when the British Government was requested in 1791 to join a coalition against France, it gave a positive and unequivocal refusal. (28)

2. Toward the close of the same year the valuable colony of St. Domingo was preserved to France by the timely assistance sent by Lord Effingham, then Governor of Jamaica; and the British Cabinet signified through its Ambassador at Paris to the French Government, that it fully approved of Lord Effingham's conduct. At the same time, true to the strictest principles of honour and neutrality, it refused the advantageous offer made by the French colonists, who were highly dissatisfied with the National Assembly, to surrender the French

part of St. Domingo to the Crown of Britain. And these acts of generosity were repaid by France with the utmost ingratitude. (29)

3. When Louis XVI. formally accepted the new constitution, in September, 1791, and sent circular letters to the different Courts of Europe signifying his assent, the Court of Great Britain was one of the first which returned an answer; and the answer was couched in very respectful terms, whereas some other courts either did not answer at all, or in a manner displeasing to the National Assembly. Yet, on the other hand, an event took place about this very time, which shewed how very little the National Assembly cared about the neutrality of Great Britain. (30)

(29) Ch. ii.

(30) Ch. iii.

4. When Parliament assembled in January, 1792, the British Cabinet was so far from displaying any hostile views, that it was proposed, in his Majesty's speech, to make an immediate reduction of the forces both by sea and by land. The number of seamen and marines, to be employed that year, was accordingly diminished to sixteen thousand: it was determined that the Hessian subsidy, which then expired, should not be renewed: the British land forces were likewise reduced: and taxes to the amount of two hundred thousand pounds were abolished. Yet at this very time the National Assembly took measures for a very considerable augmentation of the French marine; measures which, had they been taken in England, would have been represented in France as acts of hostility. But our Ministers did not suffer themselves to be disturbed in their system of neutrality. (31)

5. After

5. After France had declared war against Austria, on the 20th of April, 1792, the British Government proved, both by its actions and declarations, that it was determined to remain neutral in the contest between the two powers. The French Minister in London, Chauvelin, sent official information, on the 28th of April, to his Court, that the British Cabinet was resolved to preserve neutrality: and, on the 1st of May, the King of France wrote a letter of thanks to his Britannic Majesty, and acknowledged his obligations for the refusal to join the coalition. On the 15th of May, Mr. Chauvelin delivered a note, in which, after an attempt at a justification of the National Assembly in declaring war against Austria, the British Government was requested to forbid all British subjects to accept of commissions from any power which was hostile to France. This request was punctually complied with,

and a Royal proclamation to that purpose was issued on the 25th of May. At this friendly conduct the French Government again expressed its satisfaction. (32)

6. The proclamation of the 21st of May was a mere matter of national police, which the machinations then at work to overturn the British Constitution rendered absolutely necessary: it contained nothing which could give the least offence to the French Government, which was not even named in it: it contained no indications whatsoever of a hostile disposition to that country: nor did any such thought occur to the French Government, but, on the contrary, not only Mr. Chauvelin, in a note which he delivered three weeks afterward, but Le Brun himself, in the name even of the *new* government, in the month of Au-

gust, testified his conviction of the friendly disposition and conduct of the British Cabinet toward France. (33)

7. When the British Cabinet, on July 8, in answer to the proposal to act as mediator between France and the other Belligerent Powers, replied, that it could not do so, unless the mediation were requested by *all* the parties concerned, the refusal was so far from indicating a disposition to hostilities, that it proved the very reverse: and this is confirmed by Mr. Chauvelin's acknowledgment in his letter of July 17, and by the acknowledgment of Le Brun, in his note to Lord Gower. Besides, the mediation was requested in the name of the King of France, at a time when his authority was expiring: and though he was not *formally* deposed before the 10th of August, yet the events of the 20th of June

(33) Ch. vi.

had transferred the whole power of France, executive as well as legislative, to the National Assembly: and this assembly was so far from being solicitous for peace, as certain persons have very falsely, and very artfully, asserted, in order to throw the blame of the war on the British Government, that it was determined, at all events, to prosecute the war. (34)

8. When an alarm was spread in France, in July, 1792, in consequence of the sailing of five ships of the line, and a few frigates, from Portsmouth, merely to perform naval evolutions in the channel, Mr. Chauvelin sent a note to his own Government, in which he testified the pacific dispositions of the British Cabinet, and even complained of the false notions which were entertained on this subject. On the 4th of August, Mr. Chau-

velin's note was read in the National Assembly: and it was declared that Mr. Chauvelin's testimony to the pacific dispositions of the British Cabinet was satisfactory. (35)

9. The recall of the British Ambassador from Paris, after the King had been dethroned, was no breach of neutrality toward France, either in itself, or in the manner in which it was conducted. As he had been accredited to the King, his letters of credence were become useless: and, before a new diplomatic connexion could be formed, it was necessary first to know who was to govern France in future. But, at that time, all authorities were organized only provisionally: and, during the struggle of contending parties, it was most consistent with the principles of neutrality to await the issue of it. Besides, the letter of recall was couched in

(35) Ch. viii.

such pacific and friendly terms, that Le Brun openly testified his approbation of it, and declared, in the National Assembly, that the British Ambassador had left a satisfactory testimony of the dispositions of his court. The pacific disposition of the British Court was further evinced by the decisive rejection of the invitation which was made at that very time, as it had been already in the preceding year, to join the coalition. (36) But that the Provisional Executive Council might not be wanting in etiquette; it immediately dispatched Mr. Noel with an order to Mr. Chauvelin to return to Paris. Mr. Chauvelin, however, obtained a revocation of the order, in consequence of his making the following remonstrance; “that he was perfectly well with Mr. Fox, and some other members of Opposition, and that it would not be prudent in France to lose the fruits of

(36) Ch. ix.

his labours with these gentlemen, and their subsequent services, for a vain form of diplomatic etiquette." (37)

10. In the month of November, 1792, after the Dutchy of Savoy, the Austrian Netherlands, and a part of Germany, had been conquered, the French rulers threw off the mask, and declared to the whole world the revolutionizing system which they had hitherto only followed in the dark. Not only was it decreed, on the 19th of November, that all nations which chose to rebel against their governments should receive assistance from France, but, on the 28th of November, when deputies from certain British societies appeared at the bar of the National Convention, and signified their intention of overturning the British Constitution, they were received with applause from the whole As-

(37) Ch. xiii. Note 34.

sembly, and were assured by the President himself, that the period was not far distant, when Frenchmen would come to congratulate the National Convention of Great Britain. After this declaration, it ought no longer to be a question: Who were the aggressors? Further, toward the close of the year 1792, England was overrun with French emissaries, who were engaged in the plot for the overthrow of the British Constitution, and were supplied, for that purpose, with immense sums from the French Government. A considerable fleet also was fitted out in France three months before Great Britain even began to arm. (38)

11. When the British Parliament assembled in the month of December, in consequence of the danger with which the country was threatened from France, all the mea-

tures which were taken were purely defensive: and a war might have easily been avoided, had it been the will of the National Convention, and of the Executive Council. (39)

12. While measures were taking in Great Britain, in order to ward off the danger with which it was already threatened, the rulers of France continued to augment that danger: and, by a new series of injuries and insults proved their determination to engage in a war with Great Britain and Holland. By the decree of December 15, war was declared, not only on all kings, but on all nations, which refused to take up arms against them: and this decree, with that of November 19, was, in various ways, applied to Great Britain in particular. The Minister for Foreign Affairs threatened, in the Na-

tional Convention, an appeal to the British Nation, and the Marine Minister publicly proclaimed the design of a landing in Britain with fifty thousand caps of liberty. A new and very considerable addition was ordered to be made to the French ships already in commission, with the avowed view of acting against Great Britain: and, before the middle of January, the order was signed for the actual invasion of Holland. (40)

13. In the diplomatic communications between Great Britain and France, the British Ministers displayed no unwillingness to negotiate: and, though no negotiation could be considered at that time as strictly official, Mr. Chauvelin's credentials having been received from the deposed King of France, yet he was assured by Lord Grenville, that outward forms would be no hinderance to his

Britannic Majesty, whenever the question related to explanations which might be satisfactory and beneficial to both parties. Mr. Pitt, likewise, in a conference which he had with Mr. Maret, expressed his readiness to negotiate with Mr. Maret as a confidential person of the French Executive Council; but this Council not only refused to grant instructions to Mr. Maret, but forbid him even to converse with Mr. Pitt on political subjects. When the negotiation was conducted between Lord Grenville and Mr. Chauvelin, the notes which were delivered, on the part of the French Government, were so far from containing satisfactory explanations, that a firm resolution was avowed in them of continuing those very aggressions of which the British Government complained. And when, notwithstanding this avowal, the Executive Council endeavoured, by all the arts of sophistry, to impose a belief of its pacific intentions, its actions uniformly contradicted its

its

its assertions. Nor was it ashamed to utter the most solemn declarations, even with the consciousness of their falsehood. Its whole mode of conducting the negotiation, betrayed as much insolence as hypocrisy: and an appeal to the people of Great Britain was threatened in the very first note. On the other hand, the conditions of peace, proposed by the British Government, had no reference whatsoever to any particular form of government in France; they related only to the external power of that country; they were absolutely necessary for the salvation of Britain, and were so far from being degrading to France, that they required only an adherence to that principle which the republican rulers had repeatedly declared to be the basis of their system of politicks. These conditions were rejected: and at the same time it was announced, that, if the preparations then making in the British ports (which had been ordered merely in self-defence,

fence,

fence, and which could not be possibly stopt, after the Executive Council had rejected the conditions, which alone could insure safety to Great Britain) were still continued, a declaration of war would be the consequence. It was no longer in the power, therefore, of the British Government to avoid a rupture with France. (41)

14. A war with Great Britain had been resolved on in the French Cabinet, not only before the negotiation was ended, but even before it commenced: and the object of the Executive Council was not to produce a reconciliation, but to amuse the British Government, and to deceive the nation, till the plan, which had been laid for the destruction of the British empire, was fully ripe for execution. The mad ambition of the French rulers, their determination to extirpate all

kingly governments, and the confident expectation of insurrections in every part of Europe, aided by the necessity of finding employment for their turbulent armies, were their motives to war in general : and their firm belief, that the inhabitants of Great Britain were so disaffected to their Government, that French assistance would induce them to an immediate revolt, the inconsiderable number of troops at that time in Great Britain, in comparison with those which could easily be spared from France, the forward state of the French navy, the persuasion that a landing on the British coast would be attended with no difficulty, and the immense advantages expected from the acquisition of the British wealth, commerce and marine, in the prosecution of their conquests on the continent, all these motives, added to the innate desire of crushing an ancient and formidable, but at that time despised rival, induced

duced them to a war with Great Britain in particular. (42)

15. The events of the last fourteen days, before the declaration of war, cannot possibly be numbered among the causes of it, because the war was already determined. As to the negotiation, attempted by General Dumouriez, it had no other object than to amuse the British and Dutch governments a little longer: and, though both governments gave their consent to it, the National Convention refused to await the issue of it, and declared war unanimously on Great Britain and Holland. (43)

16. The pretexts alleged by the National Convention, to justify the declaration of hos-

(42) Ch. xiv.

(43) Ch. xv.

tilities, were either futile or false, or were events, which had not taken place, till after a war with Great Britain and Holland had been resolved on. Lastly, though the two great parties in France, the Girondists and the Jacobins, formed a junction on the question of a war with Great Britain: yet, as soon as they found that it did not answer their expectations, they accused each other of having been the authors of it. And this mutual accusation is a tacit acknowledgment from both parties, that the blame did not attach to the British Government. (44)

After a statement of these premises, all of which have been proved in the preceding history by unanswerable documents, every shadow of doubt must be removed in regard to the origin of that war, which was declared by the National Convention on the 1st of

February, 1793. It was a war of aggression, of injury, and of insult, on the part of France, as well in the motives which gave it birth, as in the open declaration of it : and, on the part of Britain, it was just and necessary, as being strictly a war of self-defence.

APPENDIX.

CONTAINING

A NARRATIVE OF THE ATTEMPTS MADE BY THE
BRITISH GOVERNMENT TO RESTORE PEACE.

As the preceding History contains a full and unanswerable Proof that the War, which was declared against Great Britain in February, 1793, derived its Origin from the French Government alone, a plain and impartial Statement of the Attempts, which have been made to restore Peace, will equally prove, that the Continuance of the War can no more be ascribed to the British Government, than the Commencement of it.

AFTER hostilities had continued three years, and the arms of Britain had been crowned by sea with as much success

as the arms of France had been by land, the British Government formed the resolution in February, 1796, of making, at least, an attempt to restore that peace, which the mad ambition of the French Convention had wantonly broken. (1) The period in question

(1) It cannot be said that the French, on their part, had made any attempt to restore peace: for the note, signed by Le Brun on April 2, 1793, and delivered by a notary public to Lord Grenville (New Annual Register, 1793, British and Foreign History, p. 98), was nothing more than a new attempt to amuse and to deceive the British Government. In this note Le Brun, who, in the negotiation conducted by Mr. Chauvelin, had displayed the most shameful duplicity, who had acknowledged to Dumouriez his resolution to pay not the least regard to that negotiation, who had refused to await the issue of the conference with Lord Auckland, and had, moreover, twice refused to furnish Mr. Maret with instructions, presumed to notify to Lord Greville an intention of sending the same Mr. Maret to London as a negotiator. Now, after the British Ministers had been so frequently and so shamefully deceived by Le Brun, they really must have been deficient in common sense, had they listened to his proposal of the 2d of April:

was well adapted to the purpose, if any thing short of irresistible force can induce the Directory of the *Great Nation* to make a general peace : for the armies both of General Pichegru and of General Jourdan had been lately obliged to yield to the Imperial troops, at that time victorious ; Manheim had been retaken, the supposed impregnable lines before Mayntz had been forced, the right bank of the Rhine was again free, and Marshal Clairfayt had advanced a considerable distance on the other side. The intelligence, that the Cape of Good Hope had surrendered

April : and, after the irrefragable proofs of the hostile disposition of the National Convention toward Great Britain, they must have been struck with blindness, had they supposed that the Convention sincerely wished to live in peace and amity with Great Britain. But they clearly saw, that the only object of Le Brun's note was to gain time, as the invasion of Holland had already met with a considerable check, and to suspend the operations of Great Britain, in order that its intended destruction might be completed at a more convenient opportunity.

to the British arms was already known in Europe; Corsica was still in our possession; a British fleet commanded the Mediterranean; and Buonaparte did not yet stand at the head of a victorious army in Italy. An armistice of two months had been concluded between Austria and France, and thus a road had been opened, which, if the French Government had thought proper, might have led to a general peace.

Of these apparently favourable circumstances, the British Government resolved to avail itself; but as it was first necessary to know whether France, on her part, was equally disposed to peace, and as no direct communication subsisted between London and Paris, Mr. Wickham, Minister Plenipotentiary to the Swiss Cantons, was previously commissioned to demand of Mr. Barthelemi, the French Minister in Switzerland, an answer to the following questions, which

which he did in a note dated the 8th of March. (2)

1. “ Is there the disposition in France to
 “ open a negotiation with his Majesty and
 “ his allies, for the re-establishment of a ge-
 “ neral peace upon just and suitable terms,
 “ by sending, for that purpose, Ministers to
 “ a congress, at such place as may hereafter
 “ be agreed upon ?

2. “ Would there be the disposition to
 “ communicate to the undersigned the gene-
 “ ral grounds of a pacification, such as France
 “ would be willing to propose ; in order that

(2) Mr. Wickham's note to Mr. Barthelemi is printed, in the French original, in the *Moniteur*, 21st April, 1796, where Mr. Barthelemi's answer is likewise printed. The English translation, of which a copy is here given, is that which was published by authority, together with the declaration of the British Court, on April 10, 1796.

“ his

“ his Majesty and his allies might thereupon
 “ examine in concert, whether they are such
 “ as might serve as the foundation of a ne-
 “ gotiation for peace ?

3. “ Or would there be a desire to pro-
 “ pose any other way whatever, for arriving
 “ at the same end, that of a general pacifi-
 “ cation ? (3)

(3) It has been objected to this note, that the word *France* was used instead of *French Government*, and that this language was adopted, in order to avoid a formal acknowledgment of the French republic. Now, as the republican rulers of France had not only been the aggressors, but had uniformly acted with the utmost insolence toward the British Government, we were certainly not in so distressed a situation at the beginning of the year 1796, as to render it necessary to acknowledge, formally, that hostile republic, even before we knew whether its rulers would condescend to make peace with us. When it is further said, that the use of the word *France* was an insult, we may observe, that nothing is more common, than to use the name of a country, where, in strictness, the government alone can be understood.

At the same time Mr. Wickham informed Mr. Barthelemi, that he was hitherto commissioned only to propose these previous questions, and that he was not authorized to discuss the subjects of negotiation, which indeed he could not be, till it was known whether France would condescend to enter into a negotiation at all.

After having waited *eighteen days*, Mr. Wickham at length received an answer to the questions in a note from Mr. Barthelemi, dated Basel, 26th March.

understood. Mr. Chauvelin himself, whose authority will not be rejected by those who object to the note of Mr. Wickham, used the word *France* in the very same sense in which it is here used. The following passages, taken from the French original of his note to Lord Grenville, of Dec. 27, 1792, may serve as examples. *Si la France* doit regarder l'Angleterre, etc. *Le moindre doute sur les dispositions de la France* à l'égard de l'Angleterre, etc.—*Non seulement la France* doit et veut respecter l'indépendance de l'Angleterre, etc.—*La pureté des intentions de la France*, etc.

“ The

“ The Directory ardently wishes to pro-
 “ cure for the French republic a just, ho-
 “ nourable and solid peace. The step taken
 “ by Mr. Wickham would have afforded to
 “ the Directory a real satisfaction, if the de-
 “ claration itself, which that Minister makes,
 “ of his not having any order, any power
 “ to negotiate, did not give room to doubt
 “ of the sincerity of the pacific intentions of
 “ his court. (4) In fact, if it was true, that

(4) This passage very clearly proves, that the Direc-
 tory was resolved to evade a negotiation ; for had they
 been desirous of promoting it, they would not have
 used so wretched a pretext for throwing obstacles in the
 way at the very outset. That the pretext was a most
 wretched one is obvious. For how was it possible that
 the British Government, which had proposed not merely
 to negotiate for itself, but to include its allies, should
 draw up instructions for its Ambassador, which required
 a previous communication with those allies, when the
 place of congress had not been determined, and when
 it was neither known in what manner the Directory
 thought proper to negotiate, nor whether it chose to
 negotiate at all ?

“ Eng-

“ England began to know her real interests,
“ that she wished to open again for herself
“ the sources of abundance and prosperity;
“ if she fought for peace with good faith; (5)
“ would she propose a congress of which the
“ necessary result must be to render all ne-
“ gotiation endless? (6) Or would she con-

(5) This insulting language again proved that the Directory was firmly resolved to admit no reconciliation with the British Government. For when two parties are at variance, and that party which had been first attacked, comes to the other and says, “ Let us in future be good friends;” the other party certainly would not answer, “ Sir, you are a hypocrite,” unless he were still animated with the same hostile sentiments, which he had displayed from the beginning. There was likewise great artifice in the mode of reply; it was calculated to excite discontents in England, by suggesting the notion, that the interests of the country had been wantonly sacrificed by its ministers: nor was the artifice, when aided by the co-operation of certain persons at home, wholly destitute of success.

(6) A congress will never render a negotiation endless, when *all* parties are sincerely desirous of peace; and where this is not the case, a negotiation even between

“ fine herself to the asking in a vague man-
 “ ner, that the French Government should
 “ point out any other way whatever for at-
 “ taining the same object? (7)

“ Is it that this step has had no other object,
 “ than to obtain for the British Government

tween two *single* powers will not advance very rapidly toward a happy conclusion. Besides, when *several* powers are engaged in war, and it is proposed to make a *general* peace, a congress, that is, a meeting of ambassadors from *all* the powers engaged, is the the usual, if not the only means of effecting the purpose. But it was not the policy of the French Directory to make peace with all the allied powers at the same time: and on the other hand, it was not consistent with the integrity of the present Ministers of Great Britain, to make a separate peace, and thus expose their allies to the mercy of the French.

(7) Here the Directory felt itself reduced to the necessity of taking refuge in nonsense. The questions, which had been proposed were simple, clear, and determinate, as it is possible for questions to be. But how could the British Government determine the answers, which is left to the decision of the Directory?

“ the

“ the favourable imprefſion, which always
 “ accompanies the firſt overtures for peace ?
 “ May it not have been accompanied with
 “ the hope, that they would produce no
 “ effect ? (8)

“ However that may be, the Executive
 “ Directory, whoſe policy has no other
 “ guides than openneſs and good faith, (9)

(8) Theſe highly inſulting queſtions were very artfully introduced by the French Directors, in order to transfer all blame from themſelves to the Britiſh Government. They were conſcious of their own hypocrify, and therefore endeavoured to obviate the charge, which might be made to them, by previously laying it at the door of their opponents. This is the uſual finette of the French rulers ; and it has been hitherto attended with great ſucceſs.

(9) The openneſs and good faith of the preſent Directory are perfectly on a parallel with the openneſs and good faith, which had been diſplayed by the Executive Council, the nature of which has been fully repreſented in the thirteenth chapter of the preceding hiſtory.

“ will

“ will follow in its explanations a conduct,
“ which shall be wholly conformable to
“ them. Yielding to the ardent desire, by
“ which it is animated to procure peace for the
“ French republic, and for all nations, it will
“ not fear to declare itself openly. Charged
“ by the constitution with the execution of the
“ laws, it cannot make or listen to any propo-
“ sal, that would be contrary to them: the
“ constitutional act does not permit it to consent
“ to any alienation of that which, according to
“ the existing laws, constitutes the territory of
“ the republic. With respect to the countries
“ occupied by the French armies, and which
“ have not been united to France, they, as
“ well as other interests, political and com-
“ mercial, may become the subject of a ne-
“ gotiation, &c.”

By this declaration all negotiation was at once precluded: for it was demanded, as a preliminary article, from which it was resolved

solved in no case to deviate, that the French should retain almost all their conquests, and that the English should retain *none*.⁽¹⁰⁾ The expression, "that which according to the existing laws constitutes the territory of the republic," comprehended: 1. France, according to its ancient limits. 2. The countries which had been incorporated into France, namely; *a*) Avignon and the country of Venaisfin; *b*) Mombeliard and Po-rentru; *c*) The whole Dutchy of Savoy; *d*) Nice and Monaco; *e*) All the Austrian Netherlands; *f*) The principality of Liege; *g*) Dutch Flanders, Maestricht, Venlo, in short all that the Dutch had been obliged to cede to France. 3. The Spanish, as well as French part, of St. Domingo. 4. Guada-loupe. 5. The islands of Bourbon and Mauritius. 6. All the conquests which had been made by Great Britain, and were then

(10) Yet it has been said that the Note of the French Directory contained nothing which could prevent a continuance of the negotiation!

in our possession, nameily; *a)* Corsica; *b)* Martinico, Tobago, with other islands in the West Indies; *c)* Pondicherry and Chander-nagore in the East-Indies; *d)* St. Pierre and Miquelon, at the mouth of the river St. Lawrence; *e)* The islands of St. Marcou, on the coast of France. All this was to be granted to France, before the Directory would condescend even to enter upon the negotiation. But at the beginning of the year 1796, France was not in a situation which warranted so enormous a demand: nor was Great Britain in so distressed a situation, as to render the acceptance of it necessary. The British Government therefore very properly rejected it, and of course the attempt, which it had made to restore peace, failed of success. (11)

(11) It is a very false conclusion, which has been drawn, that the British Ministers did not wish for peace. It follows only, that they did not wish for peace *on such terms*; and in that wish, surely the hearts of all true Britons must join them.

But

But within six months after the first attempt had failed, the British Government determined to make a second, to which it was induced by the decisive victory of the Austrians at Amberg in the Upper Palatinate, on the 24th of August 1796. This grand victory, which obliged the whole army of General Jourdan to retreat to the Rhine with great precipitation and disorder, was announced in the London Gazette of the sixth of September: (12) and *on this very day* Lord Grenville took the first step toward a new negotiation, in the hope that, as the Directory saw its project of subjugating the Emperor unsuccessful, it would at last consent to grant the blessings of peace to a suffering world. On the 6th of Sep-

(12) They who have not access to the London Gazette itself, need only consult any other paper of the following day. That which I have now before me is the Sun of Sept. 7, 1796, where a copy is given of the Gazette of Sept. 6.

tember, namely, Lord Grenville sent a note to Count Jarlsberg, the Danish Ambassador in London, (13) in which, as there was no direct communication between the British and French Governments, his Lordship requested him to forward an inclosed note, addressed to the French Government, dated likewise Sept. 6, and signed by Lord Grenville himself, (14) to the Danish Minister in

(13) Lord Grenville's note to Count Jarlsberg, with all the other notes belonging to the negotiation, were printed under the following title: "A correct copy of the papers relating to the negotiation between Great Britain and France, London, Dec. 29, 1796. As the notes are all numbered, I shall quote each by the number prefixed to it. Lord Grenville's Note to Count Jarlsberg is No. 1.

(14) It is printed No. 2. and is as follows: "His
 " Britannic Majesty, animated with the same desire,
 " which he has already manifested, to terminate by
 " just, honourable, and permanent conditions of peace,
 " a war which has extended itself throughout all parts
 " of the world, is willing to omit nothing on his part
 " which may contribute to this object. It is with this
 " view that he has thought it proper to avail himself of
 " the

Paris, to be by him communicated to the French Minister for Foreign Affairs. This inclosed note, in which the Directory was requested by the British Government to

“ the confidential intervention of the Ministers of a
 “ neutral power, to demand of the Executive Direc-
 “ tory passports for a person of confidence, whom his
 “ Majesty would send to Paris with a commission to
 “ discuss with the Government there all the means the
 “ most proper to produce so desirable an end. And
 “ his Majesty is persuaded, that he shall receive, with-
 “ out delay, through the same channel, a satisfactory
 “ answer to this demand, which cannot fail to place, in
 “ a still clearer light, the just and pacific dispositions
 “ which he entertains in common with his allies.

Westminster, Sept. 6, 1796.

GRENVILLE.

In the edition which I have now before me, this note is without any address: but that Lord Grenville's original was addressed to the French Directory, is evident from the answer returned by the Danish Ambassador, (No. 3.) which begins thus: “ I have the honour to
 “ inform your Excellency, that the note *addressed to the*
 “ *Executive Directory*, in date of the 6th of the present
 “ month, was transmitted by Mr. Koenemann, Chargé
 “ d'Affaires of his Danish Majesty, to Mr. Delacroix,
 “ Minister for Foreign Affairs at Paris.”

grant a passport for an Ambassador who should come to Paris to negotiate a peace, was delivered by Mr. Koenemann, the Danish Chargé d'Affaires in that city, into the hands of Mr. Delacroix, the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, who promised to lay it before the Directory, and to return an immediate answer. But as three days elapsed without any notice being taken of it, Mr. Koenemann again waited on the French Minister, when, instead of receiving the requested passport, or any kind of written answer to Lord Grenville's note, he was informed by the French Minister, in a very dry tone, (15) that the Executive Directory had not permitted him to return an answer in writing, but that he was directed to express himself verbally to this effect: "That
" the Executive Directory of the French
" republic would not for the future receive

(15) See Mr. Koenemann's letter to Count Jarlsberg, No. 4. It is dated, Paris, Sept. 19, 1796.

“ or answer any confidential overtures trans-
“ mitted through any intermediate channel
“ from the enemies of the republic; but
“ that, if they would send persons furnished
“ with full powers and official papers, these
“ might, upon the frontiers, demand the
“ passports necessary for proceeding to Pa-
“ ris.”

From this answer, to say nothing of its affronting tone, which it is usual to avoid when a reconciliation is really desired, it was obvious that the French Directory endeavoured to evade the proposed negotiation. The refusal of a passport, under the pretence that the request had been made through an intermediate channel, was mere chicanery, since the note, which contained that request, was signed not by the Danish Ambassador, but by the British Secretary of State himself. The British Government, therefore, applied immediately to the Directory:

and it was surely a matter of perfect indifference to them, whether Lord Grenville's note was delivered to the French Minister for Foreign Affairs by a King's messenger, or by the Danish Minister in Paris; or, if there was a difference, the latter mode appeared the most respectful. Besides, the reason why Lord Grenville's note to the French Directory was transmitted, not by an English messenger, who, there was reason to apprehend, might be stopped at Calais, but by the means of a neutral Ambassador, was so apparent, that nothing but the vilest sophistry could find any objection to the mode adopted by the British Government. Mr. Koenemann himself likewise was so sensible of the unfriendly conduct of the Directory, and so convinced that they wished to evade a negotiation, that he closed his letter to Count Jarlsberg with the following words: "Such, Sir, is the result of a measure, which I have taken at your request.

" I wish

“ I wish, for the sake of humanity, that we
“ may meet with better success at some fu-
“ ture period: *but I fear that this period is*
“ *still at a great distance.*”

In the mean time, the intelligence arrived in England, that the Archduke Charles had gained a new victory over the army of General Jourdan in the neighbourhood of Wurzburg, that the French had evacuated Francfort and Königstein, and that the Austrians were already advanced to Friedberg: and this intelligence was printed in the London Gazette of the 23d of September. On the day following, therefore, the British Government made another attempt at a negotiation, in the hope that the repeated ill-success of the French arms might at length induce the Directory to listen, at least, to an accommodation. To avoid, however, on the one hand, the inconvenience and humiliation to which a British Ambassador, waiting

waiting on the borders of France till the Directory should think fit to furnish him with a passport, would have been necessarily expected, and yet to cut off, on the other hand, every pretext for chicane on the ground of an intermediate channel, it was determined, that the note which Mr. Grenville now addressed to the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, again containing a request for a passport, (16) should be sent with a flag of truce to Calais, to be forwarded thence by the municipality of that place to Paris. (17) Now, whether the total retreat of Jourdan's army across the Rhine, which had taken place before the middle of September, rendered the Directory at this time more flexible,

(16) See No. 5. In the edition which I possess, Lord Grenville's Note is dated September 27, but in the answer of the Directory (No. 7), it is quoted with the date September 24; and from various circumstances this appears to be the true date.

(17) See the Sun 26th and 27th September, 1796.

or whether they were apprehensive of producing discontents, if they repeatedly refused even to hear the propositions of the British Government, they gave an order on the 30th of September to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, to send the required passport, which he did within two days. (18)

Lord Malmesbury was accordingly appointed by the British Government to go to Paris, and conduct the negotiation, where he arrived on the 22d of October. (19) On the 24th of that month Lord Malmesbury delivered to Mr. Delacroix, the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, a memorial, (20) which was intended to serve as the general basis of negotiation. In this memorial the

(18) No. 6 and 7.

(19) See No. 8.

(20) Note 14. The intermediate numbers contain either copies of the powers, with which the negotiators were respectively invested, or notes of mere ceremony.

principle of compensation, or mutual restitution, was proposed: that is, it was proposed that Great Britain should restore to France certain conquests, which were afterwards to be determined, and that France, in return, should make to the allies of Great Britain certain restitutions, which were likewise to be determined in the progress of the negotiation. In this principle there was certainly nothing unreasonable, especially since Great Britain, as was expressly said in the memorial, had no restitution to demand *for herself*, being then in possession of all her own colonies, as well as of most of the colonies of France. But the Directory, without admitting the principle, and at the same time without directly rejecting it, returned an answer, (21) which contained the grossest affronts: for it was there suggested, that the real object

(21) This answer (No. 15), was signed by Reveillere Lépaux, at that time President, and was dated 5 Brumaire, that is, 26th October.

of the British Government was *not* to conclude a peace, that Lord Malmesbury had *secret* instructions, which were designed to counteract his ostensible instructions, that the proposal to include the allies of Great Britain had been made, in order to protract and render fruitless the whole negotiation, that the British Government had commenced it with no other view than to throw the blame of hostilities on the French Government, and thus induce the people of Great Britain more readily to furnish supplies for the continuance of the war. To which Lord Malmesbury replied: (22) “With re-

“gard to the offensive and injurious insinua-

“tions which are contained in that paper,

“and which are only calculated to throw

“new obstacles in the way of the accom-

“modation which the French Government

“professes to desire, the King has deemed it

(22) No. 16.

“far

“ far beneath his dignity to permit an answer
“ to be made to them, on his part, in any
“ manner whatsoever. The progress and
“ the result of the negotiation will suffi-
“ ciently prove the principles by which it
“ will have been directed on each side: and
“ it is neither by revolting reproaches, desti-
“ tute of foundation, nor by reciprocal in-
“ vective, that a sincere wish to accomplish
“ the great work of pacification can be
“ evinced.” At the same time Lord Malmes-
bury declared, that his Britannic Majesty
would not recede from the resolution of in-
cluding his allies in the negotiation, and con-
cluded with a pressing solicitation, that the
Directory would give a determinate answer,
whether it would accept, or not, the pro-
posed principle of compensation.

After many attempts to evade a determi-
nate answer, the Directory, at length, on the
27th of November, informed Lord Malmes-
bury,

bury, that they had resolved to admit the principle; and desired him to specify the particular *objects* of reciprocal compensation.

(23) In consequence of this information, the British Ambassador sent, on the very day on which he received it, the Secretary of Legation to London, (24) who returned to Paris, on the 15th of December, with the final instructions of the British Cabinet. (25) These instructions were to the following pur-

(23) No. 25.

(24) Compare No. 26 with the beginning of No. 23.

(25) It must not be thought extraordinary, that eighteen days elapsed between the departure of the British Secretary of Legation from Paris and his return, and that he probably waited, therefore, ten or eleven days in London: for as the British Government negotiated not merely for itself, but for its allies, it was necessary to await the consent of those allies to the propositions which it intended to make. Between Mr. Wickham's Note of March 8, and the answer which was given to it, an equal number of days elapsed, though the Directory had to wait for no one.

port.

port. (26) *Great Britain will restore all the conquests which it has made from France, under the three following conditions: 1. That France restore to the Emperor the Austrian Netherlands: 2. That France conclude a peace with the Germanic empire: 3. That Italy be evacuated by the French troops.* Such were the grand out-lines of the proposals made by the British Government: but Lord Malmesbury accompanied them with a note, dated the 17th of December, (27) in which he declared his readiness, in case objections should be made to them, “*to enter into the discussion of any counter-project which might be transmitted to him on the part of the Executive Directory.*” The same declaration he repeated (28) on December 19: but the Executive Directory not only rejected the conditions proposed by the British Government, but refused likewise to communicate any proposals whatsoever on

(26) No. 28. (27) No. 27. (28) No. 32.

their

their part: and, on the very day on which Lord Malmesbury had a second time requested a counter-project, sent him an order to depart from Paris within eight and forty hours. (29)

It is evident, therefore, that the French Directory broke off the negotiation, not because it disapproved the terms of peace which were offered by the British Cabinet, but because it was resolved to make peace with Great Britain *under no conditions whatsoever*: for, otherwise, it would certainly not have refused, at the repeated request of the British Ambassador, to deliver a counter-project. He who is disposed to peace will, undoubtedly, in case he thinks the terms proposed by his adversary unacceptable, reply, when requested to propose *his own* terms, “though not on *those* conditions, I will “make peace with you on *these*.” He would meet at least with civility an opponent who,

(29) No. 33.

though injured and attacked, was the first to offer a reconciliation: and would, surely, not repay the pacific conduct of the latter with insults and ungrounded accusations. (30) But for the very reason, that the French Government was conscious of a determina-

(30) Beside the very gross affront which was offered to the British Government in the note of the Directory of October 26, and which was the more remarkable, as being offered at the very commencement of the negotiation, very scandalous aspersions, during Lord Malmesbury's stay in Paris, were cast in various numbers of the *Redacteur*, the official paper of the Directory, as well on the person of the British Ambassador as on the embassy itself. The Directory thought, indeed, to evade all reproach, as in each number of the *Redacteur* the following notice was given: "les articles officiels de ce journal sont les seuls qui passent sous les yeux du Directoire Exécutif ou des autorités constituées." But if the abusive remarks were not inserted immediately under the head of *Articles Officiels*, if they were not inserted by the express order of the Directory, they were inserted, at least, with its consent, which in the present case is precisely the same thing. And even if we suppose that the first of those insolent remarks, which appeared in the *Redacteur*, was printed without the previous knowledge of any one of the Directors, yet

tion to make peace with Great Britain on no conditions whatsoever, it endeavoured, at the very opening of the negotiation, by previously exciting the false suspicion, that the British Government was insincere, (31) to yet it could not have remained unknown to them. Consequently, had they been desirous of a reconciliation with the British Government, they would, without all doubt, as soon as they had read the first of the injurious articles, have forbidden the continuation of them.

(31) To this calumny, because it was vented by the Directory, they, who were attached to the French cause, gave at that time implicit credit. Mais qui ne connaît d'ailleurs la honteuse faiblesse de l'esprit humain? Qui ne sait, qu'il n'est point de mensonge si grossier, qui affirmé avec audace, répété avec obstination, ne trouve à la fin quelque créance? Les imaginations débiles ne résistent point à cette impression redoublée; les imaginations ardentes la saisissent d'autant plus fortement, qu'elles en sont plus vivement émues; leur surprise même devient le principe de leur illusion. *Si l'imposteur a vaincu surtout, quel argument!* Le sort des combats n'est-il pas encore, pour la multitude ignorante, ce qui fut aux siècles de la barbarie l'épreuve décisive de la justice des causes, et la voix de Dieu même? Camille Jourdan à ses Commettans sur la révolution du 18 Fructidor, p. 4.

obviate the well-grounded suspicion which it justly apprehended, would result from its *own* conduct: and as an open refusal to negotiate at all had been deemed imprudent, lest the people, who were desirous of peace, should be irritated by the too glaring conduct of their governors, they thought it expedient to take such measures as should not only render the whole negotiation fruitless, but at the same time remove from themselves, in the opinion of the illiterate multitude, the blame of that ill success on which they had resolved even before the negotiation began.

If further proof of the position, that the Directory was determined under no condition to make peace with Great Britain, were necessary, we might appeal to the well known expedition to Ireland under General Hoche. The preparations for this expedition, which Lord Edward Fitzgerald and Arthur O'Connor had already settled with
General

General Hoche, and of which the plan had been finally arranged with Mac Nevin, who came over to Paris, as deputy of the Irish Union, for that very purpose, (32) were carried on with the utmost activity during the whole time of Lord Malmesbury's embassy in Paris. Nor was any doubt entertained by the Directory, that the expedition would be attended with success: (33) and, as after the conquest of Ireland the further preservation of England appeared highly improbable,

(32) See the Report of the Secret Committee of the Irish House of Commons, on August 20, 1798.

(33) In the *Redacteur*, Dec. 22, 1796, where the sailing of the fleet from Brest is announced, is given the following account; "La totalité de l'escadre est composée de 21 vaisseaux de ligne, outre les frégattes, corvettes et transports. Elle porte à bord des troupes de débarquement, et est abondamment pourvue en munitions et instrumens de guerre. Le succès qu'a eu l'expédition précédente du citoyen Richery, sur la destination de laquelle un inviolable secret avait trompé toutes les conjectures des Anglais, peut faire augurer, que celle-ci obtiendra, sur les mêmes auspices, les mêmes résultats."

it was thought inconsistent, as well with the interest of France, as with the ambition of its governors to grant peace and independence to a country, which, it was fondly expected, would be reduced in a short time to the degraded situation of a French dependency. If it be objected that, though the *preparations* for the Irish expedition were made during Lord Malmesbury's residence in Paris, the *execution* of it was left subordinate to the issue of the negotiation, such an objection will be at once removed by the time when the execution of it took place: for it was on the *seventeenth* of December that Lord Malmesbury first delivered to the French Minister the particular conditions of peace, which were offered by his court; and it was on the *fifteenth* of December, that the fleet sailed from Brest. (34) So far therefore

(34) This circumstance, though it does not appear to attract the public notice, which it deserved, is proved by the following passage in the *Redacteur*, 22d December, 1796: “ *L'escadre armée à Brest a mis à la voile*

were the French Directors from making the Irish expedition subordinate to the issue of the negotiation, that the final order for the execution of it was given several days, before they even knew the terms, which the British Government would give as the price of peace. (35)

In the sanguine expectation however, that Ireland would fall a prey to France, which had been the grand inducement to the breaking off of the negotiation, the Directory was disappointed: General Hoche was obliged to return, without having effected a *voile le 25 Frimaire*. That Frimaire 25 corresponds to December 15, is known to every one acquainted with the new French calendar.

(35) In defiance of the plain and undeniable facts, which have been here recorded, Lord Malmesbury's embassy to Paris has been as shamefully perverted, as the negotiations before the declaration of war. But as the preceding narrative is sufficient to confute the various misrepresentations on this subject, it is unnecessary to examine them in detail.

landing; two ships of the line (36) with seven frigates were lost or sunk; two other frigates, which had brought over twelve hundred convicts to the coast of Wales, were taken, and the Spanish fleet, destined to cooperate with that of France, was defeated at Cape St. Vincent. On the other hand, the French arms made a rapid progress at this very time on the continent; and at the end of April, 1797, the Emperor was obliged by the preliminaries signed at Leoben, to renounce his possessions in Lombardy and in the Low Countries.

As in consequence of this formal cession, the Austrian Netherlands, which the British Cabinet, for obvious reasons, had been desirous of preserving for the Emperor, ceased to be a subject of contention, it was hoped that a new negotiation might be opened with better success, especially since the ex-

(36) The *Seduisant* and the *Droits de l'Homme*.

pedition to Ireland, which had so much influence on the former negotiation, had totally failed. Accordingly on June 1, 1797, Lord Grenville sent a note to the French Minister for Foreign Affairs in Paris, with the proposal of a new negotiation. (37) The proposal was likewise accepted; (38) and after an exchange of several notes relative to passports to the place of negotiation, and other preparatory steps, (39) the ambassadors of the respective powers met at Lisle in the beginning of July. On the 8th of this month the British Ambassador, Lord Malmesbury, presented a note, in which the conditions of peace, proposed by the British Cabinet, were delivered in the most precise and unequivocal terms. These conditions were nothing less than the following.

(37) As the papers relative to this negotiation, which were published as soon as it was ended, are all numbered, I shall quote each note, as before, by the number prefixed to it. Lord Grenville's note of the 1st of June is No. 1.

(38) No. 2. (39) No. 3—II.

Great Britain will restore all the conquests, without exception, which have been made from France; and of the conquests which France has made, Great Britain requires a restitution of none. (40) Further, with the allies of France, (Spain and Holland,) the British Cabinet offered to make a peace at the same time, on the condition of retaining the island of Trinidad, the Cape of Good Hope, Trincomale in the isle of Ceylon, and of exchanging Negapatnam for the town and fort of Cochin. (41) To these proposals it was answered the 15th of July, that the Directory required, as an *indispensable preliminary*, the consent of his Britannic Majesty to cede *all* the conquests which Great Britain had made, as well from Spain and Holland as from France itself. (42) To this demand, which was proposed, not as the price of peace, but as a mere preliminary article of negotiation, the British Government, as

(40) No. 13, 14. (41) *Ib.* (42) No. 20.

might naturally be expected, made various objections; (43) and the Directory itself *appeared* at least to admit the exorbitance of the demand, as it remained for some time unresolvd, and pretended to consult with the Spanish and Dutch Governments, whether some part of it could not be remitted. In the mean time several weeks elapsed, during which the ambassadors had several conferences, and exchanged several notes, (44) though without being able to effect any thing decisive; till at last, on the 28th of August, Lord Malmesbury was informed, that the answer which had been received from Holland was *unsatisfactory*, but that a second message had been sent to the Hague, and that the reply of the Batavian Directory might be expected to arrive in the course of eight or ten days. (45) This ridiculous farce, for a ridiculous farce it certainly was, when the French Directory pretended to be under

(43) No. 21—23. (44) No. 26—33. (45) No. 34.

the necessity of previously obtaining the consent of a government, which was absolutely at its disposal, is to be ascribed to the circumstance, that the Directory itself, as well as the two Councils of France, was divided into two parties, one of which was desirous of a peace with England, while the other persisted in the maxim, that *modern Carthage must be destroyed*. (46) Hence arose the irresolution of the French Government, and the delay, with which the negotiation had been hitherto conducted. But as soon as the struggle between the two parties was ended, and the pacific Barthelemi, with his associates, had fallen a sacrifice to the fury of Barras and his hostile accomplices, all irresolution ceased: and the eighteenth of Fructidor, or the 4th of September, decided the fate of the negotiation with England. The French Ambassadors, La Tourneur and

(46) On this subject see the interesting work of Camille Jourdan, entitled; *A ses Commettans sur la révolution du 18 Fructidor*, especially p. 87—90.

the well-known Maret, who had hitherto negotiated with Lord Malmesbury, were instantly recalled, (47) and two other negotiators, Treilhard and Bonnier, whose principles were more in unison with those of the victorious party, were appointed in their stead. It was now formally insisted on, that the British Cabinet should consent to *cede* all its conquests, as a preliminary step to any negotiation whatsoever : (48) and when Lord Malmesbury replied, that nothing would then be left for a subject of negotiation, he received for answer, “ *that this would not be*
“ *the case, that many articles would still re-*
“ *main to be proposed, and many points for*
“ *important discussion.* (49) A compliance,

(47) Three persons had been appointed to negotiate on the part of France : but the third, Pleville le Pelley, had already left Lisle. Indeed we find his name affixed to the none the French notes, which bear a later date than July 15.

(48) No. 42, 43.

(49) No. 42. So early as the 10th of July, the former

therefore, with the demand of the Directory, would have laid Great Britain at the mercy of an unrelenting foe : it was answered, as it merited, with a formal refusal : (50) and on the very day, on which the answer was returned, the British Ambaffador received from the French Plenipotentiaries, agreeably, as they exprefsly declared, to their instructor French Ambaffadors had demanded the restitution of as many fhips of war, as had been taken or destroyed at Toulon (fee No. 16), that is fourteen fhips of the line and twenty-four frigates. But, among *the points for important difcuffion*, this was undoubtedly one of the leaft confequence : for, as the French Government flood in very clofe connexion with the heads of the Irish Union, who had at that time in Paris a regularly accredited ambaffador, and, as during the courfe of the negotiation it had been pofitively and repeatedly declared, that the French Directory could in no cafe detach itfelf from the engagements made with its allies, we may be affured that one of the points for important difcuffion was the feparation of Ireland from Great Britain, and the eftablifhment of a republic there, under the auspices of the Great Nation.

tions, an order to depart from Lisle within four and twenty hours. (51)

Thus ended the last negotiation between Great Britain and France, which, if any doubt had remained, that nothing but the total overthrow of the British empire could satisfy the ambition of the French rulers, must entirely remove it. But the confident expectations of these political enthusiasts have been disappointed in a manner, which

(51) No. 45. It is impossible to imagine any thing more absurd, than the conduct of the French Plenipotentiaries on this occasion. They accompanied the order for Lord Malmesbury's departure, which completely put an end to the negotiation, with the assurance, that it was the desire of the French Government to restore peace: they pretended that the order was given with no other view, than that the British Ambassador should go and persuade his Court to comply with the demand of the Directory: and, as if they seriously expected that he would return, they remained for some time in Lisle, that they might be able to pretend the negotiation had not failed through *their* fault. If the ministers of any other nation than France had acted in this manner, they would have become objects of ridicule and detestation.

they

they little imagined : (52) for, from the rupture of the negotiation at Lisle to the close of the year 1798, a period during which the single island of Britain, deserted by its former friends, had not only to combat alone with the enormous power of France and its allies, but to struggle with a most formidable insurrection in Ireland, the page of history presents one continued series of French disasters and of British triumphs. The indignation of Britons has been roused : and under the guidance of a Ministry, whose talents and whose efforts are proportioned to the great emergency, they have shewn themselves equal to the conflict, to which they have been driven, and have displayed an energy, which shall make the haughty rulers of republican France repent of their insolence and their presumption.

August 1, 1796.

(52) It is well known, that they presumed to mortgage Great Britain, as a security for the loan, which was raised to defray the expences of the intended conquest of it.

POSTSCRIPT

POSTSCRIPT
TO
THE APPENDIX.

23d March, 1800.

AT length the haughty rulers of France, convinced of the impossibility of executing their favourite project, the subjugation of the British isles, of which the fond expectation had induced them to continue, as it had induced them to commence the present war, and exposed on all sides to difficulties, which not only prevented them from continuing to overturn the kingdoms of Europe,* but threatened France itself with a further diminution of its newly acquired aggrandisement, have condescended to propose a negotiation of peace to the British Government. Never, perhaps, were the

* On the avowed designs of the French rulers, see the History of the Politicks, &c. Ch. vii. x. xiv.

Ministers of any nation placed in so critical a situation, as the Ministers of Great Britain were placed by this proposal. If they answered in the negative, they exposed themselves, in the first place, to the charge of inconsistency, and of having refused what they themselves had solicited, though solicited in vain : they inverted the situations, in which the Governments of Great Britain and France had been hitherto placed, and loaded on themselves the blame of continuing the war, which till that time had been borne by their adversaries : they ran the risk of damping that noble enthusiasm, which Britons had displayed, while they combated for their political existence, and of rousing that spirit among the French, which the lately-acquired conviction of having hitherto wasted their blood and treasure, only to gratify the ambition of their rulers, had materially diminished. With such powerful inducements to accept the proposal, and to

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hear at least the conditions, which the enemy might offer, before a decisive answer was given in the negative, the British Government must have been influenced by still weightier motives on the other side, if its conduct can be justified in the eye of the public. Let us examine, therefore, what those weightier motives were.

In the first place, as a negotiation with the Consul of France, in conjunction with the Emperor of Russia, was at that time out of the question, we will suppose that Ministers had consented to negotiate with Buonaparte, in conjunction with Austria, and inquire what would have been the result.

The grand objects of Buonaparte were, to retain the Netherlands, thus to insure his dominion over Holland, to keep possession of Malta, to secure his favourite colony in

Egypt, at *that* time occupied by a French army, to monopolize the commerce of the Levant, and at the same time to regain the colonies, which had been conquered by Great Britain. But all these objects, though of the highest consequence to us, were matters of indifference to the House of Austria: and, indeed, the Continent in general, envious of the maritime power, and the commanding commerce of Great Britain, would have no objection to measures which tended to the diminution of them. The great, if not the sole object of the cabinet of Vienna was, to secure its dominion over Italy, by retaining the territories of the late Cisalpine Republic, as well as those, which formerly constituted the States of Venice. And Buonaparte, however desirous he might be to restore the Cisalpine Republic, which was a work of his own creation, would probably have deferred this project to a more convenient opportunity, in order to obtain

obtain the above-mentioned advantages, which are infinitely more desirable for France. At a Congress, therefore, consisting of the Plenipotentiaries of France on the one hand, and of those of Great Britain and Austria on the other (for, after the defection of Russia no other ally would have been left, which could have been entitled to a voice), Buonaparte would have proposed, with all the speciousness of justice, to make a general peace on the principle of compensation; and, when the objects of compensation came to be specified, they would have consisted in the proposal, to cede the Cisalpine Republic to our ally the Emperor, and to make, perhaps, some other arrangements in Italy, on condition of our ceding all our colonial conquests, while France was to retain the Netherlands, Malta, and Egypt. The consequence of such a proposal would have been an immediate disagreement between Great Britain and Austria: the former would have justly objected

to it as incompatible with its own interest, whereas the latter, for a contrary reason, would have thought it highly acceptable. In this situation, would Austria have continued to make a common cause with Great Britain? Would the Cabinet of Vienna, after its own object was attained, have consented to carry on the war, in order to obtain advantageous conditions also for its ally? This question may certainly be answered in the negative: for, at the time when the proposals of peace were made to the British Ministry, the Cabinet of Vienna had not pledged itself, either directly or indirectly, to make a common cause with Great Britain, and to act only in concert with its ally. And, as Buonaparte, who, unlike the late Directory, knows how to proportion his means to his ends, would not have regarded the disengagement of the Austrian Cabinet, as purchased at too dear a rate by a temporary cession of the Cisalpine Republic, the consequence would have been

a separate

a separate peace between France and Austria, and we should have been left in the same condition as in 1797.

Why, then, it will be said, did not our Ministry resolve to negotiate for Great Britain alone? Why did they not accept, without loss of time, the proposal of the French Government, and, by being the first to make a separate peace, endeavour to obtain advantages which afterwards they might seek in vain? From this step they were deterred both by honour and by policy. When they had engaged the Emperor of Russia in their cause, when that cause had derived from him essential service, and the plan even of the next campaign was nearly settled, it would have been a flagrant breach of honour to have deserted our ally, and to have negotiated for ourselves alone. On the other hand, if honour be set aside, and the possibility of being de-

serted by an ally be thought an excuse for infidelity on our part, at a time when there was no reason to suppose that our ally would forsake us, a separate negociation did not promise the advantages which superficial observers might expect. The first object of Bonaparte was to detach the Emperor of Russia from the coalition, by procuring the consent of the British Government to hear at least his terms of pacification : and, when that object was attained, the next step was to make proposals of a separate peace to the Cabinet of Vienna. Now, whatever doubts the British Ministers might have entertained on the question, whether this Cabinet would have made a separate peace with France, even though Great Britain had remained faithful to its alliance, they could have had none in regard to the question, whether a consent on their part to enter into a separate negociation would induce the Cabinet of Vienna immediately to do the same. In
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this case the circumstance of our having given *the first consent to negotiate* would by no means have secured us from the danger of being *the last to make peace*. For it must not be supposed that the Consul of France, the subtlety of whose politicks surpasses even his talents for war, would have delivered his conditions to the British Government immediately and unequivocally; and that, though he affects to despise the ordinary diplomatic forms, he would not convert them to his own advantage. It would have been easy, therefore, to protract the negotiation with Great Britain till the negotiation with Austria had been already set on foot: and thus by keeping the two powers at bay at the same time, he could have granted to either of them the priority of pacification, as best suited his own interest. Now on which side this interest lies, it requires no deep knowledge of politicks to discover. As France has been already sufficiently aggrandized

dized by the acquisition of the Netherlands, and of the left bank of the Rhine, Buonaparte, in a separate negotiation with Austria, would have had no further cession of territory to demand, at least not for France itself; and in order to secure these acquisitions, it would have been no great sacrifice to give up the Cisalpine Republic, which was already occupied by the Austrians, and which, if reconquered, could never be incorporated into France. On the other hand, in a negotiation with Great Britain, the interest of France requires the restitution of the colonies, which have been conquered in the East and West Indies, as well from the Dutch and the Spaniards as from the French themselves; while the cession of the Netherlands, which the interest of Great Britain loudly demands, is doubly inimical to the interest of France, which would lose not only a very valuable territory, but its present sovereignty over Holland.

land. It would evidently, therefore, have been the policy of Buonaparte to have first signed the peace with Austria; and thus we should have been again reduced to the situation in which we stood in 1797.

Since, therefore, the acceptance of Buonaparte's proposal at the beginning of January, 1800, whether we determined to negotiate alone, or in conjunction with Austria (for a negotiation with the Consul of France in conjunction with Russia was out of the question) would not have produced the beneficial effects, which many persons at first sight might have imagined; and since the bare consent to negotiate, however prejudicial the result, would have deprived us of all hopes of being further assisted by our allies, the British Ministers would surely not have consulted the good of their country, or of Europe in general, if, after the many strenuous and the successful efforts of
the

the last year to confine the power of France within its proper limits, they had resolved to leave the work incomplete, to exchange a substance for a shadow, and to abandon probable advantages when no compensation could be expected for such a sacrifice. It is true, that the events of war are uncertain; yet the mere hopes of an honourable peace are preferable to the certainty of a disgraceful one. It is true, likewise, that we may be deserted by our allies, though we remain faithful to them; but even if this should unfortunately happen, we shall be reduced only to the situation to which *we* should have reduced *ourselves*, had we acceded to the proposal of Buonaparte; and, what would have failed us in the latter instance, we shall enjoy at least the consolation, that we were neither the instruments of our own distress, nor were guilty of infidelity to our friends.

Further

Further, the character of the persons with whom we should have had to treat deserved particular attention. The conduct of Buonaparte, who is now absolute sovereign of France, has been hitherto marked with the most glaring duplicity. He is a real Proteus, and is capable of assuming whatever shape accords with his present interest. In Italy he was a faithful son of the Pope; in Egypt a true disciple of Mohammed. By the addresses from his army he promoted the revolution of September, 1797, which put an end to the negotiation at Lisle; and that very revolution he now affects to condemn. Before his departure for Egypt he encouraged the Directory to carry on the war with the utmost vigour; and after his return he was not ashamed to censure the continuation of those very hostilities of which he himself was the principal agent. He has no equal in France, and yet he talks of equality: his power is unlimited,

unlimited, yet his subjects have perfect liberty. Nor does he confine himself merely to the secret arts of deception; for his character is blotted with the most abominable treachery. Was it not treachery to amuse the Venetians with the doctrines of freedom, and then to sell them to a foreign master? Was it not treachery to pretend friendship for the Turks, and then insidiously to rob them of one of their most valuable provinces? Was it not treachery, unheard-of treachery, when an armistice of four-and-twenty hours had been concluded before the walls of Acre, to storm the town during that very armistice, while the unsuspecting Turks were employed in burying their dead? Was it not treachery again when he instructed General Kleber to make a convention with the Porte, and then to contrive means of evading the execution of it? An offer of peace from *such* a man cannot possibly be considered as sincere:

his

his maxim is to treat only to deceive; and his negotiations are more dangerous than his arms.

If to these considerations we add the motives above alledged, we shall cease to wonder that the proposal of Buonaparte was rejected. Those motives, indeed, which related to the probable conduct of our allies, could not be openly assigned by *Ministers*; but they will suggest themselves, if not to the nation at large, at least to every man who is experienced in politicks, and will vindicate the conduct of the British Government. Should the fact therefore, to which Ministers have appealed, that the present situation of affairs in France affords no security, either for Europe in general, or for Great Britain in particular, be thought an insufficient reason of *itself* for rejecting the negotiation, or should even the fact appear doubtful, notwithstanding the many instances

instances of treachery already displayed by the French Consul, yet since a bare consent to negotiate would have destroyed every advantage, which there was reason to expect, since we should have sacrificed our honour on the one hand, and have become the dupes of French politicks on the other, we can have no reason to censure Administration for the step which has been taken.

Lastly, the effect, which a consent to negotiate with the present Consul of France, would have produced on the Emperor of Russia, was not unworthy of attention. As he had uniformly avowed, that it was his intention to restore the Bourbon family to the throne of France, it is evident that a negotiation with the new Government of that country, would have instantly detached him from our alliance. Was it the business of Ministers then, it will be objected, to continue the war till the Bourbon family

was restored to the throne, and because the Emperor of Russia had avowed this project, must they resolve to do the same? Certainly not. The war was neither begun nor continued for any such reason: and in the late note of Lord Grenville to the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, it was again declared, that however desirable might be the restoration of royalty in France, the British Cabinet did not presume to dictate forms of Government to a foreign nation. But, whatever was the object of our allies (for it would be absurd to suppose, that they have been fighting merely for our sakes), yet, when the bare *pursuit* of that object had a necessary tendency to secure the British Empire from future dangers, and to set bounds to a torrent, which has deluged Europe with blood, it was a duty, which Ministers owed their country, to co-operate, as far as lay in their power, till *this* desirable object was attained. And by so doing they have avoid-

ed at the same time the reproach, in case our allies should desert us, of having been themselves the cause.

But, however desirable it may be, that France should be deprived either of the power, or of the will, of disturbing any longer the tranquillity of Europe, or that we should have proofs of sincerity and moderation on the part of our enemy, before we listen to his offers; yet, as neither the justice of a cause, nor the wisdom of councils can always insure success, it would be absurd to declare, that a peace can *in no case* be concluded, before those objects are attained. Still, however, we may hope, from the energy of our Government, and the cooperation of those allies, who were preserved to us by our refusal to treat, that those objects will ultimately be attained; and, that though both honour and interest forbid a negotiation at the time when it was proposed,

proposed, the period will arrive, at which a negotiation will be inconsistent with neither. *When* this period actually is arrived, Ministers themselves must be best able to determine : and *then* we may trust, that the same principle, which induced them, not only to avoid the war till it was forced on them by France, but repeatedly to solicit the termination of it, will again operate, and perhaps with better success, than on former occasions. But, whether peace be near or distant, is a matter of still less importance, than whether it come accompanied or unaccompanied with that grand object, for which alone we have been struggling above seven years—*the security of the British Empire.*

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