LETTER XXIX.

Prosecution of the campaign in Italy.—Insurrection at Pavia.—Defeat of the Austrians at Borgoletto.—Mantua blockaded.—Invasion of the Venetian States.—The King of Naples secedes from Austria.—Armistice purchased by the Pope.—Neutrality of Tuscany violated, and Leghorn occupied by the French.—Wurmser succeeds Beaulieu.—Corsica re-united to France.—Battles of Arcola, and success of the French, A. D. 1795.

My last letter will have prepared you, my dear son, as I think I may fairly presume, for anticipating a succession of military achievements, between the Austrian and republican armies at this eventful crisis. The rubicon was passed, and Buonaparte well knew that, situated as he and his army now were, he had placed everything at stake. It was manifest that he could only hope for success by the most strenuous perseverance in the career which he was now pursuing—he had gone too far to recede with any other prospect than that of utter ruin. Occupying Milan, and conqueror in so many battles, he might be justly considered as in absolute possession of Lombardy, while the broken forces of Beaulieu had been compelled to retreat under that sole remaining bulwark of the Austrian power, the strong fortress of Mantua, where they might await such support as should be detached to them through the Tyrol, but could undertake no offensive operations. To secure his position, the Austrian general had occupied the line formed by the Mincio, his left flank resting upon Mantua, his right upon Peschiera, a Venetian city and fortress, but of which he had taken possession, against the reclamation of the Venetian government, who were desirous of observing a neutrality between such powerful belligerents, not perhaps altogether aware how far the victor, in so dreadful a strife, might be disposed to neglect the general law of nations.

The Austrian defence on the right was prolonged by the Lago di Garda, a large lake out of which the Mincio flows, and which, running thirty-five miles northward into the mountains of the Tyrol, maintained uninterrupted Beaulieu’s communication with Germany.

Buonaparte in the mean time permitted his forces only the repose of four or five days, ere he again summoned them to active exertion. He called on them to visit the capital, there to re-establish (he ought to have said to carry away) the statues of the great men of antiquity, and to change, or rather renovate, the destinies of the finest district of Europe. But while thus engaged, he received orders from Paris respecting his farther proceedings which must have served to convince him that all his personal enemies, all who doubted and feared him, were not to be found in the Austrian ranks.

The directory themselves had begun to suspect the prudence of suffering the whole harvest of success which Italy afforded, to be reaped by the adventurous and haughty character who had first thrust in the sickle. They perhaps felt already an instinctive distrust of the waxing influence, which was destined one day to overpower their own. Under some such impression, they resolved to divide the army of Italy betwixt Buonaparte and Kellermann, directing the former general to pass the Po, and advance southward on Rome and Naples, with twenty thousand men; while Kellermann, with the other moiety of the Italian army, should press the siege of Mantua, and make head against the Austrians.

This was taking Buonaparte’s victory out of his grasp; and he resented the proposal accordingly, by transmitting his resignation, and declining to have any concern in the loss of his army, and the fruits of his conquests. He affirmed, that Kellermann, with an army reduced to twenty thousand men, could not face Beaulieu, but would be speedily driven out of Lombardy; and that, in consequence, the army which advanced southward would be overwhelmed and destroyed. One bad general, he said, was better than two
good ones. The directory must have perceived from such a reply, the firm and inflexible nature of the man they had made the leader of their armies, but they dared not, such was his reputation, proceed in the plan they had formed for the diminution of his power; and perhaps, for the first time since the revolution, the executive government of France was compelled to give way to a successful general, and adopt his views instead of their own. The campaign was left to his sole management; he obtained an ascendancy which he took admirable care not to relinquish, and it became the only task of the directory, so far as Italy was concerned, to study phrases for intimating their approbation of the young general’s measures.

Whatever were the ultimate designs of Buonaparte against Rome, he thought it prudent to suspend them until he should be free from all danger of the Austrians, by the final defeat of Beaulieu. For this object, he directed the divisions of his army towards the right bank of the Mincio, with a view of once more forcing Beaulieu’s position, after having taken precautions for blockading the citadel of Milan, where the Austrians still held out, and for guarding Pavia and other points, which appeared necessary to secure his conquests.

Napoleon himself fixed his head-quarters at Lodi, upon the 24th of May. But he was scarcely arrived there, when he received the alarming intelligence, that the city of Pavia, with all the surrounding districts, were in arms in his rear; that the tocsin was ringing in every village, and that news were circulated that the prince of Condé’s army, united with a strong Austrian force, had descended from the Tyrol into Italy. Some commotions had shown themselves in Milan, and the Austrian garrison there made demonstrations towards favouring the insurrection in Pavia, where the insurgents were completely successful, and had made prisoners a French corps of three hundred men.

Buonaparte represents these disturbances as effected by Austrian agents; but he had formerly assured us, that the Italians took little interest in the fate of their German masters. The truth is, that, having entered Italy with the most flattering assurances of observing respect for public and private property, the French had disgusted the inhabitants, by exacting the contributions which they had imposed on the country with great severity. As Catholics, the Italians were also disgusted with the open indignities thrown on the places and objects of public worship, as well as on the persons and character of their priests. The nobles and the clergy naturally saw their ruin in the success of the French; and the lower classes joined them for the time, from dislike to foreigners, love of national independence, resentment of the exactions made, and the acts of sacrilege committed by the ultramontane invaders. About thirty thousand insurgents were in arms; but having no regular forces on which to rest as a rallying point, they were ill calculated to endure the rapid assault of the disciplined French.

Buonaparte, anxious to extinguish a flame so formidable, instantly returned from Lodi to Milan, at the head of a strong division, took order for the safety of the capital of Lombardy, and moved next morning towards Pavia, the centre of the insurrection. The village of Benasce, which was defended against Lannes, was taken by storm, the inhabitants put to the sword, and the place plundered and burnt. Napoleon himself arrived before Pavia, blew the gates open with his cannon, dispersed with ease the half-armed insurgents, and caused the leaders of the insurrection to be put to death, for having attempted to defend the independence of their country. He then seized on the persons of many inhabitants, and sent them to Paris as hostages for the subjection of their fellow-citizens.

The French general published a proclamation in the republican style, in which he reproaches the insurgents for presuming to use arms in defence of their country, and menaces with fire and sword whatever individuals should in future prosecute the same daring course. He made his threat good some weeks afterwards, when a similar insurrection took place in those districts called the Imperial siefs, and still latter, when an effort at resistance was at-
tempted in the town of Lago. On both occasions, the leaders of the armed inhabitants were tried by a military commission, condemned, and shot. On the last, indeed, to revenge the defeat sustained by a squadron of French dragoons, Lago was taken by storm, pillaged, burnt, and the men put to the sword; while some credit seems to be taken by Buonaparte in his dispatches, for the clemency of the French, which spared the women and children.

It is impossible to read the account of these severities, without contrasting them with the opinions professed on other occasions, both by the republican and imperial governments of France. The first of these exclaimed as at an unheard of cruelty, when the duke of Brunswick, in his celebrated proclamation, threatened to treat as a brigand every Frenchman, not being a soldier, whom he should find under arms, and to destroy such villages as should offer resistance to the invading army. The French at that time considered with justice, that, if there is one duty more holy than another, it is that which calls on men to defend their native country against invasion. Napoleon, being emperor, was of the same opinion in the years 1813 and 1814, when the allies entered the French territories, and when, in various proclamations, he called on the inhabitants to rise against the invaders with the implements of their ordinary labour when they had no better arms, and "to shoot a foe, as they would a wolf." It would be difficult to reconcile these invitations with the cruel vengeance taken on the town of Lago, for observing a line of conduct which, in similar circumstances, Buonaparte so keenly and earnestly recommended to those whom fortune had made his own subjects.

The brief insurrection of Pavia suppressed by these severities, Buonaparte once more turned his thoughts to the strong position of the Austrians, with the purpose of reducing Beaulieu to a more decided state of disability, before he executed the threatened vengeance of the republic on the Sovereign Pontiff. For this purpose he advanced to Brescia, and manœuvred in such a manner as induced Beaulieu, whom repeated surprises of the same kind had not put upon his guard, to believe, that either the French general intended to attempt the passage of the Mincio at the small but strong town of Peschiera, where that river issues from the Lago di Guarda, or else that, marching northward along the eastern bank, he designed to come round the head of the lake, and thus turn the right of the Austrian position. While Beaulieu disposed his forces as expecting an attack on the right of his line, Buonaparte, with his usual celerity, proposed to attack him on the centre, at Borghetto, a town situated on the Mincio, and commanding a bridge over it, about ten miles lower than Peschiera.

On the 30th of May, the French general attacked, with superior force, and repulsed across the Mincio, an Austrian corps who endeavoured to cover the town. The fugitives endeavoured to demolish the bridge, and did break down one of its arches. But the French, rushing forward with impetuosity, under cover of a heavy fire upon the retreating Austrians, repaired the broken arch so as to effect a passage, and the Mincio, passed as the Po and the Adda had been before, ceased in its turn to be a protection to the army drawn up behind it.

Beaulieu, who had his head-quarters at Valeggio, a village nearly opposite to Borghetto, hastened to retreat, and evacuating Peschiera, marched his dismayed forces behind the Adige, leaving five hundred prisoners, with other trophies of victory, in the hands of the French. Buonaparte had designed that this day of success should have been still more decisive; for he meditated an attack upon Peschiera at the moment when the passage at Borghetto was accomplished; but ere Augereau, to whom this manœuvre was committed, had time to approach Peschiera, it was evacuated by the Austrians, who were in full retreat by Castel Nuovo, protected by their cavalry.

The left of the Austrian line, cut off from the centre by the passage of the French, had been stationed at Puzzuolo, lower on the Mincio. When Sebottendorf, who commanded the Imperial troops stationed on the left bank, heard the cannonade, he immediately ascended the river, to assist his commander-in-chief to repel the French, or to take them in flank if it
was already crossed. The retreat of Beaulieu made both purposes impossible; and yet this march of Sebottendorf had almost produced a result of greater consequence than would have been the most complete victory.

The French division which first crossed the Mincio, had passed through Valeggio without halting, in pursuit of Beaulieu, by whom the village had been just before abandoned. Buonaparte with a small retinue remained in the place; and Massena's division were still on the right bank of the Mincio, preparing their dinner. At this moment the advanced-guard of Sebottendorf, consisting of hulans and hussars, pushed into the village of Valeggio. There was but barely time to cry to arms; and, shutting the gates of the inn, to employ the general's small escort in its defence, while Buonaparte, escaping by the garden, mounted his horse, and galloped toward Massena's division. The soldiers threw aside their cookery, and marched instantly against Sebottendorf, who with much difficulty, and not without loss, effected a retreat in the same direction as his commander-in-chief Beaulieu. This personal risk induced Buonaparte, to form what he called the corps of guides, veterans of ten years service at least, who were perpetually near his person, and, like the Triarii of the Romans, were employed only when the most desperate efforts of courage were necessary. Bessieres, afterwards duke of Istria, and maréchal of France, was placed at the head of this chosen body, which gave rise to the formation of the celebrated imperial guards of Napoleon.

The passage of the Mincio obliged the Austrians to retire within the frontier of the Tyrol; and they might have been considered as completely expelled from Italy, had not Mantua and the citadel of Milan still continued to display the Imperial banners. The castle of Milan was a place of no extraordinary strength, the surrender of which might be calculated on so soon as the general fate of war had declared itself against the present possessors. But Mantua was by nature one of those almost impregnable fortresses, which may long, relying on its own resources, defy any compulsion but that of famine.

The town and fortress of Mantua are situated on a species of island, five or six leagues square, called the Seregliao, produced by three lakes, which communicate with, or rather are formed by the Mincio. This island has access to the land by five causeways, the most important of which was in 1796, defended by a regular citadel, called, from the vicinity of a ducal palace, La Favorita. Another was defended by an entrenched camp extending between the fortress and the lake. The third was protected by a hornwork. The remaining two causeways were only defended by gates and drawbridges. Mantua, low in situation, and surrounded by water, in a warm climate, is naturally unhealthy; but the air was likely to be still more destructive to a besieging army, (which necessarily lay in many respects more exposed to the elements, and were besides in greater numbers, and less habituated to the air of the place,) than to a garrison who had been seasoned to it, and were well accommodated within the fortress.

To surprise a place so strong by a coup-de-main was impossible, though Buonaparte represents his soldiers as murmuring that such a desperate feat was not attempted. But he blockaded Mantua with a large force, and proceeded to take such other measures to improve his success, as might pave the way to future victories. The garrison was numerous, amounting to from twelve to fourteen thousand men; and the deficiencies of the fortifications, which the Austrians had neglected in over security, were made up for by the natural strength of the place. Yet of the five causeways, Buonaparte made himself master of four; and thus the enemy lost possession of all beyond the walls of the town and citadel, and had only the means of attaining the main land through the citadel of La Favorita. Lines of circumvallation were formed, and Serrurier was left in blockade of the fortress, which the possession of four of the accesses enabled him to accomplish with a body of men inferior to the garrison.

To complete the blockade, it was necessary to come to some arrangement with the ancient republic of Venice. With this venerable government Na-
poleon had the power of working his own pleasure; for although the state might have raised a considerable army to assist the Austrians, to whom its senate, or aristocratic government, certainly bore good-will, yet, having been in amity with the French republic, they deemed the step too hazardous, and vainly trusting that their neutrality would be respected, they saw the Austrian power completely broken for the time, before they took any active measures either to stand in their defence, or to deprecate the wrath of the victor. But when the line of the Mincio was forced, and Buonaparte occupied the Venetian territory on the left bank, it was time to seek by concessions that deference to the rights of an independent country, which the once haughty aristocracy of Venice had lost a favourable opportunity of supporting by force.

There was one circumstance which rendered their cause unfavourable. Louis XVIII. under the title of a private person, the comte de Lisle, had received the hospitality of the republic, and was permitted to remain at Verona, living in strict seclusion. The permission to entertain this distinguished exile, the Venetian government had almost mendicantly from the French revolutionary rulers, in a manner which we would term mean, were it not for the goodness of the intention, which leads us to regard the conduct of the ancient mistress of the Adriatic with pity rather than contempt. But when the screen of the Austrian force no longer existed, between the invading armies of France and the Venetian territories—when the final subjugation of the north of Italy was resolved on—the directory peremptorily demanded, and the senate of Venice were obliged to grant, an order, removing the comte de Lisle from the boundaries of the republic.

The illustrious exile protested against this breach of hospitality, and demanded, before parting, that his name, which had been placed on the golden book of the republic, should be erased, and that the armour presented by Henry IV. to Venice, should be restored to his descendant. Both demands were evaded, as might have been expected in the circumstances, and the future monarch of France left Verona on the 21st of April 1796, for the army of the prince of Condé, in whose ranks he proposed to place himself, without the purpose of assuming any command, but only that of fighting as a volunteer in the character of the first gentleman of France. Other less distinguished emigrants, to the number of several hundreds, who had found an asylum in Italy, were, by the successes at Lodi and Borghetto, compelled to fly to other countries.

Buonaparte, immediately after the battle of Borghetto, and the passage of the Mincio, occupied the town of Verona, and did not fail to intimate to its magistrates, that if the Pretender, as he termed him, to the throne of France, had not left Verona before his arrival, he would have burnt to the ground a town which, acknowledging him as king of France, assumed, in doing so, the air of being itself the capital of that republic. This might, no doubt, sound gallant in Paris; but Buonaparte knew well that Louis of France was not received in the Venetian territory as the successor to his brother's throne, but only with the hospitality due to an unfortunate prince, who, suitting his claim and title to his situation, was content to shelter his head, as a private man might have done, from the evils which seemed to pursue him.

The neutrality of Venice, was, however, for the time admitted, though not entirely from respect for the law of nations; for Buonaparte is at some pains to justify himself for not having seized without ceremony on the territories and resources of that republic, although a neutral power as far as her utmost exertions could preserve neutrality. He contented himself for the time with occupying Verona, and other dependencies of Venice upon the line of the Adige. "You are too weak," he said to the provveditore Fescarelli, "to pretend to enforce neutrality with a few hundred Scelvoniens on two such nations as France and Austria. The Austrians have not respected your territory where it suited their purpose, and I must, in requital, occupy such part as falls within the line of the Adige."

But he considered that the Venetian territories to the westward should in
policy be allowed to retain the character of neutral ground, which the government, as that of Venice was emphatically called, would not, for their own sakes, permit them to lose; while otherwise, if occupied by the French as conquerors, these timid neutrals might upon any reverse have resumed the character of fierce opponents. And, at all events, in order to secure a territory as a conquest, which, if respected as neutral, would secure itself, there would have been a necessity for dividing the French forces, which it was Buonaparte's wish to concentrate. From interested motives, therefore, if not from respect to justice, Buonaparte deferred seizing the territory of Venice when within his grasp, conscious that the total defeat of the Austrians in Italy would, when accomplished, leave the prey as attainable, and more defenceless than ever. Having disposed his army in its position, and prepared some of its divisions for the service which they were to perform as movable columns, he returned to Milan to reap the harvest of his successes.

The first of these consisted in the defection of the king of Naples from the cause of Austria, to which, from family connexion, he had yet remained attached, though of late with less deep devotion. His cavalry had behaved better during the engagement on the Mincio, than has been of late the custom, with Napolitan troops, and had suffered accordingly. The king, discouraged with the loss, solicited an armistice, which he easily obtained; for his dominions being situated at the lower extremity of Italy, and his force extending to sixty thousand men at least, it was of importance to secure the neutrality of a power who might be dangerous, and who was not, as matters stood, under the immediate control of the French. A Napolitan ambassador was sent to Paris to conclude a final peace; in the mean while, the soldiers of the king of the two Sicilies were withdrawn from the army of Beaulieu, and returned to their own country. The dispositions of the court of Naples continued, nevertheless, to vacillate, as opportunity of advantage, joined with the hatred of the queen, (sister of Marie Antoinette) or the fear of the French military superiority, seemed to predominate.

The storm now thickened round the devoted head of the pope. Ferrara and Bologna, the territories of which belonged to the holy see, were occupied by the French troops. In the latter place, four hundred of the papal troops were made prisoners, with a cardinal who acted as their officer. The latter was dismissed on his parole, but when summoned to return to the French head-quarters, his eminence declined to obey, and amused the republican officers a good deal by alleging that the pope had dispensed with his engagement. Afterwards, however, there were officers of no mean rank in the French service, who could contrive to extricate themselves from the engagement of a parole, without troubling the pope for his interference on the occasion. Influenced by the approaching danger, the court of Rome sent Azara, the Spanish minister, with full powers to treat for an armistice. It was a remarkable part of Buonaparte's character, that he knew as well when to forbear as when to strike. Rome, it was true, was an enemy whom France, or at least its present rulers, both hated and despised, but the moment was then inopportune for the prosecution of their resentment. To have detached a sufficient force in that direction, would have weakened the French army in the north of Italy, where fresh bodies of German troops were already arriving, and might have been attended with great ultimate risk, since there was a possibility that the English might have transported to Italy the forces which they were about to withdraw from Corsica, amounting to six thousand men. But though these considerations recommended to Napoleon a negotiation with the pope, his holiness was compelled to purchase the armistice at a severe rate. Twenty-one millions of francs, in actual specie, with large contributions in forage and military stores, the cession of Ancona, Bologna, and Ferrara, not forgetting one hundred of the finest pictures, statues, and similar objects of art, to be selected according to the choice of the committee of artists who attended the French army, were the price of a respite which was not of long duration. It was particularly stipulated, with republican ostentation, that the busts of the elder and younger Brutus were to be among the number of ceded articles; and it was in this manner that Buonaparte
made good his vaunt, of establishing in the Roman capital the statues of the illustrious and classical dead.

The archduke of Tuscany was next to undergo the republican discipline. It is true, that prince had given no offense to the French republic; on the contrary, he had claims of merit with them, having been the very first power in Europe who acknowledged them as a legal government, and having ever since been in strict amity with them. It seemed also, that while justice required he should be spared, the interest of the French themselves did not oppose the conclusion. His country could have no influence on the fate of the impending war, being situated on the western side of the Appenines. In these circumstances, to have seized on his museum, however tempting, or made requisitions on his territories, would have appeared unjust towards the earliest ally of the French republic; so Buonaparte contented himself with seizing on the grand duke's sea-port of Leghorn, confiscating the English goods which his subjects had imported, and entirely ruining the once flourishing commerce of the dukedom. It was a principal object with the French to seize the British merchant vessels, who, confiding in the respect due to a neutral power, were lying in great numbers in the harbour; but the English merchantmen had such early intelligence as enabled them to set sail for Corsica, although a very great quantity of valuable goods fell into the possession of the French.

While the French general was thus violating the neutrality of the grand duke, occupying by surprise his valuable sea-port, and destroying the commerce of his state, the unhappy prince was compelled to receive him at Florence, with all the respect due to a valued friend, and profess the utmost obligation to him for his lenity, while Manfredini, the Tuscan minister, endeavoured to throw a veil of decency over the transactions at Leghorn, by allowing that the English were more masters in that port than was the grand duke himself. Buonaparte disdained to have recourse to any paltry apologies. "The French flag," he said, "has been insulted in Leghorn:—you are not strong enough to cause it to be respected. The directory has commanded me to occupy the place." Shortly after, Buonaparte, during an entertainment given to him by the grand duke at Florence, received intelligence that the citadel of Milan had at length surrendered. He rubbed his hands with self-congratulation, and turning to the grand duke observed, "that the emperor, his brother, had now lost his last possession in Lombardy."

When we read of the exactions and indignities to which the strong reduce the weak, it is impossible not to remember the simile of Napoleon himself, who compared the alliance of France and an inferior state, to a giant embracing a dwarf. "The poor dwarf," he added, "may probably be suffocated in the arms of his friend; but the giant does not mean it, and cannot help it." While Buonaparte made truce with several of the old states in Italy, or rather adjourned their destruction in consideration of large contributions, he was far from losing sight of the main object of the French directory, which was to cause the adjacent governments to be revolutionized and new modelled on a republican form, corresponding to that of the great nation herself. This scheme was, in every respect, an exceedingly artful one. In every state which the French might overrun or conquer, there must occur, as we have already repeatedly noticed, men fitted to form the members of revolutionary government, and who, from their previous situation and habits, must necessarily be found eager to do so. Such men are sure to be supported by the rabble of large towns, who are attracted by the prospect of plunder, and by the splendid promises of liberty, which they always understand as promising the equalization of property. Thus provided with materials for their edifice, the bayonets of the French army were of strength sufficient to prevent the task from being interrupted, and the French republic had soon to greet sister states, under the government of men who held their offices by the pleasure of France, and who were obliged, therefore, to comply with all her requisitions, however unreasonable:

Having noticed the effect of Buonaparte's short but brilliant campaign on other states, we must observe the effects which his victories produced on
Austria herself. These were entirely consistent with her national character. The same tardiness which has long made the government of Austria slow in availing themselves of advantageous circumstances, cautious in their plans, and unwilling to adopt, or indeed to study to comprehend, a new system of tactics, even after having repeatedly experienced its terrible efficacies, is combined with the better qualities of firm determination, resolute endurance, and unquenchable spirit. The Austrian slowness and obstinacy, which have sometimes threatened them with ruin, have, on the other hand, often been compensated by their firm perseverance and courage in adversity. Upon the present occasion Austria showed ample demonstration of the various qualities we have ascribed to her. The rapid and successive victories of Buonaparte, appeared to her only the rash flight of an eagle, whose juvenile audacity had over-estimated the strength of his pinion. The imperial council resolved to sustain their diminished force in Italy, with such reinforcements as might enable them to re-assume the complete superiority over the French, though at the risk of weakening their armies on the Rhine. Fortune in that quarter, though of a various complexion, had been on the whole more advantageous to the Austrians than elsewhere, and seemed to authorize the detaching considerable re-inforcements from the eastern frontier, on which they had been partially victorious, to Italy, where, since Buonaparte had descended from the Alps, they had been uniformly unfortunate.

Beaulieu, aged and unlucky, was no longer considered as a fit opponent to his inventive, young, and active adversary. He was as full of displeasure, it is said, against the aulic council, for the associates whom they had assigned him, as they could be with him for his bad success. He was re-called, therefore, in that species of disgrace which misfortune never fails to infer, and the command of his remaining forces, now drawn back and secured within the passes of the Tyrol, was provisionally assigned to the veteran Melas. Meanwhile Wurmsen, accounted one of the best of the Austrian generals, was ordered to place himself at the head of thirty thousand men, from the imperial forces on the Rhine, and, traversing the Tyrol, and collecting what recruits he could in that warlike district, to assume the command of the Austrian army, which, expelled from Italy, now lay upon its frontiers, and might be supposed eager to resume their national supremacy in the fertile climates out of which they had been so lately driven.

Aware of the storm which was gathering, Buonaparte made every possible effort to carry Mantua before the arrival of the formidable Austrian army, whose first operation would doubtless be to raise the siege of that important place. A scheme to take the city and castle by surprise, by a detachment which should pass to the seruglio, or islet on which Mantua is situated, by night and in boats, having totally failed, Buonaparte was compelled to open trenches, and proceed as by regular siege. The Austrian general, Canto d’IRles, when summoned to surrender it, replied that his orders were to defend the place to the last extremity. Napoleon, on his side, assembled all the battering ordnance which could be collected from the walls of the neighbouring cities and fortresses, and the attack and defence commenced in the most vigorous manner on both sides; the French making every effort to reduce the city before Wurmsen should open his campaign, the governor determined to protract his resistance, if possible, until he was relieved by the advance of that general. But although red-hot balls were expended in profusion, and several desperate and bloody assaults and sallies took place, many more battles were to be fought, and much more blood expended, before Buonaparte was fated to succeed in this important object.

The plan which the directory had adopted for the campaign of 1796, was of a gigantic character, and menaced Austria, their most powerful enemy upon the continent, with nothing short of total destruction. It was worthy of the genius of Carnot, by whom it was formed, and of Napoleon and Moreau, by whom it had been revised and approved. Under sanction of this general plan, Buonaparte regulated the Italian campaign in which he had proved so successful; and it had been schemed, that to allow Austria no breathing space, Moreau, with the army of the Sambre and Meuse, should

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press forward on the eastern frontier of Germany, supported on the left by Jourdan, at the head of the army of the Rhine, and that both generals should continue to advance, until Moreau should be in a position to communicate with Buonaparte through the Tyrol. When this junction of the whole forces of France, in the centre of the Austrian dominions was accomplished, it was Carnot's ultimate plan that they should advance upon Vienna, and dictate peace to the emperor under the walls of his own capital.

Of this great project, the part intrusted to Buonaparte was completely executed, and for some time the fortune of war seemed equally auspicious to France upon the Rhine as in Italy. Moreau and Jourdan crossed that great national boundary at Neuwied and Kehl, and moved eastward through Germany, forming a connected front of more than sixty leagues in breadth, until Moreau had actually crossed the river Leck, and was almost touching with his right flank the passes of the Tyrol, through which he was, according to the plan of the campaign, to have communicated with Buonaparte.

During this advance of two hostile armies, amounting each to seventy-five thousand men, which filled all Germany with consternation, the Austrian leader Wartensleben, was driven from position to position by Jourdan, while the archduke Charles was equally unable to maintain his ground before Moreau.

The imperial generals were reduced to this extremity by the loss of the army, consisting of from thirty to thirty-five thousand men, who had been detached under Wurmser, to support the remains of Beaulieu's forces; and re-instate the Austrian affairs in Italy, and who were now on their march through the Tyrol for that purpose. But the archduke was an excellent and enterprising officer, and at this important period he saved the empire of Austria by a bold and decided manœuvre. Leaving a large part of his army to make head against Moreau, or at least to keep him in check, the archduke moved to the right with the rest, so as to form a junction with Wartensleben, and overwhelm Jourdan with a local superiority of numbers, being the very principle on which the French themselves achieved so many victories. Jourdan was totally defeated, and compelled to make a hasty and disorderly retreat, which was rendered disastrous by the insurrection of the German peasantry around his fugitive army. Moreau, also unable to maintain himself in the heart of Germany, when Jourdan, with the army which covered his left flank, was defeated, was likewise under the necessity of retiring, but conducted his retrograde movement with such dexterity, that his retreat through the Black Forest, where the Austrians hoped to cut him off, has been always judged worthy to be compared to a great victory. Such were the proceedings on the Rhine, and in the interior of Germany, which must be kept in view as influencing, at first, by the expected success of Moreau and Jourdan, and afterwards by their actual failure, the movements of the Italian army.

As the divisions of Wurmser's army began to arrive on the Tyrolese district of Trent, where the Austrian general had fixed his head quarters, Buonaparte became urgent, either that re-inforcements should be dispatched to him from France, or that the armies on the Rhine should make such a movement in advance towards the point where they might co-operate with him, as had been agreed upon at arranging the original plan of the campaign. But he obtained no succours: and though the campaign on the Rhine commenced, as we have seen, in the month of June, yet that period was too late to afford any diversion in favour of Napoleon, Wurmser and his whole re-inforcements being already either by that time arrived, or on the point of arriving, at the place where they were to commence operations against the French army of Italy.

The thunder-cloud which had been so long blackening on the mountains of the Tyrol, seemed now about to discharge its fury. Wurmser, having under his command perhaps eighty thousand men, was about to march from Trent against the French, whose forces, amounting to scarce half so many, were partly engaged in the siege of Mantua, and partly dispersed in the towns and villages on the Adige and Chiese, for covering the division of Serrurier, which carried on the siege. The Austrian veteran, confident in his numbers, was only anxious so to regulate his advance, as to derive the
most conclusive consequences from the victory which he doubted not to obtain. With an imprudence which the misfortunes of Beaulieu ought to have warned him against, he endeavoured to occupy with the divisions of his army so large an extent of country, as rendered it very difficult for them to maintain their communications with each other. This was particularly the case with his right wing under Quasdonowich, the prince of Reuss, and general Oeskay, who were detached down the valley of the river Chiese, with orders to direct their march on Brescia. This division was destined to occupy Brescia, and cut off the retreat of the French in the direction of Milan. The left wing of Wurmser's army under Melas, was to descend the Adige by both banks at once, and manoeuvre on Verona, while the centre, commanded by the Austrian field-marshal in person, was to march southward by the left bank of the Lago di Guarda, take possession of Peschiera, which the French occupied, and descending the Mincio, relieve the siege of Mantua. There was this radical error in the Austrian plan, that, by sending Quasdonowich's division by the valley of Chiese, Wurmser placed the broad lake of Guarda, occupied by a French flotilla, between his right wing and the rest of his army, and of course made it impossible for the centre and left to support Quasdonowich's, or even to have intelligence of his motions or his fate.

The active invention of Buonaparte, sure as he was to be seconded by the zeal and rapidity of the French army, speedily devised the means to draw advantage from this dislocation of the Austrian forces. He resolved not to await the arrival of Wurmser and Melas, but, concentrating his whole strength, to march into the valley of Chiese, and avail himself of the local superiority thus obtained, to attack and overpower the Austrian division left under Quasdonowich, who was advancing on Brescia, down the eastern side of the lake. For this purpose, one great sacrifice was necessary. The plan inevitably involved the raising of the siege of Mantua. Napoleon did not hesitate to relinquish this great object at whatever loss, as it was his uniform system to sacrifice all secondary views, and to incur all lesser hazards, to secure what he considered as the main object of the campaign. Serrurier, who commanded the blockading army, was hastily ordered to destroy as much as possible of the cannon and stores, which had been collected with so much pains for the prosecution of the siege. An hundred guns were abandoned in the trenches, and Wurmser, on arriving at Mantua, found that Buonaparte had retired with a precipitation resembling that of fear.

On the night of the 31st of July this operation took place; and, leaving the division of Augereau at Borghetto, and that of Massena at Peschiera, to protect, while it was possible, the line of the Mincio, Buonaparte rushed, at the head of an army which his combinations had rendered superior, upon the right wing of the Austrians, which had already directed its march to Lonato, near the bottom of the Lago di Guarda, in order to approach the Mincio, and resume its communication with Wurmser. But Buonaparte, placed by the celerity of his movements between the two hostile armies, defeated one division of the Austrian right at Salo, upon the lake, and another at Lonato. At the same time Augereau and Massena, leaving just enough of men at their posts of Borghetto and Peschiera to maintain a respectable defence against Wurmser, made a forced march to Brescia, which was occupied by another division of the Austrian right wing. But that body, finding itself insulated, and conceiving that the whole French army was debouching on them from different points, was already in full retreat towards the Tyrol, from which it had advanced with the expectation of turning Buonaparte's flank, and destroying his retreat upon Milan. Some French troops were left to accelerate their flight, and prevent their again making head, while Massena and Augereau rapidly counter-marching, returned to the banks of the Mincio to support their respective rear-guards, which they had left at Borghetto and Peschiera, on the line of that river.

They received intelligence, however, which induced them to halt upon this counter-march. Both rear-guards had been compelled to retire from the line of the Mincio, of which river the Austrians had forced the passage. The rear-guard of Massena, under general Pigeon, had fallen back in good
order, so as to occupy Lonato; that of Augereau fled with precipitation and confusion, and failed to make a stand at Castiglione, which was occupied by Austrians who intrenched themselves there. Valette, the general who commanded this body, was deprived of his commission in the presence of his troops for misbehaviour; an example which the gallantry of the French generals rendered extremely infrequent in their service. Wurmser became now seriously anxious about the fate of his right wing, and determined to force a communication with Quasdonovitch at all risks. But he could only attain the valley of the Chiese, and the right bank of the Lago di Guarda, by breaking a passage through the divisions of Massena and Augereau. On the 3rd of August, at break of day, two divisions of Austrians, who had crossed the Mincio in pursuit of Pieron and Valette, now directed themselves, with the most determined resolution, on the French troops, in order to clear the way between the commander-in-chief and his right wing.

The late rear-guard of Massena which, by his counter-march, had now become his advanced guard, was defeated, and Lonato, the place which they occupied, was taken by the Austrians, with the French artillery, and the general officer who commanded them. But the Austrian general, thus far successful, fell into the great error of extending his line too much towards the right, in order, doubtless, if possible, to turn the French position on the left flank, whereby the sooner to open a communication with his own troops on the right bank of the Lago di Guarda, to force which had been his principal object in the attack: but in thus manoeuvring he weakened his centre, an error of which Massena instantly availed himself. He formed two strong columns under Augereau, with which he redeemed the victory, by breaking through and dividing the Austrian line, and retaking Lonato at the point of the bayonet. The manœuvre is indeed a simple one, and the same by which, ten years afterwards, Buonaparte gained the battle of Austerlitz; but it requires the utmost promptitude and presence of mind, to seize the exact moment for executing such a daring measure to advantage. If it is but partially successful, and the enemy retains steadiness, it is very perilous; since the attacking column, instead of flanking the broken divisions of the opposite line, may be itself flanked by decided officers and determined troops, and thus experience the disaster which it was their object to occasion to the enemy. On the present occasion, the attack on the centre completely succeeded. The Austrians finding their line cut asunder, and their flanks pressed by the victorious columns of the French, fell into total disorder. Some, who were farthest to the right, pushed forward, in hopes to unite themselves to Quasdonovitch, and what they might find remaining of the original right wing; but these were attacked in front by general Soret, who had been active in defeating Quasdonovitch upon the 30th of July, and were at the same time pursued by another detachment of the French, which had broken through their centre.

Such was the fate of the Austrian right at the battle of Lonato, while that of the left was no less unfavourable. They were attacked by Augereau with the utmost bravery, and driven from Castiglione, of which they had become masters by the bad conduct of Valette. Augereau achieved this important result at the price of many brave men's lives; but it was always remembered as an essential service by Buonaparte, who afterwards, when such dignities came in use, bestowed on Augereau the title of duke of Castiglione. After their defeat, there can be nothing imagined more confused or calamitous than the condition of the Austrian divisions, who, having attacked, without resting on each other, found themselves opposed and finally overwhelmed by an enemy who appeared to possess ubiquity, simply from his activity and power of combining his forces.

A remarkable instance of their lamentable state of disorder and confusion, resembling in its consequences more than one example of the same sort, occurred at Lonato. It might, with any quickness of intelligence, or firmness of resolution, have proved a decisive advantage to their arms; it was, in its result, a humiliating illustration, how completely the succession of bad fortune had broken the spirit of the Austrian soldiers. You can hardly have
forgotten the incident at the battle of Millesimo, when an Austrian column
which had been led astray, re-took, as if it were by chance, the important
village of Dego; or the more recent instance, when a body of Beaulieu's
advanced-guard, alike unwittingly, had nearly made Buonaparte prisoner in
his quarters. The present danger arose from the same cause, the confusion
and want of combination of the enemy; and now, as in the former perilous
occurrences, the very same circumstances which brought on the danger,
served to ward it off.

A body of four or five thousand Austrians, partly composed of those who
had been cut off at the battle of Lonato, partly of stragglers from Quasdo-
novich, received information from the peasantry, that the French troops,
having departed in every direction to improve their success, had only left
a garrison of twelve hundred men in the town of Lonato. The commander
of the division resolved instantly to take possession of the town, and thus
to open his march to the Mincio, to join Wurmser. Now, it happened that
Buonaparte himself, coming from Castiglione with only his staff for protec-
tion, had just entered Lonato. He was surprised when an Austrian officer
was brought before him blindfolded, as is the custom on such occasions, who
summoned the French commander of Lonato to surrender to a superior
force of Austrians, who, he stated, were already forming columns of attack
to carry the place by irresistible force of numbers. Buonaparte, with admir-
able presence of mind, collected his numerous staff around him, caused the
officer's eyes to be unbandaged, that he might see in whose presence he stood,
and upbraided him with the insolence of which he had been guilty, in bring-
ing a summons of surrender to the French commander-in-chief in the middle
of his army. The credulous officer, recognizing the presence of Buonaparte,
and believing it impossible that he could be there without at least a strong
division of his army, stammered out an apology, and returned to persuade
his dispirited commander to surrender himself, and the four thousand men
and upwards whom he commanded, to the comparatively small force which
occupied Lonato. They grounded their arms accordingly, to one fourth of
their number, and missed an inviting and easy opportunity of carrying Bu-
naparte prisoner to Wurmser's head-quarters.

The Austrian general himself, whose splendid army was thus destroyed in
detail, had been hitherto employed in revictualling Mantua, and throwing in
supplies of every kind; besides which, a large portion of his army had been
detached in the vain pursuit of Serrurier, and the troops lately engaged in
the siege, who had retreated towards Marcaria. When Wurmser learned
the disasters of his right wing, and the destruction of the troops dispatched
to form a communication with it, he sent to re-call the division which we have
mentioned, and advanced against the French position between Lonato and
Castiglione, with an army still numerous, notwithstanding the reverse which
it had sustained. But Buonaparte had not left the interval unimproved. He
had re-called Serrurier from Marcaria, to assail the left wing and the flank of
the Austrian field-marshal. The opening of Serrurier's fire was a signal for
a general attack on all points of Wurmser's line. He was defeated, and
nearly made prisoner; and it was not till after suffering great losses in the
retreat and pursuit, that he gained with difficulty Trent and Roverudo, the
positions adjacent to the Tyrol, from which he had so lately sallied with such
confidence of victory. He had lost perhaps one half of his fine army, and
the only consolation which remained was, that he had thrown supplies into
the fortress of Mantua. His troops also no longer had the masculine con-
idence which is necessary to success in war. They were no longer proud of
themselves and of their commanders; and those, especially, who had sustained
so many losses under Beaulieu, could hardly be brought to their duty, in
circumstances where it seemed that destiny itself was fighting against them.

The Austrians are supposed to have lost nearly forty thousand men in
these disastrous battles. The French must have at least suffered the loss of
one fourth of the number, though Buonaparte confesses only to seven
thousand men; and their army, desperately fatigued by so many marches,
such constant fighting, and the hardships of a campaign, where even the
general for seven days never laid aside his clothes, or took any regular repose, required some time to recover their physical strength. Meantime, Napoleon resumed his position before Mantua; but the want of battering cannon, and the commencement of the unhealthy heats of autumn, amid lakes and inundations, besides the great chance of a second attack on the part of Wurmsbr, induced him to limit his measures to a simple blockade, which, however, was so strict as to retain the garrison within the walls of the place, and cut them off even from the islet called the seraglio.

The events of this hurried campaign threw light on the feelings of the different states of Italy. Lombardy in general remained quiet, and the citizens of Milan seemed so well affected to the French, that Buonaparte, after the victory of Castiglione, returned them his thanks in the name of the republic. But at Pavia, and elsewhere, a very opposite disposition was evinced; and at Ferrara, the cardinal Mattei, archbishop of that town, made some progress in exciting an insurrection. His apology, when introduced to Buonaparte's presence to answer for his conduct, consisted in uttering the single word, Peccavi! and Napoleon, soothed by his submission, imposed no punishment on him for his offence, but, on the contrary, used his mediation in some negotiations with the court of Rome. Yet though the bishop of Ferrara overawed and despised, was permitted to escape, the conduct of his superior, the pope, who had shown vacillation in his purposes of submission, when he heard of the temporary raising of the siege of Mantua, was carefully noted and remembered for animadversion, when a suitable moment should occur.

Nothing is more remarkable, during these campaigns, than the inflexibility of Austria, which, reduced to the extremity of distress by the advance of Moreau and Jourdan into her territories, stood nevertheless on the defensive at every point, and by extraordinary exertions again recruited Wurmsbr with fresh troops, to the amount of twenty thousand men; which re-inforcement enabled that general, though under no more propitious star, again to resume the offensive, by advancing from the Tyrol. Wurmsbr, with less confidence than before, hoped now to relieve the siege of Mantua a second time, and at a less desperate cost, by moving from Trent towards Mantua, through the defiles formed by the river Brenta. This manœuvre he proposed to execute with thirty thousand men, while he left twenty thousand, under general Davidovich, in a strong position at or near Rovereda, for the purpose of covering the Tyrol; an invasion of which district, on the part of the French, must have added much to the general panic which already astounded Germany, from the apprehended advance of Moreau and Jourdan from the banks of the Rhine.

Buonaparte penetrated the design of the veteran general, and suffered him without disturbance to march towards Bassano upon the Brenta, in order to occupy the line of operations on which he intended to manœuvre, with the secret intention that he would himself assume the offensive, and overwhelm Davidovich as soon as the distance betwixt them precluded a communication betwixt that general and Wurmsbr. He left general Kilmaine, an officer of Irish extraction in whom he reposed confidence, with about three thousand men, to cover the siege of Mantua, by posting himself under the walls of Verona, while, concentrating a strong body of forces, Napoleon marched upon the town of Roveredo, situated in the valley of the Adige, and having in its rear the strong position of Calliano. The town is situated on the high road to Trent, and Davidovich lay there with twenty-five thousand Austrians, intended to protect the Tyrol, while Wurmsbr moved down the Brenta, which runs in the same direction with the Adige, but at about thirty miles distance, so that no communication for mutual support could take place between Wurmsbr and his lieutenant-general. It was upon Davidovich that Buonaparte first meant to pour his thunder.

The battle of Roveredo, fought upon the fourth of September, was one of that great general's splendid days. Before he could approach the town, one of his divisions had to force the strongly entrenched camp of Mori, where the enemy made a desperate defence. Another attacked the Austrians on
the opposite bank of the Adige, (for the action took place on both sides of the river) until the enemy at length retreated, still fighting desperately. Napoleon sent his orders to general Dubois, to charge with the first regiment of hussars—he did so, and broke the enemy, but fell mortally wounded with three balls. "I die," he said, "for the republic—bring me but tidings that the victory is certain."

The retreating enemy were driven through the town of Roveredo, without having it in their power to make a stand. The extreme strength of the position of Calliano seemed to afford them rallying ground. The Adige is there bordered by precipitous mountains; approaching so near its course, as to only leave a pass of forty toises breadth between the river and the precipice, which opening was defended by a village, a castle, and a strong defensive wall resting upon the rock, all well garnished with artillery.

The French, in their enthusiasm of victory, could not be stopped even by these obstacles. Eight pieces of light artillery were brought forward, under cover of which the infantry charged and carried this strong position; so little do natural advantages avail when the minds of the assailants are influenced with an opinion that they are irresistible, and those of the defenders are depressed by a uniform and uninterrupted course of defeat. Six or seven thousand prisoners, and fifteen pieces of cannon captured, were the fruits of this splendid victory; and Massena the next morning took possession of Trent in the Tyrol, so long the strong-hold where Wurmser had maintained his head-quarters.

The wrecks of Davidovich's army fled deeper into the Tyrol, and took up their position at Lavisa, a small village on a river of a similar name, about three leagues to the northward of Trent, and situated in the principal road which communicates with Brixen and Innspruck. Buonaparte instantly pursued them with a division of his army, commanded by Vaubois, and passed the Lavisa with his cavalry, while the enemy were amused with an assault on the bridge. Thus he drove them from their position, which, being the entrance of one of the chief defiles of the Tyrol, it was of importance to secure, and it was occupied accordingly by Vaubois, with his victorious division.

Buonaparte, in consequence of his present condition, became desirous to conciliate the martial inhabitants of the Tyrol, and published a proclamation, in which he exhorted them to lay down their arms, and return to their homes; assuring them of protection against military violence, and labouring to convince them, that they had themselves no interest in the war, which he waged against the emperor and his government, but not against his subjects. That his conduct might appear to be of a piece with his reasoning, Napoleon issued an edict, disuniting the principality of Trent from the German empire, and annexing it in point of sovereignty to the French republic, while he intrusted, or seemed to intrust, the inhabitants themselves, with the power of administering their own laws and government.

Bounties which depended on the gift of an armed enemy, appeared very suspicious to the Tyrolese, who were aware that in fact the order of a French officer would be more effectual law, whenever that nation had the power, than that of any administrator of civil affairs whom they might themselves be permitted to choose. As for the proclamation, the French general might as well have wasted his eloquence on the rocks of the country. The Tyrol, one of the earliest possessions of the house of Austria, had been uniformly governed by those princes with strict respect to the privileges of the inhabitants, who were possessed already of complete personal freedom. Secured in all the immunities which were necessary for their comfort, these sagacious peasants saw nothing to expect from the hand of a stranger general, excepting what Buonaparte himself has termed, those vexations necessarily annexed to a country which becomes the seat of war, and which, in more full detail, include whatever the avarice of the general, the necessities of the soldiers, not to mention the more violent outrage of marauders and plunderers, may choose to exact from the inhabitants. But, besides this prudent calculation of consequences, the Tyrolese felt the generous spirit
of national independence, and resolved that their mountains should not be dishonoured by the march of an armed enemy, if the unerring rifle-guns of their children were able to protect their native soil from such indignity. Every mode of resistance was prepared; and it was then that those piles of rocks, stones, and trunks of trees, were collected on the verge of the precipices which line the valley of the Inn, and other passes of the Tyrol, but which remained in grim repose till rolled down, to the utter annihilation of the French and Bavarian invaders in 1809, under the directions of the vaillant Hoffer and his companions in arms.

More successful with the sword than the pen, Buonaparte had no sooner disposed of Davidovich and his army, than he began his operations against Wurmser himself, who had by this time learned the total defeat of his subordinate division, and that the French were possessed of Trent. The Austrian field-marshal immediately conceived that the French general, in consequence of his successes, would be disposed to leave Italy behind, and advance to Innsbruck, in order to communicate with the armies of Moreau and Jourdan, which were now on the full advance into Germany. Instead, therefore, of renouncing his own scheme of relieving Mantua, Wurmser thought the time favourable for carrying it into execution; and in place of falling back with his army on Friuli, and thus keeping open his communication with Vienna, he committed the great error of involving himself still deeper in the Italian passes to the southward, by an attempt, with a diminished force, to execute a purpose, which he had been unable to accomplish when his army was double the strength of the French. With this ill-chosen plan, he detached Mezaros with a division of his forces, to manoeuvre on Verona, where, as we have seen, Buonaparte had stationed Kilmaine, to cover the siege, or rather the blockade, of Mantua. Mezaros departed accordingly, and leaving Wurmser at Bassano on the Brenta, marched southwestward towards the collateral valley of the Adige, and attacked Kilmaine, who, by drawing his men under cover of the fortifications of Verona, made a resolute defence. The Austrian general, finding it impossible to carry the place by a coup-de-main, was meditating to cross the Adige, when he was re-called by the most urgent commands to rejoin Wurmser with all possible dispatch.

As soon as Buonaparte learned this new separation of Wurmser from a large division of his army, he anticipated the possibility of defeating the field-marshal himself, driving him from his position at Bassano, and of consequence, cutting off at his leisure the division of Mezaros, which had advanced so far to the southward as effectually to compromise its safety. To execute this plan required the utmost rapidity of movement; for, should Wurmser learn that Buonaparte was advancing towards Bassano, in time to re-call Mezaros, he might present a front too numerous to be attacked with hope of success. There are twenty leagues, distance betwixt Trent and Bassano, and that ground was to be traversed by means of very difficult roads, in the space of two days at farthest. But it was in such circumstances that the genius of Napoleon triumphed, through the enthusiastic power which he possessed over the soldiery, and by which he could urge them to the most incredible exertions. He left Trent on the 6th of September at break of day, and reached, in the course of the evening, Borgo di Val Lugano, a march of ten French leagues. A similar forced march of five leagues and upwards, brought him up with Wurmser’s advanced-guard, which was strongly posted at Primolano.

The effect of the surprise, and the impetuosity of the French attack, surmounted all the advantages of position. The Austrian double lines were penetrated by a charge of three French columns—the cavalry occupied the high road, and cut off the enemy’s retreat on Bassano—in a word, Wurmser’s van-guard was totally destroyed, and more than four thousand men laid down their arms. From Primolano the French, dislodging whatever enemies they encountered, advanced to Cismone, a village, where a river of the same name unites with the Brenta. There they halted, exhausted with fatigue; and on that evening no sentinel in the army endured more privations.
than Napoleon himself, who took up his quarters for the night without either staff-officers or baggage, and was glad to accept a share of a private soldier’s ration of bread, of which the poor fellow lived to remind his general when he was become emperor.

Cismone is only about four leagues from Bassano, and Wurmsler heard with alarm, that the French leader, whom he conceived to be already deeply engaged in the Tyrolese passes, had destroyed his van-guard, and was menacing his own position. It was under this alarm that he dispatched expresses, as already mentioned, to re-call Mezaros and his division. But it was too late; for that general was under the walls of Verona, nigh fifteen leagues from Wurmsler’s position, on the night of the 7th of September, when the French army was at Cismone, upon a third part of that distance. The utmost exertions of Mezaros could only bring his division as far as Montebello, upon the 8th of September, when the battle of Bassano seemed to decide the fate of his unfortunate commander-in-chief.

This victory was as decisive as any which Buonaparte had hitherto obtained. The village of Salagna was first carried by main force; and then the French army, continuing to descend the defiles of the Brenta, attacked Wurmsler’s main body, which still lay under his own command in the town of Bassano. Augereau penetrated into the town upon the right, Massena upon the left. They bore down all opposition, and seized the cannon by which the bridge was defended, in spite of the efforts of the Austrian grenadiers, charged with the duty of protecting Wurmsler and his staff, who were now in absolute flight. The field-marshal himself, with the military chest of his army, nearly fell into the hands of the French; and though he escaped for the time, it was after an almost general dispersion of his troops. Six thousand Austrians surrendered to Buonaparte; Quasdonowich, with three or four thousand men, effected a retreat to the north-east, and gained Friuli; while Wurmsler himself, finding it impossible to escape otherwise, fled to Vicenza in the opposite direction, and there united the scattered forces which still followed him, with the division of Mezaros. When this junction was accomplished, the aged marshal had still the command of about sixteen thousand men, out of sixty thousand, with whom he had, scarce a week before, commenced the campaign. The material part of his army, guns, wagons, and baggage, was all lost—his retreat upon the hereditary states of Austria was entirely cut off—the flower of his army was destroyed—courage and confidence were gone—there seemed no remedy but that he should lay down his arms to the youthful conqueror, by whose forces he was now surrounded on all sides, without, as it appeared, any possibility of extricating himself. But fate itself seemed to take some tardy compassion on this venerable and gallant veteran; and not only adjourned his final fall, but even granted him leave to gather some brief-dated laurels, as the priests of old were wont to garland their victims before the final sacrifice.

Surrounded by dangers, and cut off from any other retreat, Wurmsler formed the gallant determination to throw himself and his remaining forces into Mantua; and share the fate of the beleaguered fortress which he had vainly striven to relieve. But to execute this purpose it was necessary to cross the Adige, nor was it easy to say how this was to be accomplished. Verona, one point of passage, was defended by Kilmaine, who had already repulsed Mezaros. Legnago, where there was a bridge, was also garrisoned by the French; and Wurmsler had lost his bridge of pontoons at the battle of Bassano. At the village of Albarado, however, there was an established ferry, totally insufficient for passing over so considerable a force with the necessary dispatch, but which Wurmsler used for the purpose of sending across two squadrons of cavalry, in order to reconnoitre the blockade of Mantua, and the facilities which might present themselves for accomplishing a retreat on that fortress. This precaution proved for the time the salvation of Wurmsler, and what remained of his army.

Fortune, which has such influence on warlike affairs, had so ordered it, that Kilmaine, apprehending that Wurmsler would attempt to force a passage at Verona, and desirous to improve his means of resistance against so great
a force, had sent orders that the garrison of four hundred men who guarded
the bridge at Legnago should join him at Verona, and that an equal number
should be detached from the blockade of Mantua, to supply their place on
the Lower Adige. The former part of his command had been obeyed, and
the garrison of Legnago were on their march for Verona. But the relief
which was designed to occupy their post, though on their way to Legnago,
had not yet arrived. The Austrian cavalry, who had "passed over at Alba-
rado, encountering this body on its march from the vicinity of Mantua, at-
tacked them with spirit, and sabred a good many. The commander of the
French battalion, confounded at this appearance, concluded that the whole
Austrian army had gained the right bank of the Adige, and that he should
necessarily be cut off if he prosecuted his march to Legnago. Thus the pas-
sage at that place was left altogether undefended; and Wurmser, apprized
of this unhoped for chance of escape, occupied the village, and took posses-
sion of the bridge.

Buonaparte, in the mean time, having moved from Bassano to Arcola in
pursuit of the defeated enemy, learned at the latter place that Wurmser
still lingered at Legnago, perhaps to grant his troops some indispensable re-
pose, perhaps to watch whether it might be even yet possible to give the slip
to the French divisions by which he was surrounded, and, by a rapid march
back upon Padua, to regain his communication with the Austrian territo-
ries, instead of inclosing himself in Mantua. Buonaparte hastened to avail
himself of these moments of indecision. Augereau was ordered to march
upon Legnago by the road from Padua, so as to cut off any possibility of
Wurmser's retreat in that direction; whilst Massena's division was thrown
across the Adige, by a ferry at Ronco, to strengthen general Kilmaine, who
had already occupied the line of a small river called the Molinella, which
intersects the country between Legnago and Mantua. If this position could
be made good, it was concluded that the Austrian general, unable to reach
Mantua, or to maintain himself at Legnago, must even yet surrender himself
and his army.

On the 12th of September, Wurmser began his march. He was first op-
opposed at Corea, where Murat and Pigeon had united their forces. But
Wurmser made his dispositions, and attacked with a fury which swept out
of the way both the cavalry and the infantry of the enemy, and obtained pos-
session of the village. In the heat of the skirmish, and just when the
French were giving way, Buonaparte himself entered Corea, with the purp-
se of personally superintending the dispositions made for intercepting the
retreat of Wurmser, when, but for the speed of his horse, he had nearly
fallen as a prisoner into the hands of the general whose destruction he was
labouring to insure. Wurmser arrived on the spot a few minutes after-
wards, and gave orders for a pursuit in every direction; commanding; how-
ever, that the French general should, if possible, be taken alive—a conjunc-
tion of circumstances worthy of remark, since it authorized the Austrian
general for the moment to pronounce on the fate of him, who before and
after, was the master of his destiny.

Having again missed this great prize, Wurmser continued his march all
night, and turning aside from the great road, where the blockading army
had taken measures to intercept him, he surprised a small bridge over the
Molinella, at a village called Villa Impenta, by which he eluded encountering
the forces of Kilmaine. A body of French horse, sent to impede his pro-
gress, was cut to pieces by the Austrian cavalry. On the 14th, Wurmser
obtained a similar success at Castel-Dui, where his cuirassiers destroyed a
body of French infantry; and having now forced himself into a communi-
cation with Mantua, he encamped between the suburb of Saint George and
the citadel, and endeavoured to keep open the communication with the
country, for the purpose of obtaining a supply of forage and provisions.
But it was not Buonaparte's intention to leave him undisturbed in so com-
modious a position. Having received the surrender of an Austrian corps
which was left in Porto Legnago, and gleaned up such other remnants of
Wurmser's army as could not accompany their general in his rapid march to
Mantua, he resolved once more to force his way into the islet of the Sera-glio, upon which Mantua is built, and confine the besieged within the walls of their garrison. On the 15th, after a very severe and bloody action, the French obtained possession of the suburb of Saint George, and the citadel termed La Favorita, and a long series of severe sallies and attacks took place, which, although gallantly fought by the Austrians, generally tended to their disadvantage, so that they were finally again blockaded within the walls of the city and castle.

The woes of war now appeared among them in a different and even more hideous form than when inflicted with the sword alone. When Wurmser threw himself into Mantua, the garrison might amount to twenty-six thousand men; yet as October was far advanced, there were little above half the number fit for service. There were nearly nine thousand sick in the hospitals,—infectious diseases, privations of every kind, and the unhealthy air of the lakes and marshes with which they were surrounded, had cut off the remainder. The French also had lost great numbers; but the conquerors could reckon up their victories, and forget the price at which they had been purchased.

It was a proud vaunt, and a cure in itself for many losses, that the minister of war had a right to make the following speech to the directory, at the formal introduction of Marmont, then aide-de-camp of Buonaparte, and commissioned to present on his part the colours and standards taken from the enemy:—"In the course of a single campaign," he truly said, "Italy had been entirely conquered,—three large armies had been entirely destroyed,—more than fifty stand of colours had been taken by the victors,—forty thousand Austrians had laid down their arms—and, what was not the least surprising part of the whole, these deeds had been accomplished by an army of only thirty thousand Frenchmen, commanded by a general scarce twenty-six years old."

It was about this period that the re-union of Corsica with France took place. Buonaparte contributed to this change in the political relations of his native country indirectly, in part by the high pride which his countrymen must have originally taken in his splendid career; and he did so more immediately, by seizing the town and port of Leghorn, and assisting those Corsicans, who had been exiled by the English party, to return to their native island. He intimated the event to the directory, and stated that he had appointed Gentili, the principal partisan of the French, to govern the island provisionally; and that the commissioner Salicetti was to set sail for the purpose of making other necessary arrangements. The communication is coldly made, nor does Buonaparte's love of his birth-place induce him to expatiate upon its importance, although the directory afterwards made the acquisition of that island a great theme of exultation. But his destinies had called him to too high an elevation to permit his distinguishing the obscure islet which he had arisen from originally.

Indeed Buonaparte's situation, however brilliant, was at the same time critical, and required his undivided thoughts. Mantua still held out, and was likely to do so. Wurmser had caused about three-fourths of the horses belonging to his cavalry to be killed and salted for the use of the garrison, and thus made a large addition, such as it was, to the provisions of the place. His character for courage and determination was completely established; and being now engaged in defending a fortress by ordinary rules of art, which he perfectly understood, he was in no danger of being over-reached and out manoeuvred by the new system of tactics, which occasioned his misfortunes in the open field.

While, therefore, the last pledge of Austria's dominions in Italy was confided to such safe custody, the emperor and his ministers were eagerly engaged in making a new effort to recover their Italian territories. The defeat of Jourdan, and the retreat of Moreau before the archduke Charles, had given the Imperialists some breathing time, and enabled them, by extensive levies in the warlike province of Illyria, as well as draughts from the army of the Rhine, to take the field with a new army, for the recovery of the
Italian provinces, and the relief of Mantua. By order of the Aulo-council, two armies were assembled on the Italian frontier; one at Friuli, which was partly composed of that portion of the army of Wurmser, which cut off from the main body at the battle of Bassano, had effected, under Quasdonowich, a retreat in that direction; the other was to be formed on the Tyrol. They were to operate in conjunction, and both were placed under the command of maréchal Alvinzi, an officer of high reputation, which was then thought merited. Thus for the fourth time, Buonaparte was to contest the same objects on the same ground, with new forces belonging to the same enemy. He had, indeed, himself, received from France re-inforcements to the number of twelve battalions, from those troops which had been formerly employed in La Vendée. The army, in general, since victory had placed the resources of the rich country which they occupied at the command of their leader, had been well supplied with clothes, food, and provisions, and were devotedly attached to the chief who had conducted them from starving on the barren Alps into this land of plenty, and had directed their military efforts with such skill, that they could scarce ever be said to have failed of success in whatever they undertook under his direction. Napoleon had also on his side the good wishes, if not of the Italians in general, of a considerable party, especially in Lombardy, and friends and enemies were alike impressed with belief in his predestined success. During the former attempts of Wurmser, a contrary opinion had prevailed, and the news that the Austrians were in motion, had given birth to insurrections against the French in many places and to the publication of sentiments unfavourable to them almost everywhere. But now, when all predicted the certain success of Napoleon, the friends of Austria remained quiet, and the numerous party who desire in such cases to keep on the winning side, added weight to the actual friends of France, by expressing their opinions in her favour. It seems, however, that Victory, as if displeased that mortals should presume to calculate the motives of so fickle a deity, was, on this occasion, disposed to be more coy than formerly even to her greatest favourite, and to oblige him to toil harder than he had done even when the odds were more against him.

Davidovich commanded the body of the Austrians which was in the Tyrol, and which included the fine militia of that martial province. There was little difficulty in prevailing on them to advance into Italy, convinced as they were that there was small security for their national independence while the French remained in possession of Lombardy. Buonaparte, on the other hand, had placed Vaubois in the passes upon the river Lavisi, above Trent, to cover that new possession of the French republic, and check the advance of Davidovich. It was the plan of Alvinzi to descend from Friuli, and approach Vicenza, to which place he expected Davidovich might penetrate by a corresponding movement down the Adige. Having thus brought his united army into activity, his design was to advance on Mantua, the constant object of bloody contention. He commenced his march in the beginning of October, 1796.

As soon as Buonaparte heard that Alvinzi was in motion, he sent orders to Vaubois to attack Davidovich, and to Massena to advance to Bassano upon the Brenta, and to make head against the Austrian commander-in-chief. Both measures failed in effect. Vaubois indeed made his attack, but so unsuccessfully, that after two days fighting he was compelled to retreat before the Austrians, to evacuate the city of Trent, and to retreat upon Calliano, already mentioned as a very strong position, in the previous account of the battle of Rovereto. A great part of his opponents being Tyrolese, and admirably calculated for mountain warfare, they forced Vaubois from a situation which was almost impregnable; and their army, descending the Adige upon the right bank, appeared to manoeuvre with the purpose of marching on Montebaldo and Rivoli, and thus opening the communication with Alvinzi.

On the other hand, though Massena had sustained no loss, for he avoided an engagement, the approach of Alvinzi, with a superior army, compelled him to evacuate Bassano, and to leave the enemy in undisputed possession of the valley of the Brenta. Buonaparte, therefore, himself, saw the necess-
sity of advancing with Augereau's division, determined to give battle to Alvinzi, and force him back on the Piave before the arrival of Davidovich. But he experienced unusual resistance; and it is amid complaints of the weather, of misadventures and miscarriages of different sorts, that he faintly claims the name of a victory for his first encounter with Alvinzi. It is clear that he had made a desperate attempt to drive the Austrian general from Bassano—that he had not succeeded; but, on the contrary, was under the necessity of retreating to Vicenza. It is further manifest, that Buonaparte was sensible this retreat did not accord well with his claim of victory; and he says, with a consciousness which is amusing, that the inhabitants of Vicenza were surprised to see the French army retire through their town, as they had been witnesses of their victory on the preceding day. No doubt there was room for astonishment, if the Vicenzans had been as completely convinced of the fact as Buonaparte represents them. The truth was, Buonaparte was sensible that Vaubois, being in complete retreat, was exposed to be cut off unless he was supported, and he hastened to prevent so great a loss, by meeting and re-inforcing him. His own retrograde movement, however, which extended as far as Verona, left the whole country, betwixt the Brenta and Adige open to the Austrians; nor does there occur, to those who read the account of the campaign, any good reason why Davidovich and Alvinzi, having no body of French to interrupt their communication, should not instantly have adjusted their operations on a common basis. But it was the bane of the Austrian tactics, through the whole war, to neglect that connexion and co-operation betwixt their separate divisions, which is essential to secure the general result of a campaign. Above all, as Buonaparte himself remarked of them, their leaders were not sufficiently acquainted with the value of time in military movements.

Napoleon having retreated to Verona, where he could at pleasure assume the offensive by means of the bridge, or place the Adige between himself and the enemy, visited, in the first place, the positions of Rivoli and Corone, where were stationed the troops which had been defeated by Davidovich. They appeared before him with dejected countenances, and Napoleon upbraided them with their indifferent behaviour. "You have displeased me," he said; "You have shown neither discipline, nor constancy, nor bravery. You have suffered yourselves to be driven from positions where a handful of brave men might have arrested the progress of a large army. You are no longer French soldiers—Let it be written on their colours—They are not of the army of Italy?" Tears and groans of sorrow and shame, answered this harangue—the rules of discipline could not stifle their sense of mortification, and several of the grenadiers, who had deserved, and wore marks of distinction, called out from the ranks—"General, we have been misrepresented—Place us in the advance, and you may then judge whether we do not belong to the army of Italy." Buonaparte having produced the necessary effect, spoke to them in a more conciliatory tone; and the regiments who had undergone so severe a rebuke, redeemed their character in the subsequent part of the campaign.

While Napoleon was indefatigable in concentrating his troops on the right bank of the Adige, and inspiring them with his own spirit of enterprise, Alvinzi had taken his position on the left bank, nearly opposite to Verona. His army occupied a range of heights called Caldiero, on the left of which, and somewhat in the rear, is the little village of Arcola, situated among marshes, which extend around the foot of that eminence. Here the Austrian general had stationed himself, with a view, it may be supposed, to wait until Davidovich and his division should descend the right bank of the Adige, disquiet the French leader's position on that river, and give Alvinzi himself the opportunity of forcing a passage.

Buonaparte, with his usual rapidity of resolution, resolved to drive the Austrian from his position on Caldiero, before the arrival of Davidovich. But neither on this occasion was fortune propitious to him. A strong French division, under Massena, attacked the heights amid a storm of rain; but their most strenuous exertions proved completely unsuccessful, and left to
the general only his usual mode of concealing a check, by railing at the elements. The situation of the French became critical, and what was worse, the soldiers perceived it and complained that they had to sustain the whole burden of the war, had to encounter army after army, and must succumb at last under the renewed and unwearied efforts of Austria. Buonaparte par-ried these natural feelings as well as he could, promising that their conquest of Italy should be speedily sealed by the defeat of this Alvinzi; and he applied his whole genius to discover the means of bringing the war to an effective struggle, in which he confided that, in spite of numbers, his own talents, and the enterprising character of an army so often victorious, might assure him a favourable result. But it was no easy way to discover a mode of attack, with even plausible hopes of success. If he advanced northward on the right bank to seek out and destroy Davidovich, he must weaken his line on the Adige, by the troops withdrawn to effect that purpose; and during his absence, Alvinzi would probably force the passage of the river at some point, and thus have it in his power to relieve Mantua. The heights of Caldiero, occupied by the Austrian main-body, and lying in his front, had, by dire experiment proved impregnable. In these doubtful circumstances, the bold scheme occurred to the French general, that the position of Cal- diero, though it could not be stormed, might be turned, and that by possess- ing himself of the village of Arcola, which lies to the left, and in the rear of Caldiero, the Austrians might be compelled to fight to a disadvantage. But the idea of attacking Arcola was one which would scarce have occurred to any general save Buonaparte.

Arcola is situated upon a small stream called the Alpon, which as already hinted, finds its way into the Adige, through a wilderness of marshes, intersected with ditches, and traversed by dykes in various directions. In case of an unsuccessful attack, the assailants were like to be totally cut off in the swamps. Then to debouche from Verona, and move in the direction of Arcola, would have put Alvinzi and his whole army on their guard. Secrecy and celerity are the soul of enterprise. All these difficulties gave way before Napoleon’s genius.

Verona, it must be remembered, is on the left bank of the Adige,—on the same with the point which was the object of Buonaparte’s attack. At night-fall the whole forces of Verona were under arms; and leaving fifteen hundred men under Kilmaine to defend the place from any assault, with strict orders to secure the gates, and prevent all communication of his nocturnal expedition to the enemy, Buonaparte commenced his march at first to the rear, in the direction of Peschiera; which seemed to imply, that his resolution was at length taken to resign the hopes of gaining Mantua, and perhaps to aban- don Italy. The silence with which the march was conducted, the absence of all the usual rumours which used in the French army to precede a battle, and the discouraging situation of affairs, appeared to pressage the same issue. But after the troops had marched a little way in this direction, the heads of columns where wheeled to the left, out of the line of retreat, and descended the Adige as far as Roncon, which they reached before day. Here a bridge had been prepared, by which they passed over the river, and were placed on the same bank with Arcola, the object of their attack, and lower than the heights of Caldiero.

There were three causeways by which the march of Arcola is traversed—each was occupied by a French column. The central column moved on the causeway which led to the village so named. The dykes and causeways were not defended, but Arcola and its bridge were protected by two battalions of Croats with two pieces of cannon, which were placed in a position to enflame the causeway. These received the French column with so heavy a fire on its flank, that it fell back in disorder. Augereau rushed forward upon the bridge with his chosen grenadiers; but, enveloped as they were in a destructive fire, they were driven back on the main body.

Alvina, who conceived it only an affair of light troops, sent however forces into the marsh by means of the dykes which traversed them, to drive out the French. These were checked by finding that they were to oppose
strong columns of infantry, yet the battle continued with unabated vigour. It was essential to Buonaparte’s plan that Arcole should be carried; but the fire continued tremendous. At length, to animate his soldiers to a final exertion, he caught a stand of colours, rushed on the bridge, and planted them there with his own hand. A fresh body of Austrians arrived at that moment, and the fire on flank blazed more destructively than ever. The rear of the French column fell back; the leading files, finding themselves unsupported, gave way, but, still careful of their general, bore him back in their arms through the dead and dying, the fire and the smoke. In the confusion, he was at length pushed into the marsh. The Austrians were already betwixt him and his own troops, and he must have perished or been taken, had not the grenadiers perceived his danger. The cry instantly arose,—“Forward—forward—save the general!” Their love to Buonaparte’s person did more than even his commands and example had been able to accomplish. They returned to the charge, and at length pushed the Austrians out of the village; but not till the appearance of a French corps under general Guienx had turned the position, and he had thrown himself in the rear of it. These succours had passed to the ferry of Alborado, and the French remained in possession of the long contested village. It was at the moment a place of the greatest importance; for the possession of it would have enabled Buonaparte, had the Austrians remained in their position, to operate on their communications with the Brenta, interpose between Alvinzi and his reserves, and destroy his park of artillery. But the risk was avoided by the timely caution of the Austrian field-marshal.

Alvinzi was no sooner aware that a great division of the French army was in his rear, than, without allowing them time for further operations, he instantly broke up his position on Caldiero, and evacuated these heights by a steady and orderly retreat. Buonaparte had the mortification to see the Austrians effect this manoeuvre by crossing a bridge in their rear over the Alpon, and which could he have occupied, as was his purpose, he might have rendered their retreat impossible, or at least disastrous. As matters stood, however, the village of Arcole came to lose its consequence as a position, since, after Alvinzi’s retreat, it was no longer in the rear, but in the front of the enemy. Buonaparte remembered he had enemies on the right as well as the left of the Adige; and that Davidovich might be once more routing Vaubois, while he was too far advanced to afford him assistance. He therefore evacuated Arcole, and the village of Porci, situated near it, and retreating to Ronco, re-crossed the river, leaving only two demi-brigades in advance upon the left bank. The first battle of Arcole, famous for the obstinacy with which it was disputed, and the number of brave officers and men who fell, was thus attended with no decisive result. But it had checked the inclination of Alvinzi to advance on Verona—it had delayed all communication betwixt his army and that of the Tyrol—above all, it had renewed the Austrians’ apprehensions of the skill of Buonaparte and the bravery of his troops, and restored to the French soldiery the usual confidence of their national character.

Buonaparte remained stationary at Ronco until next morning at five o’clock, by which time he received intelligence that Davidovich had lain quiet in his former position; that he had no cause to be alarmed for Vaubois’ safety, and might therefore operate in security against Alvinzi. This was rendered the more easy, (16th of November) as the Austrian general, not aware of Buonaparte’s having halted his army at Ronco, imagined he was on his march to concentrate the forces nearer Mantua, and hastened therefore to overwhelm the rear-guard, whom he expected to find at the ferry. Buonaparte spared them the trouble of a close advance to the Adige. He again crossed to the left side, and again advanced his columns upon the dykes and causeways which traversed the marshes of Arcole. On such ground, where it was impossible to assign to the columns more breadth than the causeways could accommodate, the victorious soldiers of France had great advantage over the recent levies of Austria; for though the latter might be superior in number on the whole, success must in such a case depend on the
personal superiority of the front or leading files only. The French, therefore, had the first advantage, and drove back the Austrians upon the village of Arcole; but here, as on the former day, Alvinzi constituted his principal point of defence, and maintained it with the utmost obstinacy. After having repeatedly failed when attacking in front a post so difficult of approach, Napoleon endeavoured to turn the position by crossing the little river Alpon, near its union with the Adige. He attempted to effect a passage by means of fascines, but unsuccessfully; and the night approached without any thing effectual being decided. Both parties drew off; the French to Ronco, where they re-crossed the Adige; the Austrians to a position behind the well-contested village of Arcola. The battle of the 16th of November was thus far favourable to the French, that they had driven back the Austrians, and made many prisoners in the commencement of the day; but they had also lost many men; and Napoleon, if he had gained ground in the day, was glad to return to his position at night, lest Davidovich, by the defeat of Vaubois, might either relieve Mantua, or move on Verona. The 17th was to be a day more decisive.

The field of battle and the preliminary manoeuvres, were much the same as on the preceding day; but those of the French were nearly disconcerted by the sinking of one of the boats which constituted their bridge over the Adige. The Austrians instantly advanced on the demi-brigade, which had been stationed on the left bank to defend the bridge. But the French, having repaired the damage, advanced in their turn, and compelled the Austrians to retreat upon the marsh. Massena directed his attack on Porcell—general Robert pressed forward on Arcola. But it was at the point where he wished to cross the Alpon that Buonaparte chiefly desired to attain a decided superiority; and in order to win it, he added stratagem to audacity. Observing one of his columns repulsed, and retreating along the causeway, he placed the 92d regiment in ambuscade in a thicket of willows which bordered the rivulet, and saluting the pursuing enemy with a close, heavy, and unexpected fire, instantly rushed to close with the bayonet, and attacking the flank of a column of nearly three thousand Croats, forced them into the marsh, where most of them perished. It was now that, after a calculation of the losses sustained by the enemy, Napoleon conceived their numerical superiority so far diminished, and their spirit so much broken, that he need no longer confine his operations to the dykes, but meet his enemy on the firm plain which extended beyond the Alpon. He passed the brook by means of a temporary bridge which had been prepared during night; and the battle raged as fiercely on the dry level, as it had done on the dykes and amongst the marshes.

The Austrians fought with resolution, the rather that their left, though stationed on dry ground, was secured by a marsh which Buonaparte had no means of turning. But though this was the case, Napoleon contrived to gain his point by impressing on the enemy an idea that he had actually accomplished that which he had no means of doing. This he effected by sending a daring officer, with about thirty of the guides, (his own body—guards they may be called) with four trumpets; and directing these determined cavaliers to charge, and the trumpets to sound, as if a large body of horse had crossed the marsh. Augereau attacked the Austrian left at the same moment; and a fresh body of troops advancing from Legnago, compelled them to retreat, but not to fly. Alvinzi was now compelled to give way, and commence his retreat on Montebello. He disposed seven thousand men in echelons to cover this movement, which was accomplished without very much loss; but his ranks had been much thinned by the slaughter of the three battles of Arcola. Eight thousand men has been stated as the amount of his losses. The French, who made so many and so sanguinary assaults upon the villages, must also have suffered a great deal. Buonaparte acknowledges this in energetic terms. "Never," he writes to Carnot, "was field of battle so disputed. "I have scarce any generals remaining.—I can assure you that the victory "could not have been gained at a cheaper expense. The enemy were nu- "merous, and desperately resolute." The truth is, that Buonaparte's mode
of striking terror by these bloody and desperate charges, in front upon strong positions, was a blemish in his system. They cost many men, and were not uniformly successful. That of Arcola was found a vain waste of blood, till science was employed instead of main force, when the position was turned by Guieu on the first day; on the third, by the troops that crossed the Alpion.

The tardy conduct of Davidovich, during these three undecided days of slaughterous struggle, is worthy of notice and censure. It would appear that from the 10th of November that general had it in his power to attack the division which he had hitherto driven before him, and that he had delayed doing so till the 16th; and on the 18th, just the day after Alvinzi had made his retreat, he approached Verona on the right bank. Had these movements taken place before Alvinzi's defeat, or even during any of the three days preceding, when the French were engaged before Arcola, the consequences must have been very serious. Finding, however, that Alvinzi had retreated, Davidovich followed the same course, and withdrew into the mountains, not much annoyed by the French, who respected the character of his army, which had been repeatedly victorious, and felt the weakness incident to their own late losses. Another incidental circumstance tends equally strong to mark the want of concert and communication among the Austrian generals. Wurmser, who had remained quiet in Mantua during all the time when Alvinzi and Davidovich were in the neighbourhood, made a vigorous sally on the 23rd of November; when his doing so was of little consequence, since he could not be supported.

Thus ended the fourth campaign, undertaken for the Austrian possessions in Italy. The consequences were not so decidedly in Buonaparte's favour as those of the three former. Mantua, it is true, had received no relief; and so far the principal object of the Austrians had miscarried. But Wurmser was of a temper to continue the defence till the last moment, and had already provided for a longer defence than the French counted upon, by curtailing the rations of the garrison. The armies of Friuli and the Tyrol had also, since the last campaign, retained possession of Bassano and Trent, and removed the French from the mountains through which access is gained to the Austrian hereditary dominions. Neither had Alvinzi suffered any such heavy defeat as his predecessors Beaulieu or Wurmser; while Davidovich, on the contrary, was uniformly successful, had he known how to avail himself of his victories. Still the Austrians were not likely, till re-inforced again, to interrupt Buonaparte's quiet possession of Lombardy.

LETTER XXX.

Italian campaign of 1797.—Contest at La Favorita.—Fall of Mantua.—
Popularity of Buonaparte.—Proposes terms to the pope.—Invades the Papal territories.—View of the situation of the different Italian states—
Rome—Naples—Tuscany—Venice.—Napoleon compels the archduke Charles to retreat.—Conduct of Venice.—Armistice between France and Austria.—
Treaty of Leoben signed.—Buonaparte declares war against Venice, &c.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The eyes of all Europe were now riveted on Napoleon Buonaparte, whose rise had been so sudden that he had become the terror of empires and the founder of states; the conqueror of the best generals and most disciplined troops in Europe, within a few months after he had been a mere soldier of fortune, seeking rather for a subsistence than expecting honourable distinc- tion. Such sudden elevations have occasionally happened amid semi-barbarous nations, where great popular insurrections, desolating and decisive revolu- tions, are common occurrences, but were hitherto unheard of in civilized Europe.
The pre-eminence which he had suddenly obtained had, besides, been subjected to so many trials, as to afford every proof of its permanence. Napoleon stood aloft like a cliff on which successive tempests had expended their rage in vain. The means which raised him were equally competent to make good his greatness. He had infused into the armies which he commanded the firmest reliance on his genius, and the greatest love for his person; so that he could always find agents ready to execute his most difficult commands. He had even inspired them with a portion of his own indefatigable exertion and his commanding intelligence. The maxim which he inculcated upon them when practising those long and severe marches which formed one essential part of his system, was, "I would rather gain victory at the expense of your legs than at the price of your blood." The French, under his training, seemed to become the very men he wanted, and to forget in the excitement of war and the hope of victory, even the feelings of weariness and exhaustion. The following description of the French soldier by Napoleon himself occurs in his dispatches to the Directory during his first campaign in Italy:—

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

To command this active, intelligent, and intrepid soldiery, Buonaparte possessed officers entirely worthy of the charge; men young, or at least not advanced in years, to whose ambition the revolution, and the wars which it had brought on, had opened an unlimited career, and whose genius was inspired by the plans of their leader, and the success which attended them. Buonaparte, who had his eye on every man, never neglected to distribute rewards and punishments, praise and censure, with a liberal hand, or omitted to press for what latterly was rarely if ever denied to him—the promotion of such officers as particularly distinguished themselves. He willingly assumed the task of soothing the feelings of those whose relatives had fallen under his banners. His letter of consolation to general Clarke, upon the death of young Clarke his nephew, who fell at Arcola, is affecting, as showing that amid all his victories he felt himself the object of reproach and criticism. His keen sensitiveness to the attacks of the public press attended him through life, and, like the slave in the triumphal car, seemed to remind him that he was still a mortal man.

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

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

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

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

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

Buonaparte affected to consider these preparations as designed against the
French; and marching a body of troops, took possession of the city without
resistance, deprived the duke of all the advantages which he had purchased
by the mediation of the celebrated Saint Jerome, and declared the town un-
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Under protection of France. Bologna and Ferrara, legations belonging to the Papal See, had been already occupied by French troops, and placed under the management of a committee of their citizens. They were now encouraged to coalesce with Reggio and Modena. A congress of an hundred de-
legates from the four districts was summoned, to effect the formation of a government, which should extend over them all. The congress met accord-
ingly, engaged their constituents in a perpetual union, under the title of the Cispadane republic, from their situation on the right of the river Po; thus assuming the character of independence, while in fact they remained under the authority of Buonaparte, like clay in the hands of the potter, who may ultimately model it into any shape he has a mind. In the mean time, he was careful to remind them, that the liberty which it was desirable to establish, ought to be consistent with due subjection to the laws. "Never forget," he said, in reply to their address announcing their new form of government, "that laws are mere nullities without the force necessary to support them.

"Attend to your military organization," which you have the means of placing "on a respectable footing—you will be more fortunate than the people of "France, for you will arrive at liberty without passing through the ordeal "of revolution."

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

If Buonaparte may be justly charged with want of faith, in destroying the authority of the duke of Modena, after having accepted of a price for granting him peace and protection, we cannot object to him the same charge for acceding to the Transpadane republic, in so far as it detached the legations of Ferrara and Bologna from the Roman See. These had been in a great measure reserved for the disposal of the French, as circumstances should dic-
tate, when a final treaty should take place betwixt the republic and the so-
vereign pontiff. But many circumstances had retarded this pacification, and seemed at length likely to break it off without hope of renewal. If Buon-
aparte is correct in his statement, which we see no reason to doubt, the delay of a pacification with the Roman See was chiefly the fault of the directory, whose avaricious and engrossing spirit was at this period its most distinguish-
ing characteristic. An armistice, purchased by treasure, by contributions, by pictures and statues, and by the cession of the two legations of Bologna and Ferrara, having been mediated for his holiness by the Spanish ambassador Azara, the pope sent two plenipotentiaries to Paris to treat of a definitive peace. But the conditions proposed were so severe, that however desperate his condition, the pope found them totally inadmissible. His holiness was required to pay a large contribution in grain for ten years, a regular tribute of six millions of Roman crowns for six years, to code to France in perpetuity
the ports of Ancona and Civita Vecchia, and to declare the independence of Ferrara, Bologna, and Ravenna. To add insult to oppression, the total cession of the Clementine Museum was required, and it was stipulated that France should have under management of her minister at Rome, a separate tribunal for judging her subjects, and a separate theatre for their amusement. Lastly, the secular sovereignty of the dominions of the church was to be executed by a senate and a popular body. These demands might have been complied with, although they went the length of entirely stripping his holiness of the character of a secular prince; but there were others made on him, in capacity of head of the church, which he could not grant, if he meant in future to lay claim to any authority under that once venerable title. The sovereign pontiff was required to re-call all the briefs which he had issued against France since 1769, to sanction the constitutional oath which released the French clergy from the dominion of the holy see, and to ratify the confiscation of the church-lands. Treasures might be expended, secular dignities resigned, and provinces ceded; but it was clear that the sovereign pontiff could not do what was expressly contrary to the doctrines of the church which he represented. There were but few clergyman in France who had hesitated to prove their devotion to the church of Rome, by submitting to expulsion, rather than take the constitutional oath. It was now for the head of the church to show in his own person a similar disinterested devotion to her interests. Accordingly, the College of Cardinals having rejected the proposals of France, as containing articles contrary to conscience, the pope declared his determination to abide by the utmost extremity, rather than accede to conditions destructive, degrading, and, in his opinion, impious. The directory instantly determined on the total ruin of the pope, and of his power, both spiritual and temporal.

Napoleon dissented from the opinion of the government. In point of moral effect, a re-conciliation with the pope would have been of great advantage to France, and have tended to re-unite her with other Catholic nations, and diminish the horror with which she was regarded as sacrilegious and atheistical. Even the army of the Holy See was not altogether to be despised, in case of any reverse taking place in the war with the Austrians. Under these considerations, he prevailed on the directory to renew the negotiations at Florence. But the French commissioners, having presented as preliminaries sixty indispensable conditions, containing the same articles which had been already rejected, as contrary to the conscience of the pontiff, the conferences broke up; and the pope, in despair, resolved to make common cause with the house of Austria, and have recourse to the secular force, which the Roman see had disused for so many years. It was a case of dire necessity; but the arming of the pope’s government, whose military force had been long the subject of ridicule, against the victorious conqueror of five Austrian armies, reminds us of Piam, when, in extremity of years and despair, he buckled on his rusty armour, to oppose age and decrepitude to the youthful strength of Pyrrhus. Yet the measures of Sextus indicated considerable energy. He brought back to Rome an instalment of sixteen millions of stipulated tribute, which was on the road to Buonaparte’s military chest—took every measure to increase his army, and by the voluntary exertions of the noble families at Rome, he actually raised it to forty thousand men, and placed at its head the same general Coll, who had commanded with credit the troops of Sardinia during the campaign on the Alps. The utmost pains were taken by the clergy, both regular and secular, to give the expected war the character of a crusade, and to excite the fierce spirit of those peasantry who inhabit the Appenines, and were doubly disposed to be hostile to the French, as foreigners and as heretics. The pope also endeavoured to form a close alliance with the king of the two Sicilies, who promised in secret to cover Rome with an army of thirty thousand men. Little reliance was indeed to be placed in the good faith of the court of Naples; but the pope was compared, by the French envoy, to a man who, in the act of falling, would grasp for support at a hook of red-hot iron.

While the court of Rome showed this hostile disposition, Napoleon re-
proached the French government for having broke off the negotiation, which they ought to have protracted till the event of Alvinci’s march into Italy was known; at all events, until their general had obtained possession of the sixteen millions, so much wanted to pay his forces. In reply to his remonstrances, he received permission to renew the negotiations upon modified terms. But the pope had gone too far to recede. Even the French victory of Arcola, and the instant threats of Buonaparte to march against him at the head of a flying column, were unable to move his resolution. “Let the French general march upon Rome,” said the papal minister; “the pope, if necessary, will quit his capital. The farther the French are drawn from the Adige, the nearer they are to their ultimate destruction.” Napoleon was sensible on receiving a hostile answer, that the pope still relied on the last preparations which were made for the relief of Mantua, and it was not safe to attempt his chastisement until Alvinci and Provers should be disposed of. But the decisive battles of Rivoli and La Favorita having ruined these armies, Napoleon was at leisure to execute his purpose of crushing the power, such as it was, of the Holy See. For this purpose he dispatched Victor with a French division of four thousand men, and an Italian army of nearly the same force, supplied by Lombardy and the Transpadane republic, to invade the territories of the church on the eastern side of Italy, by the route of Imola. Meantime, the utmost exertions had been made by the clergy of Romagna, to raise the peasants in a mass, and a great many obeyed the sound of the tocsin. But an insurrectionary force is more calculated to embarrass the movements of a regular army, by alarms on their flanks and rear, by cutting off their communications, and destroying their supplies, defending passes, and skirmishing in advantageous positions, than by opposing them in the open field. The papal army, consisting of about seven or eight thousand men, were encamped on the river Senio, which runs on the southward of the town of Imola, to dispute the passage. The banks were defended with cannon; but the river being unusually low, the French crossed about a league and a half higher up than the position of the Roman army, which, taken in the rear, fled in every direction, after a short resistance. A few hundreds were killed, among whom were several monks, who, holding the crucifix in their hand, had placed themselves in the ranks to encourage the soldiers. Faenza held out, and was taken by storm; but the soldiers were withheld from pillage by the generosity, or prudence of Napoleon, and he dismissed the prisoners of war to carry into the interior of the country the news of their own defeat, of the irresistible superiority of the French army, and the clemency of their general. Next day, three thousand of the papal troops, occupying an advantageous position in front of Ancona, and commanded by Colli, were made prisoners without firing a shot; and Ancona was taken after slight resistance, though a place of some strength. A curious piece of priestcraft had been played off in this town, to encourage the people to resistance. A miraculous image was seen to shed tears, and the French artists could not discover the mode in which the trick was managed until the image was brought to head-quarters, when a glass shrine, by which the illusion was managed, was removed. The Madonna was sent back to the church which owned her, but apparently had become reconciled to the foreign visitors, and dried her tears in consequence of her interview with Buonaparte.

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

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

From Ancona the division commanded by Victor turned westward to Foligno, to unite itself with another column of French which penetrated into the territories of the church by Perugia, which they easily accomplished. Resistance seemed now unavailing. The pope in vain solicited his subjects to rise against the second Alaric, who was approaching the holy city. They remained deaf to his exhortations, though made in the names of the Blessed Virgin, and of the apostles Peter and Paul, who had of old been the visible protectors of the metropolis of the Christian world in a similar emergency. All was dismay and confusion in the patrimony of Saint Peter's, which was now the sole territory remaining in possession of his representative. But there was an unhappy class of persons, who had found shelter in Rome, rather than disown whose allegiance they had left their homes, and resigned their means of living. These were the recusant French clergy, who had refused to take the constitutional oath, and who now, recollecting the scenes which they witnessed in France, expected little else, than that, on the approach of the republican troops, they would, like the Israelish captain, be slain between the horns of the very altar at which they had taken refuge. It is said that one of their number, frantic at the thoughts of the fate which he supposed awaited them, presented himself to Buonaparte, announced his name and condition, and prayed to be led to instant death. Napoleon took the opportunity to show once more that he was acting on principles different from the brutal and persecuting spirit of Jacobinism. He issued a proclamation, in which, premising that the recusant priests, though banished from the French territory, were not prohibited from residing in countries which might be conquered by the French arms, he declares himself satisfied with their conduct. The proclamation goes on to prohibit, under the most severe penalty, the French soldiery, and all other persons, from doing any injury to these unfortunate exiles. The convents are directed to afford them lodging, nourishment, and fifteen French livres (twelve shillings and sixpence British) monthly, to each individual, for which the priest was to compensate by saying masses ad velorem;—thus assigning the Italian convents payment for their hospitality, in the same coin with which they themselves required the laity.

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

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

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

Rome might, for the present at least, be considered as completely subjugated. Naples was at peace, if the signature of a treaty can create peace. At any rate, so distant from Rome, and so controlled by the defeat of the papal arms—by the fear that the English fleet might be driven from the Mediterranean—and by their distance from the scene of action—the king of the Two Sicilies, or rather his wife, the high spirited daughter of Maria Theresa, dared not offer the least interference with the purposes of the French general. Tuscany had apparently consented to owe her political existence to any degree of clemency or contempt which Buonaparte might extend to her; and, entertaining hopes of some convention betwixt the French and the English, by which the grand duke's port of Leghorn might be restored to him, remained passive as the dead. The republic of Venice alone, feeling still the stimulus arising from her ancient importance, and yet painlessly conscious of her present want of power, strained every exertion to place herself in a respectable attitude. That city of lofty remembrances, the Tyre of the middle ages, whose traders were princes, and her merchants the honourable of the earth, fallen as she was from her former greatness, still presented some appearance of vigour. Her oligarchical government, so long known and so dreaded, for jealous precautions, political sagacity, the impenetrability of their plans, and the inflexibility of their vigour, still preserved the attitude of independence, and endeavoured, by raising additional regiments of Sclavonians, disciplining their peasantry, who were of a very martial character, and forming military magazines of considerable extent, to maintain such an aspect, as might make their friendship to be courted, and their enmity to be feared. It was already evident that the Austrians, notwithstanding all their recent defeats, were again about to make head on their Italo-German frontier; and France, in opposing them, could not be indifferent to the neutrality of Venice, upon whose territories, to all appearance, Buonaparte must have rested the flank of his operations, in case of his advancing towards Friuli. So circumstanced, and when it was recollected that the mistress of the Adriatic had still fifty thousand men at her command, and those of a fierce and courageous description, chiefly consisting of Sclavonians, Venice, even yet, was an enemy not to be lightly provoked. But the inhabitants were not unanimous, especially those of the Terra Firma, or mainland, who, not being enrolled in the golden book of the insular nobility of Venice, were discontented, and availed themselves of the encouragement and assistance of the new-created republics on the Po to throw off their allegiance. Brescia and Bergamo, in particular, were clamorous for independence.

Napoleon saw, in this state of dissension, the means of playing an adroit game; and while, on the one hand, he endeavoured to restrain, till a more favourable opportunity, the ardour of the patriots, he attempted, on the
other, to convince the senate, that they had no safe policy but in embracing at once the alliance of France, offensive and defensive, and joining their forces with those of the army with which he was about to move against the Austrians. He offered, on these conditions, to guarantee the possessions of the republic, even without exacting any modification of their oligarchical constitution. But Venice declared for an impartial neutrality. It had been, they said, their ancient and sage policy, nor would they now depart from it. "Remain then neuter," said Napoleon; "I consent to it. I march upon "Vienna, yet will leave enough of French troops in Italy to control your re- "public.—But dismiss these new levies; and remark, that if, while I am in "Germany, my communications shall be interrupted, my detachments cut "off, or my convoys intercepted in the Venetian territory, the date of your "republic is terminated. She will have brought on herself annihilation."

Lest these threats should be forgotten while he was at a distance, he took the best precautions in his power, by garrisoning advantageous points on the line of the Adige; and trusting partly to this defence, partly to the insurgents of Bergamo and Brescia, who, for their own sakes, would oppose any invasion of the mainland by their Venetian masters, whose yoke they had cast aside, Napoleon again unfurled his banners, and marched to new triumphs over yet untired opponents.

By the direction of the Aulic council, the archduke Charles had taken up his position at Friuli, where it had been settled that the sixth Austrian army, designed to act against Buonaparte for the defence of the Italo-German frontier, should be assembled. This position was strangely preferred to the Tyrol, where the archduke could have formed a junction ten days sooner with an additional force of forty thousand men from the army of the Rhine, marching to re-inforce his own troops,—men accustomed to fight and conquer under their leader's eye; whilst those with whom he occupied Friuli, and the line of the Piave, belonged to the hapless imperial forces, which, under Beaulieu, Wurmser, and Alvinzi, had never encountered Buonaparte without incurring some notable defeat.

While the archduke was yet expecting those re-inforcements which were to form the strength of his army, his active adversary was strengthened by more than twenty thousand men, sent from the French armies on the Rhine, and which gave him at the moment a numerical superiority over the Austrian general. Instead, therefore, of waiting, as on former occasions, until the Imperialists should commence the war by descending into Italy, Napoleon resolved to anticipate the march of the succours expected by the archduke, drive him from his position on the Italian frontiers, and follow him into Germany, even up to the walls of Vienna. No scheme appeared too bold for the general's imagination to form, or his genius to render practicable; and his soldiers, with the view before them of plunging into the midst of an immense empire, and placing chains of mountains betwixt them and every possibility of re-inforcement or communication, were so confident in the talents of their leader, as to follow him under the most undoubted expectation of victory. The directory had induced Buonaparte to expect a co-operation by a similar advance on the part of the armies of the Rhine, as had been attempted in the former campaign.

Buonaparte took the field in the beginning of March, 1797, advancing from Bassano. The Austrians had an army of observation under Lusignan on the banks of the Piave, but their principal force was stationed upon the Tagliamento, a river whose course is nearly thirty miles more to the eastward, though collateral with the Piave. The plains on the Tagliamento afforded facilities to the archduke to employ the noble cavalry which have always been the boast of the Austrian army; and to deliberate him from the strong and mountainous country which he occupied, and which covered the road that penetrates between the mountains and the Adriatic, and forms the mode of communication in that quarter betwixt Vienna and Italy, through Carinthia, it was not only necessary that he should be pressed in front, a service which Buonaparte took upon himself, but also that a French division, occupying the mountains on the prince's right, should precipitate his retreat by main-
taining the perpetual threat of turning him on that wing. With this view, Massena had Buonaparte's orders, which he executed with equal skill and gallantry. He crossed the Piave about the 11th of March, and ascending that river, directed his course into the mountains towards Balluno, driving before him Lusignan's little corps of observation, and finally compelling his rear-guard, to the number of five hundred men, to surrender.

The archduke Charles, in the mean time, continued to maintain his position on the Tagliamento, and the French approached the right bank, with Napoleon at their head, determined apparently to force a passage. Artillery and sharp-shooters were disposed in such a manner as to render this a very hazardous attempt, while two beautiful lines of cavalry were drawn up prepared to charge any troops who might make their way to the left bank, while they were yet in the confusion of landing. A very simple stratagem disconcerted this fair display of resistance. After a distant cannonade, and some skirmishing, the French army drew off, as if despairing to force their passage, moved to the rear, and took up apparently their bivouac for the night. The archduke was deceived. He imagined that the French, who had marched all the preceding night, were fatigued, and he also withdrew from the banks of the river to his camp. But two hours afterwards, when all seemed profoundly quiet, the French army suddenly got under arms, and, forming in two lines, marched rapidly to the side of the river, ere the astonished Austrians were able to make the same dispositions as formerly for defence. Arrived on the margin, the first line instantly broke up into columns, which throwing themselves boldly into the stream, protected on the flanks by the cavalry, passed through and attained the opposite bank. They were repeatedly charged by the Austrian cavalry, but it was too late—they had gotten their footing, and kept it. The archduke attempted to turn their flank, but was prevented by the second line of the French, and by their reserve of cavalry. He was compelled to retreat, leaving prisoners and cannon in the hands of the enemy. Such was the first disastrous meeting between the archduke Charles and his future relative. The Austrian prince had the farther misfortune to learn, that Massena had, at the first sound of the cannonade, rushed across the Tagliamento, higher up than his line of defence, and destroying what troops he found before him, had occupied the passes of the Julian Alps at the sources of that river, and thus interposed himself between the imperial right wing and the nearest communication with Vienna. Sensible of the importance of this obstacle, the archduke hastened, if possible, to remove it. He brought up a fine column of grenadiers from the Rhine, which had just arrived at Klagenfurt, in his rear, and joining them to other troops, attacked Massena with the utmost fury, venturing his own person like a private soldier, and once or twice narrowly escaping being made prisoner. It was in vain—all in vain. He charged successively and repeatedly, even with the reserve of the grenadiers, but no exertion could change the fortune of the day. Still the archduke hoped to derive assistance from the natural or artificial defences of the strong country through which he was thus retreating, and in doing so was involuntarily introducing Buonaparte, after he should have surmounted the border frontier, into the most fertile provinces of his brother's empire. The Lisonzo usually a deep and furious torrent, closed in by a chain of impassable mountains, seemed to oppose an insurmountable barrier to his daring pursuers. But nature, as well as events, fought against the Austrians. The stream, reduced by frost, was fordable in several places. The river thus passed, the town of Gradisca, which had been covered with field-works to protect the line of the Lisonzo, was surprised and carried by storm, and its garrison of two thousand five hundred men made prisoners, by the divisions of Bernadotte and Serrurier.

Pushed in every direction, the Austrians sustained every day additional and more severe losses. The strong fort of Chiuse-Veneta was occupied by Massena, who continued his active and indefatigable operations on the right of the retreating army. This success caused the envelopment, and dispersion or surrender, of a whole division of Austrians, five thousand of whom remained prisoners, while their baggage, cannon, colours, and all that
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constituted them an army, fell into the hands of the French. Four generals were made prisoners on this occasion; and many of the mountaineers of Carniola, and Croatia, who had joined the Austrian army from their natural love of war, seeing that success appeared to have abandoned the Imperial cause, became despondent, broke up their corps, and retired as stragglers to their villages. Buonaparte availed himself of their loss of courage, and had recourse to proclamations, a species of arms which he valued himself as much upon using to advantage, as he did upon his military fame. He assured them that the French did not come into their country to innovate on their rights, religious customs, and manners. He exhorted them not to meddle in a war with which they had no concern, but encouraged them to afford assistance and furnish supplies to the French army, in payment of which he proposed to assign the public taxes which they had been in the habit of paying to the emperor. His proposal seems to have reconciled the Carinthians to the presence of the French, or, more properly speaking, they submitted to the military exactions which they had no means of resisting. In the mean while, the French took possession of Triest and Fiume, the only sea ports belonging to Austria, where they seized much English merchandise, which was always a welcome prize, and of the quicksilver mines of Idria, where they found a valuable deposit of that mineral.

Napoleon repaired the fortifications of Klagenfurt, and converted it into a respectable place of arms, where he established his head-quarters. In a space of scarce twenty days, he had defeated the Austrians in ten combats, in the course of which prince Charles had lost at least one-fourth of his army. The French had surmounted the southern chain of the Julian Alps; the northern line could, it was supposed, offer no obstacle sufficient to stop their irresistible general; and the archduke, the pride and hope of the Austrian armies, had retired behind the river Meurh, and seemed to be totally without the means of covering Vienna. There were, however, circumstances less favourable to the French, which require to be stated. When the campaign commenced, the French general Joubert was posted with his division in the gorge of the Tyrol above Trent, upon the same river Levissa, the line of which had been lost and won during the preceding winter. He was opposed by the Austrian generals Kerpen and Laudon, who, besides some regular regiments, had collected around them a number of the Tyrolese militia, who among their own mountains were at least equally formidable. They remained watching each other during the earlier part of the campaign; but the gaining of the battle of Tagliamento was the signal for Joubert to commence the offensive. His directions were to push his way through the Tyrol to Brixen, at which place Napoleon expected he might hear news of the advance of the French armies from the Rhine, to co-operate in the march upon Vienna. But the directory, fearing perhaps to trust nearly the whole force of the republic in the hands of a general so successful and so ambitious as Napoleon, had not as yet crossed the Rhine.

Joubert, thus disappointed of his promised object, began to find himself in an embarrassing situation. The whole country was in insurrection around him, and a retreat in the line by which he had advanced, might have exposed him to great loss, if not to destruction. He determined, therefore, to elude the enemy, and, by descending the river Drave, to achieve a junction with his commander-in-chief Napoleon. He accomplished his difficult march by breaking down the bridges behind him, and thus arresting the progress of the enemy; but it was with difficulty, and not without loss, that he effected his proposed union, and his retreat from the Tyrol gave infinite spirit not only to the martial Tyrolese, but to all the favours of Austria in the north of Italy. The Austrian general Laudon, sallied from the Tyrol at the head of a considerable force, and compelled the slender body of French under Balland, to shut themselves up in garrisons; and their opponents were for the moment again lords of a part of Lombardy. They also re-occupied Triest and Fiume, which Buonaparte had not been able sufficiently to garrison; so that the rear of the French army seemed to be endangered.
The Venetians, at this crisis, fatally for their ancient republic, if indeed its doom had not, as is most likely, been long before sealed, received with eager ears the accounts, exaggerated as they were by rumour, that the French were driven from the Tyrol, and the Austrians about to descend the Adige, and resume their ancient empire in Italy. The senate were aware that neither their government nor their persons were acceptable to the French general, and that they had offended him irreconcilably by declining the intimate alliance and contribution of troops which he had demanded. He had parted from them with such menaces as were not easily to be misunderstood. They believed, if his vengeance might not be instant, it was only the more sure; and conceiving him now deeply engaged in Germany, and surrounded by the Austrian levies en masse from the warlike countries of Hungary and Croatia, they imagined that throwing their own weight into the scale at so opportune a moment, must weigh it down for ever. To chastise their insurgent subjects of Bergamo and Brescia, was an additional temptation. Their mode of making war savoured of the ancient vindictive temper ascribed to their countrymen. An insurrection was secretly organised through all the territories which Venice still possessed on the main land, and broke out, like the celebrated Sicilian vespers, in blood and massacre. In Verona they assassinated more than a hundred Frenchmen, many of them sick soldiers in the hospitals,—an abominable cruelty, which could not fail to bring a curse on their undertaking. Fioravante, a Venetian general, marched at the head of a body of Sclavonians to besiege the forts of Verona, into which the remaining French had made their retreat, and where they defended themselves. Laudon made his appearance with his Austrians and Tyrolese, and it seemed as if the fortunes of Buonaparte had at length found a check. But the awakening from this pleasing dream was equally sudden and dreadful. News arrived that preliminaries of peace had been agreed upon, and an armistice signed between France and Austria. Laudon, therefore, and the auxiliaries on whom the Venetians had so much relied, retired from Verona. The Lombards sent an army to the assistance of the French. The Sclavonians, under Fioravante, after fighting vigorously, were compelled to surrender. The insurgent towns of Vicenza, Treviso, and Padua, were again occupied by the Republicans. Rumour proclaimed the terrible return of Napoleon and his army, and the ill-advised senate of Venice were lost in stupor, and scarce had sense left to decide betwixt unreserved submission and hopeless defence.

It was one of the most artful rules in Buonaparte's policy, that when he had his enemy at decided advantage, by some point having been attained which seemed to give a complete turn to the campaign in his favour, he seldom failed to offer peace, and peace upon conditions much more favourable than perhaps the opposite party expected. By doing this, he secured such immediate and undisputed fruits of his victory, as the treaty of peace contained; and he was sure of means to prosecute farther advantages at some future opportunity. He obtained, moreover, the character of generosity; and, in the present instance, he avoided the great danger of urging to bay so formidable a power as Austria, whose despair might be capable of the most formidable efforts. With this purpose, and assuming for the first time that disregard for the usual ceremonial of courts, and etiquette of politics, which he afterwards seemed to have pleasure in displaying, he wrote a letter in person to the archduke Charles on the subject of peace. This composition affects that abrupt laconic severity of style, which cuts short argument, by laying down general maxims of philosophy of a trite character, and breaks through the usual laboured periphrastic introductions with which ordinary politicians preface their proposals, when desirous of entering upon a treaty.

"It is the part of a brave soldier," he said, "to make war, but to wish for peace. The present strife has lasted six years. Have we not yet slain enough of men, and sufficiently outraged humanity? Peace is demanded on all sides. Europe at large has laid down the arms assumed against the French republic. Your nation remains alone in hostility, and yet blood flows faster than ever. This sixth campaign has commenced under omi-
"nous circumstances—End how it will, some thousands of men more will be
slain on either side; and at length, after all, we must come to an agree-
ment, for every thing must have an end at last, even the angry passions of
men. The executive directory made known to the emperor their desire
to put a period to the war which desolates both countries, but the inter-
vention of the court of London opposed it. Is there then no means of com-
ing to an understanding, and must we continue to cut each other's throats
for the interests or passions of a nation, herself a stranger to the miseries
of war? You, the general-in-chief, who approach by birth so near to the
crown, and are above all those petty passions which agitate ministers, and the
members of government, will you resolve to be the benefactor of mankind,
and the true saviour of Germany? Do not suppose that I mean by that
expression to intimate, that it is impossible for you to defend yourself by
force of arms; but under the supposition, that fortune were to become
favourable to you, Germany would be equally exposed to ravage. With
respect to my own feelings, General, if this proposition should be the
means of saving one single man’s life, I should prefer a civic crown so me-
rited, to the melancholy glory attending military success." The whole
tone of the letter is ingeniously calculated to give the proposition the char-
acter of moderation, and at the same time to avoid the appearance of too
ready an advance towards his object. The archduke, after a space of two
days, returned this brief answer, in which he stripped Buonaparte’s proposal
of its gilding, and treated it upon the footing of an ordinary proposal for a
treaty of peace, made by a party, who finds it convenient for his interest:—
“Unquestionably, sir, in making war, and in following the road prescribed by
honour and duty, I desire as much as you the attainment of peace for the
happiness of the people, and of humanity. Considering, however, that in the
situation which I hold, it is no part of my business to inquire into and de-
temine the quarrel of the belligerent powers; and that I am not furnish-
ed on the part of the emperor with any plenipotentiary powers for treat-
ing, you will excuse me, General, if I do not enter into negotiation with
you touching a matter of the highest importance, but which does not lie
within my department. Whatever shall happen, either respecting the fu-
ture chances of the war, or the prospect of peace, I request you to be equally
convinced of my distinguished esteem." The archduke would willingly
have made some advantage of this proposal, by obtaining an armistice of five
hours, sufficient to enable him to form a junction with the corps of Kerpen,
which, having left the Tyrol to come to the assistance of the commander-in-
chief, was now within a short distance. But Buonaparte took care not to
permit himself to be hampered by any such ill-timed engagement, and after
some sharp fighting, in which the French as usual were successful, he was
able to interpose such a force as to prevent the junction taking place.

Two encounters followed at Neumark and at Unzmark—both gave rise to
fresh disasters, and the continued retreat of the archduke Charles and the
imperial army. The French general then pressed forward on the road to
Vienna, through mountain-passes and defiles, which could not have been
opened otherwise than by turning them on the flank. But these natural
fastnesses were no longer defences. Judenberg, the capital of Upper Styria,
was abandoned to the French without a blow, and shortly after Buonaparte
entered Gratz, the principal town of Lower Styria, with the same facility.
The archduke now totally changed his plan of warfare. He no longer dis-
puted the ground foot by foot, but began to retreat by hasty marches towards
Vienna, determined to collect the last and utmost strength which the exten-
sive states of the emperor could supply, and fight for the existence, it might
be, of his brother’s throne, under the walls of his capital. However perilous
this resolution might appear, it was worthy of the high-spirited prince by
whom it was adopted; and there were reasons, perhaps, besides those arising
from soldierly pride and princely dignity, which seemed to recommend it.
The army with which the enterprising French general was now about to de-
bouche from the mountains, and enter the very centre of Germany, had suf-
fereed considerably since the commencement of the campaign, not only by
the sword, but by severity of weather, and the excessive fatigue which they endured in executing the rapid marches, by which their leader succeeded in securing victory; and the French armies on the Rhine had not, as the plan of the campaign dictated, made any movement in advance corresponding with the march of Buonaparte. Nor, in the country which they were about to enter with diminished forces, could Buonaparte trust to the influence of the same moral feeling in the people invaded, which had paved the way to so many victories on the Rhine. The citizens of Austria, though living under a despotic government, are little sensible of its severities, and are sincerely attached to the emperor, whose personal habits incline him to live with his people without much form, and mix in public amusements, or appear in the public walks, like a father in the midst of his family. The nobility were as ready as in former times to bring out their vassals, and a general knowledge of discipline is familiar to the German peasant as a part of his education. Hungary possessed still the high-spirited race of barons and cavalry, who, in their great convocation in 1740, rose at once, and drawing their sabres, joined in the celebrated exclamation, "Moriamur pro rege nostri, Maria Theresa!" The Tyrol was in possession of its own warlike inhabitants, all in arms, and so far successful, as to have driven Joubert out of their mountains. Trieste and Fiume were retaken in the rear of the French army. Buonaparte had no line of communication when separated from Italy, and no means of obtaining supplies, but from a country which would probably be soon in insurrection in his rear, as well as on his flanks. A battle lost, when there was neither support, reserve, nor place of arms nearer than Klagenfurt, would have been annihilation. To add to these considerations, it was now known that the Venetian republic had assumed a formidable and hostile aspect in Italy; by which, joined to a natural explosion of feeling, religious and national, the French cause was considerably endangered in that country. There were so many favourers of the old system, together with the general influence of the Catholic clergy, that it seemed not unlikely this insurrection might spread fast and far. Italy, in that case, would have been no effectual place of refuge to Buonaparte or his army. The archduke enumerated all these advantages to the cabinet of Vienna, and exhorted them to stand the last cast of the bloody dye.

But the terror, grief, and confusion, natural in a great metropolis, whose peace for the first time for so many years was alarmed with the approach of the unconquered and apparently fated general, who, having defeated and destroyed five of their choicest armies, was now driving under its walls the remnants of the last, though commanded by that prince whom they regarded as the hope and flower of Austrian warfare, opposed this during resolution. The alarm was general, beginning with the court itself; and the most valuable property and treasure were packed up to be carried into Hungary, where the royal family determined to take refuge. It is worthy of mention, that among the fugitives of the imperial house was the arch-duchess Maria Louisa, then between five and six years old, whom our imagination may conceive agitated by every species of childish terror derived from the approach of the victorious general, on whom she was, at a future and similar crisis, destined to bestow her hand.

The court of Vienna finally adopted the alternative of treaty, and that of Leoben was set on foot. Generals Belleguard and Merfield, on the part of the emperor, presented themselves at the head-quarters of Buonaparte, 13th of April 1797, and announced the desire of their sovereign for peace. Buonaparte granted a suspension of arms, to endure for five days only; which was afterwards extended, when the probability of the definitive treaty of peace was evident. The articles in the treaty of Leoben remained long secret; the cause of which appears to have been, that the high contracting parties were not willing comparisons should be made between the preliminaries as they were originally settled, and the strange and violent alterations which occurred in the definitive treaty of Campo Formio. These two treaties of pacification differed, the one from the other, in relation to the degree and manner how a meditated partition of the territory of Venice, of the Cis-
alpine republic, and other smaller powers, was to be accomplished, for the mutual benefit of France and Austria. It is melancholy to observe, but it is nevertheless an important truth, that there is no moment during which independent states of the second class have more occasion to be alarmed for their security, than when more powerful nations in their vicinity are about to conclude peace. It is so easy to accommodate these differences of the strong at the expense of such weaker states, as, if they are injured, have neither the power of making their complaints heard, nor of defending themselves by force, that, in the iron age in which it has been our fate to live, the injustice of such an arrangement has never been considered as offering any counterpoise to its great convenience, whatever the law of nations might teach to the contrary.

It is unnecessary to enter upon the subject of the preliminaries of Leoben, until we notice the treaty of Campo Formio, under which they were finally modified, and by which they were adjusted and controlled. It may be, however, the moment to state, that Buonaparte was considerably blamed, by the directory and others, for stopping short in the career of conquest, and allowing the house of Austria terms which left her still formidable to France, when, said the censors, it would have cost him but another victory to blot the most constant and powerful enemy of the French republic out of the map of Europe; or, at least, to confine her to her hereditary states in Germany. To such criticism he replied, in a dispatch to the directory from Leoben, during the progress of the treaty: "If at the commencement of these Italian campaigns I had made a point of going to Turin, I should never have passed the Po—had I insisted prematurely on advancing to Rome, I could never have secured Milan—and now had I made an indispensable object of reaching Vienna, I might have destroyed the republic." Such was his able and judicious defence of a conduct, which, by stopping short of some ultimate and extreme point apparently within his grasp, extracted every advantage from fear, which despair perhaps might not have yielded him, if the enemy had been driven to extremity. And it is remarkable, that the catastrophe of Napoleon himself was a corollary of a doctrine which he now laid down; for, had he not insisted upon penetrating to Moscow, there is no judging how much longer he might have held the empire of France.

The contents of the treaty of Leoben, so far as they were announced to the representatives of the French nation by the directory, only made known as part of the preliminaries, that the cession of the Belgic provinces, and of such a boundary as France might choose to demand upon the Rhine, had been admitted by Austria; and that she had consented to recognise a single republic in Italy, to be composed out of those which had been provisionally established. But shortly after it transpired that Mantua, the subject of so much and such bloody contest, and the very citadel of Italy, as had appeared from the events of these sanguinary campaigns, was to be resigned to Austria, from whose tenacious grasp it had been wrenched with so much difficulty. This measure was unpopular; and it will be found that Buonaparte had the ingenuity, in the definitive treaty of peace, to substitute an indemnification, which he ought not to have given, and which was certainly the last which the Austrians should have accepted.

It was now the time for Venice to tremble. She had declared against the French in their absence; her vindictive population had murdered many of them; the resentment of the French soldiers was excited to the utmost, and the Venetians had no right to reckon upon the forbearance of their general. The treaty of Leoben left the senate of that ancient state absolutely without support; nay, as they afterwards learned, Austria, after pleading their cause for a certain time, had ended by stipulating for a share of their spoils, which had been assigned to her by a secret article of the treaty. The doom of the oligarchy was pronounced ere Buonaparte had yet traversed the Noric and Julian alps, for the purpose of enforcing it. By a letter to the doge, dated from the capital of Upper Styria, Napoleon, bitterly upbraiding the senate for requiting his generosity with treachery and ingratitude, demanded that they should return by his aid-de-camp who bore the letter, their instant
choice betwixt war and peace, and allowing them only four-and-twenty hours to disperse their insurgent peasantry, and submit to his clemency.

Juno, introduced into the senate, made the threats of his master ring in the astounded ears of the members, and by the blunt and rough manner of a soldier, who had risen from the ranks, added to the dismay of the trembling nobles. The senate returned a humble apology to Buonaparte, and dispatched agents to depreciate his wrath. These envoys were doomed to experience one of those scenes of violence, which were in some degree natural to this extraordinary man, but to which in certain cases he seems to have designedly given way, in order to strike consternation into those whom he addressed. "Are the prisoners at liberty?" he said, with a stern voice, and without replying to the humble greetings of the terrified envoys. They answered with hesitation, that they had liberated the French, the Polish, and the Brescians, who had been made captive in the insurrectionary war. "I will have them all—all!" exclaimed Buonaparte—"all who are in prison on account of their political sentiments. I will go myself to destroy your dungeons on the Bridge of Tears—opinions shall be free—I will have no inquisition. If all the prisoners are not set at instant liberty, the English envoy dismissed, the people disarmed, I declare instant war. I might have gone to Vienna if I had listed—I have concluded a peace with the emperor—I have eighty thousand men, twenty gun-boats—I will hear of no inquisition, and no senate either—I will dictate the law to you—I will prove an Attila to Venice. If you cannot disarm your population, I will do it in your stead—your government is antiquated—it must crumble to pieces."

While Buonaparte, in these disjointed yet significant threats, stood before the deputies like the Argantes of Italy's heroic poet, and gave them the choice of peace and war with the air of a superior being, capable at once to dictate their fate; he had not yet heard of the massacre of Verona, or of the batteries of a Venetian fort on the Lido having fired upon a French vessel, who had run into the port to escape the pursuit of two armed Austrian ships. The vessel was alleged to have been sunk, and the master and some of the crew to have been killed. The news of these fresh aggressions did not fail to aggravate his indignation to the highest pitch. The terrified deputies ventured to touch with delicacy on the subject of pecuniary atonement. Buonaparte's answer was worthy of a Roman. "If you could proffer me," he said, "the treasures of Peru—if you could strew the whole district with gold, it could not atone for the French blood which has been treacherously split." Accordingly on the 3rd of May, Buonaparte declared war against Venice, and ordered the French minister to leave the city; the French troops, and those of the new Italian republics, were at the same time commanded to advance, and to destroy in their progress, wherever they found it displayed, the winged lion of Saint Mark, the ancient emblem of Venetian sovereignty. The declaration is dated at Palma Nova.

The senate of Venice, rather stupefied than stimulated by the excess of their danger, were holding on the 30th of April a sort of privy council in the apartments of the doge, when a letter from the commandant of their flotilla informed them that the French were erecting fortifications on the low grounds contiguous to the lagoons or shallow channels which divide from the main land and from each other the little isles on which the amphibious mistress of the Adriatic holds her foundation; and proposing, in the blunt style of a gallant sailor, to batter them to pieces about their ears before the works could be completed. Indeed, nothing would have been more easy than to defend the lagoons against an enemy, who, notwithstanding Napoleon's bravo, had not even a single boat. But the proposal, had it been made to an abbess and a convent of nuns, could scarce have appeared more extraordinary than it did to these degenerate nobles. Yet the sense of shame prevailed; and though trembling for the consequences of the order which they issued, the senate directed that the admiral should proceed to action. Immediately after the order was received, their deliberations were interrupted by the thunder of the cannon on either side—the Venetian gun-boats pouring
their fire on the van of the French army, which had begun to arrive at Fu-
sina. To interrupt these ominous sounds, two plenipotentiaries were dis-
patched to make intercession with the French general; and to prevent delay, the
doge himself undertook to report the result.

The grand council was convoked on the 1st of May, when the doge, pale
in countenance, and disconcerted in demeanour, proposed, as the only means
of safety, the admission of some democratic modifications into their forms,
under the direction of general Buonaparte; or, in other words, to lay their
institutions at the feet of the conqueror, to be re-modelled at his pleasure.
Of six hundred and ninety patricians, only twenty-one dissentedit from a vote
which inferred the absolute surrender of their constitution. The conditions
were agreed on, were indeed declared subject to the revision of the council;
but this, in the circumstances, could only be considered as a clause intended
to save appearances. The surrender must have been regarded as uncondi-
tional and total.

Amidst the dejection and confusion which possessed the government, some
able intriguer (the secretary, it was said, of the French ambassador at Ve-
nice, whose principal had been recalled) contrived to induce the Venetian
government to commit an act of absolute suicide, so as to spare Buonaparte
the trouble and small degree of scandal, which might attach to totally de-
stroying the existence of the Republic. On the 9th of May, as the committee
of the great council were in close deliberation with the doge, two strangers
obtruded upon those councils, which heretofore—such was the jealous seve-
rity of the oligarchy—were like those of supernatural beings, those who
looked on them died. But now affliction, confusion, and fear, had withdrawn
the guards from these secret and mysterious chambers, and laid open to the
intrusion of strangers those stern haunts of a suspicious oligarchy, where, in
other days, an official or lictor of the government might have been punished
with death even for too loud a foot-fall, far more for the fatal crime of having
heard more than was designed to come to his knowledge. All this was now
ended; and without check or rebuke the two strangers were permitted to
communicate with the senate by writing. Their advice, which had the terms
of a command, was to anticipate the intended reforms of the French—to dis-
solve the present government—throw open their prisons—disband their Sla-
vonian soldiers—plant the tree of liberty on the place of Saint Mark, and to
take other popular measures of the same nature, the least of which, proposed
but a few months before, would have been a signal of death to the individual
who had dared to hint at it.

As the friendly advisers had hinted that the utmost speed was necessary,
the committee scarce interposed an interval of three days, between receiving
the advice and recommending it to the great council; and began in the
meanwhile to anticipate the destruction of their government and surrender
of their city, by dismantling their fleet and disbanding their soldiers. At
length the great council assembled on the 31st of May. The doge had com-
enced a pathetic discourse on the extremities to which the country was
reduced, when an irregular discharge of fire-arms took place under the very
windows of the council-house. All started up in confusion. Some supposed
the Slavonians were plundering the citizens; some that the lower orders
had risen on the nobility; others, that the French had entered Venice, and
were proceeding to sack and pillage it. The terrified and timid counsellors
did not wait to enquire what was the real cause of the disturbance, but hur-
ried forward, like sheep, in the path which had been indicated to them.
They hastened to despoil their ancient government of all authority, to sign
in a manner its sentence of civil death—added every thing which could render
the sacrifice more agreeable to Buonaparte—and separated in confusion, but
under the impression that they had taken the best measure in their power
for quelling the tumult, by meeting the wishes of the predominant party.
But this was by no means the case. On the contrary, they had the misfor-
tune to find that the insurrection, of which the firing was the signal, was
directed not against the aristocrats, but against those who proposed the
surrender of the national independence. Armed bands shouted, "Long live
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"St. Mark, and perish foreign domination!" Others indeed there were, who displayed in opposition three-coloured banners, with the war cry of "Liberty for ever!" The disbanded and mutinous soldiers mixed among these hostile groups, and threatened the town with fire and pillage.

Amid this horrible confusion, and while the parties were firing on each other, a provisional government was hastily named. Boats were dispatched to bring three thousand French soldiers into the city. These took possession of the Place of Saint Mark, while some of the inhabitants shouted; but the greater part, who were probably not the less sensible of the execrable tyranny of the old aristocracy, saw it fall in mournful silence, because there fell, along with the ancient institutions of their country, however little some of these were to be regretted, the honour and independence of the state itself.

The terms which the French granted, or rather imposed, appeared sufficiently moderate, so far as they were made public. They announced that the foreign troops would remain so long, and no longer, than might be necessary to protect the peace of Venice—they undertook to guarantee the public debt, and the payment of the pensions allowed to the impoverished gentry. They required, indeed, the continuation of the prosecution against the commander of the fort of Lucco who had fired on the French vessel; but all other offenders were pardoned, and Buonaparte afterwards suffered even this affair to pass into oblivion; which excited doubt whether the transaction had ever been so serious as had been alleged. Five secret and less palatable articles attended these avowed conditions. One provided for the various exchanges of territory which had been already settled at the Venetian expense betwixt Austria and France. The second and third stipulated the payment of three millions of francs in specie, and as many in naval stores. Another prescribed the cession of three ships of war, and of two frigates, armed and equipped. A fifth ratified the exaction, in the usual style of French cupidity, of twenty pictures and five hundred manuscripts.

It will be seen hereafter what advantages the Venetians purchased by all these unconscionable conditions. At the moment, they understood that the stipulations were to imply a guarantee of the independent existence of their country as a democratical state. In the mean while, the necessity for raising the supplies to gratify the rapacity of the French, obliged the provisional government to have recourse to forced loans; and in this manner they inhospitably plundered the duke of Modena (who had fled to Venice for refuge when Buonaparte first entered Lombardy) of his remaining treasure, amounting to one hundred and ninety thousand sequins. (1)

LETTER XXXI.

Affairs of Great Britain from the return of Lord Malmesbury to the peace of Amiens, 1796—1802.—Suspension of cash payments at the Bank of England.—Admiral Jervis defeats the Spanish Fleet.—Landing of a body of French conscripts in South Wales.—Mutiny in the British Navy.—Insurrection in Ireland.—Landing of some French troops there.—Threatened invasions of England.—French expedition to Egypt.—Naval victory of Aboukir.—Siege of Acre.—Union of England and Ireland.—Expedition to the coast of Holland.—Unsuccessful attempt on Fersol.—Negotiations for peace.—Attack on Copenhagen.—Change of Ministry.—Defeat of the French army in Egypt.—Peace of Amiens.

The situation of Great Britain at this period became in a high degree embarrassing to those who were intrusted with the management of public affairs;

(1) History of the Campaigns, in the years 1796—1799, in Germany, Italy, Switzerland, &c. in four volumes 8vo, 2nd edition, 1812. — Account of the Fall of the Republic of Venice.—Memoires historiques et philosophiques sur Pie VI. et son Pontificat.—New Annual Register, 1797.
for, in proportion as, from an accessory, she became a principal in the war, difficulties and dangers had accumulated around her. She now saw united against her, two powerful members of the confederacy with which she at first acted; and she had to fight for her own security, instead of pursuing schemes for humiliating a rival, and dictating in her internal concerns. Those principles of civil society which had been thought so dangerous to all established governments, that their suppression was the object of a general league, had now taken such firm root in France, that they might bid defiance to external force; and the energy first excited in their defence had terminated in a spirit of conquest sufficiently formidable to all its neighbours.

The return of lord Malmesbury from his unsuccessful negotiation threw a deep gloom upon the prospects of the country; and the funds experienced a depression beyond that of any period in the American war. An opinion now became prevalent, that the ministry had only pretended a desire for peace, that they might, with less difficulty, obtain supplies for the prosecution of the war. In order to counteract this unfavourable impression, a message from his majesty was brought down to parliament, on the 26th of December, 1796, which was to declare, that the rupture of the negotiation did not proceed from the want of a sincere desire on his part for the restoration of peace; but from the pretensions of the enemy being inconsistent with the permanent interests of the kingdom, and the general security of Europe. At the same time his majesty directed all the memorials and papers which had been exchanged in the course of the negotiation, to be laid before both houses of parliament, which was accordingly done, and various parts of the proceedings were severely censured by the opposition.

But whilst the certainty of a continuation of the war, with augmented burdens and hazards, was depressing the spirits of the nation, they received an additional shock from a suspension of payment of their notes in cash by the bank of England. That body, which was now become essential to the financial operations of government, had been called upon for such large advances of money for the payment of foreign subsidies, and other exigencies of the state, that, in the course of the past year, the directors of the bank had several times represented to the minister the impossibility of supplying all his demands. The dread of an invasion, which was now seriously apprehended, had further contributed to the want of specie by a run upon the country bankers; and the governor of the bank of England, on the 9th of February, 1797, informed Mr. Pitt, that to comply with his request of an additional advance of a million and a half to Ireland, by way of loan, would threaten ruin to the bank, and probably force the directors to close their doors. In this state of affairs, the privy council, on the 26th of February, issued an order, prohibiting the directors of the bank of England from issuing any payments in specie, till the sense of parliament could be taken on the subject, and measures adopted for supporting the public credit. On the following day the subject was communicated to parliament by a message from the throne, and on the 28th it was taken into consideration. Several warm debates ensued, in which the opposition insisted on the violent stretch of power on the part of the privy council, in thus exonerating a trading company from the payment of its debts, and urged the necessity of an enquiry into the causes of this disaster. In consequence of this, motions were carried in both houses for appointing by ballot a secret committee to examine into the affairs of the bank; and in the mean time, to remedy the inconvenience arising from the want of a circulating medium, a bill was passed authorizing the bank to issue notes of the value of one and two pounds each. The secret committee in each house brought up their report, on the 2nd and 3rd of March, to the following effect:—That there was a surplus of property belonging to the bank of £3,826,890 beyond the total of their debts, exclusive of a permanent debt from government of eleven millions and a half; that it had lately experienced a drain of cash, owing to the prevalence of alarm, which there was now reason to suppose would go on progressively increasing; so that it was to be apprehended the bank would be deprived of the means for supplying the cash necessary for the exigencies of
the public service; and consequently that it was expedient to continue the measures already taken, for such time, and under such limitations as the wisdom of parliament should direct.

A committee of the whole house of commons, having on the 9th of March, taken into consideration the report delivered to it respecting the bank, Mr. Pitt moved for a bill to continue and confirm, for a limited time, the restriction of the issue of specie by the bank of England. While this bill was passing through the house, various clauses were proposed by the minister, of which some of the most important were—That the army and navy should be paid in specie; that bank notes should be received in payment by the collectors in every branch of the revenue; that the offer of a bank note in payment of a demand should do away the effect of an arrest in the first instance; and that the bank should be permitted to issue a sum in cash, not exceeding one hundred thousand pounds, for the accommodation of private bankers and traders in the metropolis, all which points were carried.

The early part of this year 1797, was signalized by a brilliant exploit of the British navy. France had now acquired two allies, both of them capable of powerful exertions by sea; and she naturally became inspired with the hope of overthrowing that maritime superiority of England which was so essential to her security as well as her prosperity; and the ascendancy which the French had obtained in the councils of Holland and Spain was employed in urging them to use all their efforts in augmenting their navies. The court of Madrid had used so much diligence in this department, that a large fleet was equipped for the purpose of forming a junction with the French squadron at Brest. Its force consisted of twenty-seven sail of the line; six of them mounting one hundred and twelve guns, and one of one hundred and thirty-six guns. This formidable armament, however, was inadequately manned, a great proportion of the crews being landsmen; and a mixture of expert artillery men could not supply the deficiency of sailors.

The English squadron destined to intercept this threatened junction, was composed of only fifteen ships of the line and some frigates; but it was well manned, and placed under the command of admiral sir John Jervis, an officer of first-rate talents; aided by some of the most distinguished captains in the British navy. On the 14th of February, the English admiral, cruising off cape St. Vincent on the coast of Portugal, descried the Spanish fleet under a press of sail. Without a moment’s hesitation, he bore down in a line, before the enemy had time to form a regular order of battle, and separating one-third of the Spanish fleet from the rest, he reduced its force nearly to an equality. An attempt by the Spanish admiral to rejoin his separated ships was prevented by commodore Nelson, who, at one time, had to encounter the admiral and the two first-rates; but from this perilous situation he was relieved by two British ships; when finding that he could not execute his design, he made the signal for the remainder of his fleet to form together for their defence. The British admiral, however, before they could get into their stations, directed the rear most of them, some of which were entangled by others, to be attacked, and four were captured. In the mean time, the part of the Spanish fleet which had been separated from the main body had nearly rejoined it with four other ships, two of which were not in the engagement. This was a force more than equal to that which remained of the British squadron, fit, after so severe a contest, for a fresh action. The Spaniards, however, declined to face their enemy in close engagement and returned to Cadiz. The British fleet bore off the four captured prizes, two of them carrying one hundred and twelve guns each, one eighty-four, and one seventy-four. Sir John Jervis was rewarded for his valour and skill by the title of earl St. Vincent; and Nelson, who now first began to be known to fame, received the honour of knighthood. The action deservedly ranks among those which have most conspicuously illustrated the superior courage and skill of British seamen.

A singular and apparently unmeaning expedition was set on foot by France, in the month of February this year. An armament, consisting of fourteen hundred men embarked in four vessels, three of which were large frigates;
and sailing from Brest, entered the British channel, where, about the 30th they anchored in the harbour of Ilfracombe. On being informed that the North Devon regiment of volunteers were marching towards them, they stood over to Pembroke shire, and came to anchor in a bay near Fishguard. There the soldiers were landed, and on the 23rd advanced into a wild country with which they were totally unacquainted. The alarm was immediately given, and people assembled from all parts to oppose them. Upwards of three thousand men were soon collected, among whom were seven hundred well-trained militia. Lord Cawdor, placing himself at their head, marched directly against the invaders; but instead of the expected encounter, he met a French officer bearing a letter from his commander, in which he signified a desire to enter into a negotiation for a surrender. An answer was returned requiring their immediate submission as prisoners of war, which was readily complied with, and on the next day they laid down their arms. They had no field-pieces, but were well provided with ammunition. A great part of them were in rage, and apparently taken out of prison; but what the intention of this strange enterprise was, beyond that of showing how accessible the coast of England is to invaders, remains a mystery. It, however, afforded a proof of the readiness of the people of England to defend their country.

The same month added another success to the British arms. The island of Trinidad, one of the largest in the Caribbean cluster, and the nearest to the Spanish Main, was the object of an expedition under the joint command of general Abercrombie and admiral Hervey. The Spaniards, who expected an attack, had collected for its defence a naval force of four ships of the line and some frigates, which were anchored in a bay protected by strong batteries. On the 16th of February the English squadron arrived with the intention of making an attack; but during the night the Spanish ships accidentally took fire, and were all consumed, with the exception of one which was captured. The Spaniards being thus rendered incapable of any effectual resistance, general Abercrombie landed his troops, and with little opposition made himself master of the principal town, after which the whole island surrendered by capitulation.

At this time, a circumstance unprecedented in the annals of Great Britain transpired, and infused a general despondency throughout the nation. The seamen, who had so long been the defence and glory of their country, seemed to threaten her overthrow. Discontents had for some time subsisted among them, the principal cause of which was the smallness of their pay, and of the Greenwich pensions, which had not been augmented from the reign of Charles II. They also complained of the unequal distribution of prize money, and the severity of the naval discipline, rendered more galling by the harsh and haughty behaviour of the officers to those under their command. Some anonymous petitions from ships’ companies in the channel fleet under lord Bridport, craving relief from their grievances respecting pay, had been transmitted to lord Howe in the months of February and March, which had occasioned him to make particular enquiries whether discontents were prevailing in that fleet, when he was assured they were not. No sooner, however, had the fleet returned to Portsmouth, than a secret correspondence was set on foot, and an unanimous agreement entered into, that an anchor should not be lifted till redress was obtained.

On the 15th of April, the signal being hoisted to prepare for sea, three cheers were given from the Queen Charlotte, which was answered by the rest, and the mutiny was declared. “All the efforts of the officers to enforce subordination among the men were ineffectual. The ships’ companies appointed two delegates from each, who held their consultations in the cabin of the Queen Charlotte; and on the 17th an oath was administered to every seaman in the fleet, to stand firm in the general cause. Some officers who were very obnoxious to the crews were sent on shore; but in other respects the strictest discipline was observed, and the most respectful attention to their officers was enjoined, under rigorous penalties. All their proceedings indicated a concerted plan, and fixed determination to carry their point. Two petitions were drawn up and signed by the delegates, one to the
admiralty, the other to the house of commons, both couched in the most decorous language, and stating their complaints, the grounds of which appeared not unreasonable. The matter seemed so serious to government, that the board of admiralty was transferred to Portsmouth, and a kind of negotiation was entered upon with the mutineers. It was at length notified to them, that their demands were complied with, and that it was expected all would return to duty. The delegates, however, declared it to be the general resolution, that nothing could be agreed to which was not sanctioned by parliament, and sanctioned by the king's proclamation; and one of the admirals having used menaces on the occasion, the meeting bore a more hostile aspect than ever. At length lord Bridport went aboard, hoisted his flag, and acquainted them that he brought with him a redress of all their grievances, and the king's pardon; the consequence of which was that obedience was immediately restored.

From the 23rd of April to the 7th of May, the fleet remained in due subordination, when a fresh mutiny broke out, on a suspicion among the sailors that the promises made to them were not intended to be fulfilled. Lord Howe, whose influence in the navy was greater than that of any other person, then went down: and his addresses and assurances having fully satisfied their minds, they were again reduced to order. In all these measures the seamen lying at Plymouth concurred. On the 8th of May, the ministry laid before the house of commons estimates for the augmentation of pay to the seamen and marines of the navy, the sum of which was stated at four hundred and thirty-six thousand pounds. Mr. Pitt, in moving for this grant, deprecated any discussions on the case, and hoped that the house would pass its judgment by a silent vote. The opposition, however, thought that the ministers had been culpably negligent, in not having sooner applied to the house on the business, and a motion of censure to that effect was made, though afterwards withdrawn.

It was now hoped that these concessions would prove entirely satisfactory to a body of men in general so well affected to their country; but they had unfortunately been extorted, not granted, and the same method lay open for further demands. On the 22nd of May, a mutiny broke out in the men of war lying at the Nore, the crews of which, taking possession of their ships, elected delegates, and drew up a statement of requisitions to be laid before the admiralty. They were joined on the 4th of June, by four men of war from admiral Duncan's fleet off the coast of Holland. At the head of this revolt was one Parker, a man of some education and good parts, and remarkable for a resolute disposition. The admiralty having returned a negative to their demands, as being incompatible with the orders and regulations of the navy, Parker replied with a declaration, that the seamen had determined to keep possession of the fleet till their grievances were redressed. The lords of the admiralty repairing to Sheerness had an interview with the delegates, whose behaviour was so audacious, that they returned without any prospect of agreement. This mutiny was the more alarming, as the position of the ships gave them the command of the navigation of the Thames, and as it was organized in a perfectly democratical form, and exhibited tokens of deep disaffection. It was, therefore, determined by government, after an ineffectual attempt to bring back the men to duty by an offer of pardon, to employ force for their reduction; and they were confirmed in this resolution by the disapprobation which the Portsmouth and Plymouth fleets manifested at these proceedings. The buoys at the mouth of the river were therefore taken up; batteries were erected on the banks for firing red-hot ball, and a proclamation was issued declaring the ships in a state of rebellion, forbidding all intercourse with them from the shore. At length, becoming sensible that their fellow-seamen and the whole nation were against them, they began to waver and differ among themselves. One ship after another stole away—the well-affected on board the remainder were encouraged to oppose the more violent—and after some blood-shed among themselves, all the ships submitted. Parker and his fellow-delegates were given up. The former, after a deliberate trial, was capitally condemned and executed, ac-
knowledging the justice of his sentence. Some of the other delegates also suffered, but at length a general pardon was issued to the rebels.

The subsequent conduct of the seamen, however, speedily effaced this stain from the annals of the British navy. The fleet under the command of admiral Duncan, consisting chiefly of ships which had been engaged in the mutiny, sailed to the Texel, where for some time it blockaded the Dutch fleet. On the latter venturing out, an engagement ensued on the 11th of October, in which the English obtained a complete victory—nine of the Dutch ships were captured, and their admiral, De Winter, taken prisoner. For this important service, the British admiral was raised to the peerage, by the title of viscount Duncan, and other marks of royal and national favour were conferred upon him. In such high estimation was this signal victory held, that a day of thanksgiving being appointed, the king and two houses of parliament went in solemn procession to St. Paul's cathedral, to acknowledge the divine interposition in behalf of the British arms.

During the course of the year 1797, the state of Ireland was calculated to inspire the rulers of France with a degree of confidence which they otherwise might not have assumed in their negotiations with the English minister. The dimensions in that part of the empire, inflamed by a variety of aggravations, had proceeded so far, that the malecontents, who assumed the title of United Irishmen, regularly organized themselves, throughout the country, and sent deputies to treat with the French for assistance in throwing off the yoke of England. Not discouraged by the failure of the expedition of general Hoche, at the close of the preceding year, they now laboured more firmly to cement their alliance with France, and establish a regular correspondence with the directory. A memorial was transmitted to the latter, stating that one hundred and fifty thousand United Irishmen were enrolled and organized in the province of Ulster. This statement, calculated to make their force appear worthy of the attention and support of the French republic, was no doubt much exaggerated, but their number was certainly formidable. The consequence was that new arrangements were made for the invasion of Ireland and great preparations for that purpose took place at Brest and in the Texel—it being intended that both the French and Batavian republics should unite in the attempt: but the memorable victory gained by lord Duncan over the Dutch fleet, on the 11th of October, rendered the whole plan abortive. Such, however, was the state of Ireland at the close of 1797.

The British parliament assembled on the 2nd of November, and was opened by a speech from the throne, of which the principal topics were, the failure of the negotiation for peace, the flourishing state of the revenue, and the naval successes, with the necessity of continuing the most vigorous exertions till a more just and pacific spirit should prevail on the part of the enemy. The state of Ireland became a more prominent object of attention this year, among the concerns of the British empire. The numerous class of the disaffected in that country, though much disconcerted by the failure of their expectations of assistance from France, were so hard pressed by the vigorous and severe measures of government, who had obtained intelligence of their plans, that they resolved no longer to delay making trial of their strength by arms. In the month of February they had formed a military committee, which drew up instructions for their officers and commanders; but the great body of the lower class were wholly destitute of proper arms and accoutrements, for which they had relied on importations from France and Holland. Such, however, was their ardour, that they crowded to the standards of their chiefs, and, during that and the following month, the spirit of dissatisfaction had spread itself over many of the southern districts, whilst an active correspondence was carried on with those of the north. A general insurrection had been determined on, in which the castle of Dublin, the camp near it, and the artillery, were to have been surprised in one night, and other places seized at the same time. The disclosure of the plot, however, by one of the conspirators, led to the seizure of fourteen of the delegates at a house in Dublin; and the information of a militia officer, who had entered among them as a spy, produced other discoveries which entirely defeated their
design. Nothing now remained but an appeal to open arms. On the 24th of May 1798, they commenced their operations by an attack on the towns of Naas, Carlow, and other places, from which they were repulsed with loss. Next day they proceeded, about fifteen thousand strong, against Wexford, and entirely defeated part of the garrison which sallied out to meet them. On the 30th the town surrendered, after part of the Protestant inhabitants had escaped; those who remained were put under confinement. They also made themselves masters of Enniscorthy by the help of its Catholic inhabitants; but in a furious attack on New Ross, which was defended by a strong division of the army, they were repulsed with great slaughter. Enraged at this defeat, they massacred in cold blood more than a hundred of their Protestant prisoners at Wexford; for the insurrection had now assumed the precise character of a popish rebellion, as in former times, and the foresight of this result prevented any co-operation from the Protestant political malefactors in the north. Several other actions took place, of which the issues were various, until general Lake, who had collected a powerful force, on the 21st of June attacked the main body of the rebels posted on Vinegar Hill, near Enniscorthy. After a vigorous resistance, they were broken and fled; and such was their loss in the battle, and during the pursuit, that the whole party were completely disheartened. Wexford, and all the other towns which they had taken, were given up; and in the south of Ireland none remained in arms except a few strolling parties, who subsisted by pillage and plunder. In the north the counties of Down and Antrim had joined in the insurrection, and a force was mustered which ventured to oppose the troops sent against them; but a defeat which they sustained on the 12th of June, near Ballinahinch, reduced them to submission.

Lord Camden, who was at this time viceroy, was now recalled, and earl Cornwallis, an officer of high military character, was appointed to succeed him. He carried out with him a general pardon for all who should submit, with a few exceptions. Some of those who had been apprehended for the conspiracy above mentioned were executed; of others the punishment was commutted, and justice was duly tempered with mercy. Ireland would now in all probability have been soon tranquillized, had not the French at that moment sent among them a body of about nine hundred regular troops, under the command of general Humbert. These men were landed at Killala, on the 22nd of August, from three French frigates, and instantly marched to Castlebar, where they were joined by a small number of Catholics of the neighbourhood. From Castlebar they proceeded eastward into the heart of the country, probably expecting to become the rallying point of all the disaffected in the island. The invaders and those who had joined them crossed the Shannon, the British force following in column to watch their movements. In the mean time, lord Cornwallis advanced with a body of troops to Currick, and being joined on the 8th of September by general Lake, at a place called Ballinamuck, a short action ensued, which terminated in the surrender of the French, and the dispersion or capture of the rebels.

Another attempt on the part of the French to foment the existing embers of dissatisfaction in Ireland was made soon after, but with no better success. A squadron, consisting of one line of battle ship and eight frigates, with troops and ammunition on board, destined for Ireland, was fallen in with off the north western coast of that island by the English squadron under the command of sir John Borlase Warren, on the 12th of October, who captured the ship of the line and three of the frigates; and eventually the whole, except two of the frigates, came into possession of the English. This abortive effort terminated the unhappy rebellion in the sister country, an enterprise more alarming than dangerous, and not less weakly conducted than rashly undertaken. Of the number of lives lost in this deplorable contest, every estimate that has been made must be vague and uncertain: but a moderate computation will not reduce them below thirty thousand. The British empire, in a war kindled within its own bowels, lost a great number of its bravest troops, who might have been profitably employed against its foreign enemy; and
the multitude of insurgents who fell victims to a fatal delusion could not be calculated.

Foiled in all their attempts upon Ireland, the directory, about the end of October 1797, announced that there should be instantly assembled on the shores of the ocean, an army, to be called the army of England, and the citizen-general Buonaparte, now recently returned from Italy, was named to the command of it. The intelligence was received in every part of France with all the eclat which attends the anticipation of certain victory. The address of the directory enumerated all the conquests which France had won, and the efforts she had made; and prepared the French nation to expect the fruit of so many victories and sacrifices when they had punished England for her perfidy and maritime tyranny. "It is at London," said they, "where the misfortunes of all Europe are forged and manufactured—it is in London that they must be terminated." In a solemn meeting held by the directory, for the purpose of receiving the treaty of peace with Austria, which was presented to them by Berthier and Mongé on the part of Buonaparte, the latter who had been one of the commissioners for pillaging Italy of her pictures and statues, and who, in all probability, looked forwards to a new harvest of rarities in England, accepted, on the part of the army and general the task imposed by the French rulers. "The government of England," said they, "and the French republic cannot both continue to exist—you have given the word which shall fall—already our victorious troops brandish their arms, and Scipio is at their head!"

Buonaparte now made a complete survey of the coast of the British channel, pausing at each remarkable point, and making those observations and calculations which induced him to adopt at a subsequent period the renewal of the project for a descent upon England. The result of his observations decided his opinion, that in the present case the undertaking should be abandoned. The immense preparations and violent threats of invasion were carried into no more serious effect than the landing of a handful of men in South Wales. The demonstrations of invasion, however, were ostensibly continued, and every thing seemed arranged on either side for a desperate collision betwixt the two most powerful nations in Europe. But while all France and England had their eyes fixed on the fleets and armies destined against the latter country, the directory and their general had no intention of using their preparations, except as a blind to cover their real object, which was the celebrated expedition to Egypt.

Laying aside, therefore, the character of general of the army of England, and adjourning to a future day the conquest of that hostile island, Napoleon turned his eyes and his thoughts eastward, and meditated in the distant countries of the rising sun, a scene worthy his talents, his military skill and his unbounded ambition. The directory, on the other hand, eager to rid themselves of their perilous residence among them, hastened to accomplish the means of his expedition to Egypt, upon a scale far more formidable than any which had yet sailed from Modern Europe, for the invasion and subjection of distant and peaceful realms. It was soon whispered abroad, that the invasion of England was to be postponed, until the conqueror of Italy, having attained a great and national object, by the success of a secret expedition fitted out on a scale of stupendous magnitude, should be at leisure to resume the conquest of Britain.

On the 19th of May, 1798 this magnificent armament set sail from Toulon, illuminated by a splendid sun-rise. The line-of-battle ships extended for a league, and the semicircle formed by the convoy was at least six leagues in extent. They were joined on the 6th of June, as they swept along the Mediterranean, by a large fleet of transports, having on board the division of general Desaix. The 10th of June, brought the armament before Malta, where Buonaparte landed some of his troops, and took possession of the almost impregnable fortresses with scarce any opposition. Having established a garrison in Malta, which he destined to be an intermediate station between France and Egypt; on the 19th, the general resumed his expedition. On the coast of Candia, while the savants were gazing on the rock, where Jupiter is
fabled to have been nurtured, Napoleon learned that a new enemy of a different description from the Knights of Malta, was in his immediate vicinity. This was the English squadron under the command of lord Nelson. This British admiral, uniformly unconquerable on his own element as Buonaparte had hitherto shown himself upon shore, was now in full and anxious pursuit of his renowned cotemporary. Re-inforced by a squadron of ten ships of the line, a meeting with Napoleon was the first wish of his heart, and was echoed back by the meanest sailor on board his numerous fleet. The French had been heard of at Malta, but as the British admiral was about to proceed thither, he received news of their departure, and concluding that Egypt must unquestionably be the object of their expedition he shaped his course for the mouth of the Nile. It happened singularly enough, that although lord Nelson anticipated the arrival of the French at Alexandria, and accordingly directed his course thither, yet keeping a more direct path than the French fleet had taken, when he arrived there on the 28th of June, he heard nothing of the enemy, who, in the mean time were proceeding to the very same port. Nelson, therefore, set sail for Rhodes and Syracuse; and thus were the two large and hostile fleets traversing the same narrow sea, without being able to attain any certain information concerning each other's movements. This was partly owing to the English admiral having no frigates with him, which might have been detached to cruise for intelligence; and partly to a continuance of thick hazy weather, which at once concealed the French fleet from their adversaries, and obliging them to keep close together diminished the chance of discovery. On the 26th, according to Denon, lord Nelson's fleet was actually seen by the French standing to the westward, although the haze prevented the English from observing their enemy, whose squadron held an opposite direction.

On the 29th of June the French fleet came in sight of Alexandria, and saw before them the city of the Ptolemies and of Cleopatra, with its double harbour, its Pharoa, and its ancient and gigantic monuments of grandeur. The disembarkation of the French army took place about a league and a half from Alexandria, at an anchorage called Marabot. It was not accomplished without the loss of boats and men; but as soon as five or six thousand men were landed, Buonaparte commenced his march towards Alexandria, when the Turks, incensed at this hostile invasion on the part of a nation with whom they were at profound peace, shut the gates and manned the walls against their reception. But the walls were ruinous, and presented breaches in many places; and the chief weapons of resistance were musketry and stones. The conquerors of Italy forced their passage over such obstacles, though neither easily nor with impunity. Two hundred French were killed. There was severe military execution done upon the garrison, and the town was abandoned to plunder for three hours.

From the moment that Buonaparte conceived the idea of invading Egypt, the destruction of the power of the Mamelukes must have been determined on as his first object; and no sooner had he captured Alexandria than he announced his purpose. He issued a proclamation, in which he professed his respect for God, the prophet, and the Koran: his friendship for the Sublime Porte, of which he affirmed the French to be the faithful allies; and his determination to make war upon the Mamelukes. He commanded that prayers should be continued in the mosques as usual, with some slight modifications, and that all true Mussulmen should exclaim, "Glory to the sultan, and to the French army his allies! Accursed be the Mamelukes, and good fortune to the land of Egypt!"

On the 7th of July, the army marched from Alexandria against the Mamelukes. Their course was up the Nile; and a small flotilla of gun-boats ascended the river to protect their right flank, while the infantry traversed a desert of burning sands, at a distance from the stream, and without a drop of water to relieve their tormenting thirst. The army of Italy, accustomed to the enjoyments of that delicious country, were astonished at the desolation they saw around them. "Is this the country," said they, "in which we are to receive our farms of seven acres each? The general might have
"allowed us to take as much as we chose; no one would have abused the "privilege." Their officers, too, expressed disgust and horror; and even generals of such celebrity as Murat and Lannes threw their hats on the sand, and trod on their cockades. It required all Buonaparte's authority to maintain order: so much were the French disgusted with the commencement of the campaign. But to add to this embarrassment, the enemy began to appear around them. Mamelukes and Arabs, concealed behind the hillocks of sand, interrupted their march at every opportunity, and woe to the soldier who straggled from the ranks, were it only fifty yards: some of these horsemen were sure to dash at him, slay him on the spot, and make off ere a musket could be discharged at him.

As the French army advanced they had the mortification to see the whole plain covered with Mamelukes, mounted on the finest Arabian horses, and armed with pistols, carbines, and blunderbusses of the best English workmanship, their plumed turbans waving in the air, and their rich dresses and arms glittering in the sun. Entertaining a high contempt for the French force, as consisting almost wholly of infantry, this splendid barbaric chivalry watched every opportunity for charging them, nor did a single straggler escape the edge of their sabres. Their charge was nearly as swift as the wind, and as their severe bits enabled them to halt, or wheel their horses at full gallop, their retreat was as rapid as their advance. Even the practised veterans of Italy were at first embarrassed by this new mode of fighting, and lost several men, especially when fatigue caused any one to fall out of the ranks, in which case his fate became inevitable. They were, however, soon reconciled to fighting the Mamelukes, when they discovered that each of these horsemen carried about him his fortune, and that it frequently consisted of considerable sums in gold.

After fourteen days of such marches as have now been described, the French army arrived within six leagues of Cairo, and beheld at a distance the celebrated pyramids; but they learned at the same time, that Murad Bey, with twenty two of his brethren, at the head of their Mamelukes, had formed an entrenched camp at a place called Embabat, with the design of covering Cairo, and giving battle to the French. On the 21st of July, as the latter continued to advance, they saw their enemy in the field and in full force. A splendid line of cavalry, under Murad and the other Beys, displayed the whole strength of the Mamelukes. Their right rested on the imperfectly entrenched camp, in which lay twenty thousand infantry defended by forty pieces of cannon; but the infantry were an undisciplined rabble—the guns wanted carriages, and were mounted on clumsy wooden frames—and the fortifications of the camp were but commenced, consequently presented no formidable opposition. Buonaparte made his dispositions, extending his line to the right so as to keep out of gun-shot of the entrenched camp, and have only to encounter the line of cavalry. Murad Bey saw his movement, and perfectly aware of its consequences, prepared to charge with his magnificent body of horse, declaring he would cut the French up like gourds. Buonaparte, as he directed the infantry to form squares to receive them, called out to his men, "From yonder Pyramids, twenty centuries behold your actions." The Mamelukes advanced with the utmost speed and corresponding fury, charging with horrible yells. They disordered one of the French squares of infantry, which would have been sabred in an instant, but that the mass of this fiery militia was a little behind the advanced guard. The French had a moment to restore order and they, availed themselves of it. The combat then in some degree resembled that which about twenty years afterwards took place at Waterloo:—the hostile cavalry furiously charging the squares of infantry and trying by the most undaunted efforts of courage, to break in upon them at every practicable point, while a tremendous fire of musketry, grape-shot, and shells crossing in various directions, repaid their audacity. Nothing in war was ever seen more desperate than the exertions of the Mamelukes. Finding it impossible to force their horses through the French squares, they were seen to wheel them round, and rein them back on the ranks, that they might disorder them by kicking. As they became frantic with despair, they
belved at the immoveable phalanxes, which they could not break, their pistols, their poniards, and their carabines. Those who fell wounded, to the ground, dragged themselves on, to cut at the legs of the French with their crooked sabres; but their efforts were fruitless. The Mamelukes after the most courageous exertions to accomplish their purpose were finally beaten off with great slaughter; and as they could not form nor act in squadron, their retreat became a confused flight. The greater part attempted to return to their camp, from that sort of instinct, as Napoleon expressed it, which leads fugitives to retire in the same direction in which they had advanced. By taking this route they placed themselves betwixt the French army and the Nile; and the continued insupportable fire of the former soon obliged them to plunge into the river, in the hope of escaping by swimming to the opposite bank—a desperate effort in which few succeeded. Their infantry at the same time evacuated their camp without a show of resistance, precipitated themselves into the boats, and endeavoured to cross the Nile, most of whom also lost their lives. The French soldiers long afterwards occupied themselves in fishing for the drowned Mamelukes, and rarely failed to find money and valuables upon all whom they could recover.

Thus were destroyed, in a great measure, the finest cavalry, considered as individual horsemen, that were ever known to exist. "Could I have united the Mameluke horse to the French infantry," said Buonaparte, "I should have reckoned myself master of the world." The destruction of a body hitherto regarded as invincible, struck terror, not only through Egypt, but far into Africa and Asia, wherever the Mahometan religion prevailed; and the rolling fire of musketry by which the victory was achieved, procured for Napoleon the oriental appellation of "sultan Kebir," the king of fire. After this combat, which, to render it more striking to the Parisians, Buonaparte denominated "the battle of the pyramids," Cairo surrendered without resistance. The shattered remains of the Mamelukes who had swam the Nile and united under Ibrahim Bey, were compelled to retreat into Syria. A party of three hundred French cavalry ventured to attack them at Salahich, but were severely handled by Ibrahim Bey and his followers, who having cut many of them to pieces, pursued their retreat without further interruption. Lower Egypt was now completely in the hands of the French, and thus far the expedition of Buonaparte had been perfectly successful. But the sequel will shew that even the most fortunate of men cannot always escape reverses, and a severe one now awaited Napoleon.

The order of events has thus brought us to notice one of the most brilliant actions of the English navy,—a conquest achieved by the admiral whose exploits so indisputably asserted the right of Britain to the dominion of the ocean:—a tale at which the hearts of Britons will long continue to glow with honest pride.

When Buonaparte and his army were safely landed in Egypt, policy seemed to demand that the naval squadron by which they had been escorted, should have been sent back to France as soon as possible; but why this plan was not adopted has never been satisfactorily explained. Napoleon himself asserted that he positively commanded admiral Brueys either to carry his squadron into the harbour of Alexandria, or, that being found impracticable, instantly to sail for Corfu. The harbour, according to the reports of the Turkish pilots, was much too shallow to admit without danger vessels of such a depth of water; and it can scarcely be questioned that the admiral would have embraced the alternative of proceeding to Corfu, had such a step been in reality permitted by his orders. But vice-admiral Gantheume, who was himself in the battle of Aboukir, and who with difficulty escaped from the slaughter, and was entrusted by Buonaparte with drawing up the account of the disaster, which he transmitted to the minister of war, gives a different statement; for thus his dispatch runs: "Perhaps it may be said that it would have been advisable to have quitted the coast as soon as the dis-embarkation had taken place. But considering the orders of the com-"mander-in-chief, and the incalculable force afforded to the land-army by the presence of the squadron, the admiral thought it his duty not to quit
"these seas." Unable, therefore, to enter the harbour of Alexandria, the French admiral believed his squadron safely moored in the celebrated bay of Aboukir. There they formed a compact line of battle, of a semi-circular form, anchored so close to the shoal-water and surf, that it was thought impossible to get between them and the land; and they consequently concluded that they could be brought to action on the starboard side only.

On the 1st of August, the British fleet appeared; and Nelson had no sooner reconnoitred the French position than he resolved to force it at every risk. Where the French ships could ride, he argued with instantaneous decision, that there must be room for English vessels to anchor between them and the shore. Accordingly he made signal for the attack. As the vessels approached the French anchorage, they received a heavy and raging fire, to which they could make no return; but they kept their bows to the enemy, and continued to near their line. The squadrons were nearly of the same numerical strength; the French had thirteen ships of the line and four frigates—the English, thirteen ships of the line and one fifty-gun ship. But the French had three eighty-gun ships, besides the L'Orient, a superb vessel of one hundred and twenty guns—all the British were seventy-fours. The van of the English fleet, six in number, rounded successively the French line, and dropping anchor betwixt them and the shore, opened a tremendous fire. Nelson himself, and his other vessels ranged along the same French ships on the outer side, thus placing them betwixt two fires, while the rest of the French line remained for a time unable to take a share in the combat. The battle commenced with the utmost fury, and lasted till the sun having set and the night fallen, there was no light by which the combat could be continued, except the flashes which issued from the continuous broadsides. Already, however, some of the French ships were captured, and the British advancing onwards assaulted those which had not yet been engaged. In the mean time, a broad and dreadful light was thrown on the scene of action, by the breaking out of a conflagration on board the L'Orient, the French admiral's flag-ship. Brueyes had by this time fallen by a cannon shot. The flames soon mastered the immense vessel, when the carnage was so terrible as to prevent every attempt at extinguishing them; and the L'Orient remained blazing like a volcano in the middle of the combat, rendering, for a time, the dreadful spectacle visible. At length, and while the battle continued as furious as ever, the burning vessel blew up with an explosion so tremendous, that for a while it silenced the fire on both sides, and made an awful pause in the midst of what had been but lately so horrible a tumult. The cannonade was at first slowly and partially resumed; but ere midnight it raged with all its original fury. In the morning the only two French ships, who had their colours flying, cut their cables and put to sea accompanied by two frigates; being all that remained undestroyed and uncaptured of the gallant navy that so lately escorted Buonaparte and his fortunes in triumph across the Mediterranean.

Such was the victory of Aboukir: the advantages of the day, great as they were, might have been pushed much farther if Nelson had been possessed of frigates and small craft. The store-ships and transports in the harbour of Alexandria would then have been infallibly destroyed. As it was, the results were of the utmost importance, and the destinies of the French army became proportionally altered. They had no longer any means of communicating with the mother-country, but became the inhabitants of an insulated province, compelled to rely exclusively on the resources which they had brought with them, joined to those which Egypt might afford. Buonaparte, however surprised at this reverse, is said to have exhibited great composure of mind. Three thousand French seamen, the remainder of nearly six thousand engaged in that dreadful battle, were sent ashore by cartel, and formed a valuable addition to Napoleon's forces. Nelson, more grieved if possible at being frustrated of his complete purpose, than rejoiced at his victory, left the coast after establishing a blockade on the port of Alexandria.

Buonaparte now set himself in good earnest to augment his means of defense, or conquest, and in acquiring the information necessary to protect
what he had gained and extend his dominions. He undertook a journey to the isthmus of Suez, the well-known interval which connects Asia with Africa—and visited the celebrated fountains of Moses, where, misled by a guide, he had nearly been drowned in the advancing tides of the Red Sea. This, he observed, would have furnished a text to all the preachers in Europe! While engaged in this expedition, or speedily after his return, he learned that two Turkish armies had assembled, one at Rhodes, and the other in Syria, with the view of recovering Egypt. The daring genius, which had always desired to anticipate the attempts of the enemy, determined him to march with a strong force for the occupation of Syria, and thus at once to alarm the Turks by the progress which he expected to make in that province, as well as to avoid being attacked in Egypt by two Turkish armies at the same time. His commencement was as successful as his enterprise was daring. A body of Mamelukes was dispersed by a night attack. The fort of El-Arish, considered as one of the keys of Egypt, fell easily into his hands; and ultimately at the head of about ten thousand men, he traversed the desert which separates Africa from Asia, and entered Palestine without much loss. While his soldiers looked with fear on the "waste-howling wilderness" which they saw around, there was something in the extent and hugelessness of the scene that corresponded with the swelling soul of Napoleon, and accommodated itself to his ideas of immense and boundless space.

When he entered the Holy Land, Buonaparte was again called to attack a body of Mamelukes whom he defeated, and his army occupied without resistance Gaza, anciently a city of the Philistines, in which they found supplies of provisions. Jaffa, a celebrated city during the Crusades was the next object of attack; it was bravely assaulted and fiercely defended. The French valour and discipline, however, surmounted all obstacles, the place was carried by storm; three thousand Turks were put to the sword, and the town was abandoned to the license of the soldiery, which, Buonaparte himself admitted, never assumed a shape more frightful! It was not, however, to the ordinary horrors attending the storming of a town that the charge against Napoleon is on this occasion limited. He is accused of having been guilty of an action of great injustice and horrid barbarity; and what is still worse, he admitted the fact and justified the charge. The case, when stripped of colouring and exaggeration stands as follows.

After the breach had been stormed, a large part of the garrison of Jaffa, estimated by Buonaparte himself at twelve hundred men, remained on the defensive, and held out in the mosques, and a sort of citadel to which they had retreated, till, at length, despairing of succour, they surrendered their arms, and were apparently admitted to quarter. Of this body, such as were Egyptians were carefully separated from the Turks, Maufridians, and Arnaouts; and while the first were restored to liberty, and sent back to their country, these last were placed under a strong guard. Provisions were distributed to them, and they were permitted to go by detachments in quest of water. This happened on the 7th of March when, according to all appearance, they were treated as prisoners of war. Two days afterwards, this body of prisoners were marched out of Jaffa in the centre of a large square battalion, commanded by general Bon. Miot, who wrote the history of the expedition to Egypt, assures us that he himself mounted his horse, accompanied the melancholy column, and witnessed the event. The Turks foresaw their fate, but used neither entreaties nor complaints to avert it; they marched on silent and composed. Having been escorted to the sand-hills on the south-east of Jaffa, they were divided into small bodies and shot. The execution lasted a considerable time, and the wounded were dispatched with the bayonet. Their bodies were heaped together, and formed a pyramid which is said to be still visible; but the mangled corpses are now converted into a heap of human bones.

Determined to prosecute the conquest of Syria, Buonaparte now resolved to advance to Saint Jean d'Acre, so renowned in the wars of Palestine. The Turkish pacha, or governor of Syria, at this time was Achmet, who by his unrelenting cruelties and executions, had procured for himself the terrible
distinction of Djezzar, or the Butcher. Buonaparte addressed this formidable chief in two letters, offering his alliance, and threatening vengeance should his proffer be rejected; but to neither did the pacha return any answer; in the second instance he put the messenger to death. The French general advanced against Acre vowing revenge; but there were obstacles to the success of his enterprise on which he had not calculated. The pacha had communicated information of the approach of Napoleon to sir Sidney Smith, to whom had been committed the charge of assisting the Turks, and who for that purpose was cruising in the Levant. He hastened to sail for Acre with the Tigre and Theseus, two ships of the line; and arriving there two days before the French made their appearance, contributed greatly to place the town in a respectable state of defence.

Sir Sidney Smith, who so highly distinguished himself on this occasion, had been long celebrated for his enterprising spirit and intrepid courage. Scarcely had he arrived at Acre, when the Theseus, which had been detached to intercept any French vessels that might be attending on Buonaparte's march, descried a small flotilla stealing along under Mount Carmel, and he had the good fortune to capture seven out of nine of them. They proved to be a convoy from Damietta, bound for Acre, having on board heavy cannon, platforms, ammunition, and other necessary articles. These cannon and military stores, designed to form the siege of Acre, now became eminently useful in its defence, and the result of their capture was eventually decisive of the struggle. General Philippeaux, a French royalist, an officer of engineers, immediately applied himself to place the cannon thus acquired, amounting to between thirty and forty pieces, upon the walls which they had been intended to destroy. On the 17th of March, the French came in sight of Acre, and immediately commenced their operations. They proceeded to open trenches, although the guns which they had to place in them were only twelve pounders. The point of attack was a large tower, which predominated over the rest of the fortifications.

On the 28th of March a breach was effected, and a mine that had been run under the extreme defences, was sprung, and on that day the French proceeded to the assault. They advanced at the charging step, under a murderous fire from the walls, but had the mortification to find a deep ditch between them and the tower. They, nevertheless, crossed it by means of the scaling ladders which they carried with them, and forced their way as far as the tower, from which, it is said, the defenders, terrified by the fate of Jaffa, were beginning to fly. But they were checked by the interference of Djezzar himself, who fired his own pistols at the French, and upbraided the moslems who were retreating from the walls. The defences were again manned; the French, unable to support the renewed fire, were checked and forced back, and the Turks falling upon them in their retreat with sabre in hand, put to death a number of their best men, among whom was Mailly the commander of the detachment. Sorties were made from the place to destroy the French works. While the contest was thus fiercely maintained on both sides, the besiegers were threatened with other dangers. An army of moslems of various nations, all actuated by the same religious zeal, had formed themselves in the mountains of Samaria, and uniting with them the warlike inhabitants of the country, now called Naplous, determined on the plan of attacking the French' army lying before Acre on one side, while Djezzar and his allies should assail them on the other. Kleber, with his division, was dispatched by Buonaparte to disperse this assemblage. But though he obtained considerable advantages over detached parties of the Syrian army, their strength was so disproportionate, that in a little time, while maintaining a position near Mount Tabor, with two or three thousand men, he was surrounded by ten times his own number. Buonaparte was, therefore, compelled to hasten to his assistance; and leaving two divisions to keep the trenches before Acre, he penetrated into the country in three columns. The attack, made on various points was everywhere successful: the camp of the Syrian army was taken; and their defeat, almost their dis-
pension was accomplished, while their scattered remains fled to Damascus. Buonaparte now returned, crowned with laurels, to the siege of Acre.

The arrival of thirty pieces of cannon from Jaffa, now seemed to promise that success to the French which hitherto had been denied them. It was about this time that, walking on the mount which still retains the name of Richard Cœur de Lion, Napoleon thus addressed himself to Murat, as he pointed to Saint Jean d'Acre: "The fate of the east depends upon yonder petty town. Its conquest will insure the main object of my expedition, and Damascus will be the first-fruit of it." Repeated and desperate assaults, indeed, proved that the consequence which he attached to the taking of Acre, was as great as his words expressed. The assailants suffered severely on these occasions, for they were exposed to the fire of two ravelins, or external fortifications, constructed under Phillippeaux's directions, and at the same time enfiladed by the fire of the British shipping. At length, employing all the power of their heavy artillery, Buonaparte, in spite of a bloody and obstinate opposition, forced his way to the disputed tower, and made a lodgment on the second story. It, however, afforded no access to the town; and the troops remained there as in a cul-de-sac, the lodgment being covered from the English and Turkish fire by a screen constructed partly of packs of cotton, partly of the dead bodies of the slain, built up along with them.

At this critical moment, a fleet, bearing re-inforcements long hoped for and much needed, appeared in view of the garrison. It consisted of Turkish troops under the command of Hassan Bey. Yet near as they were, the danger was imminent that Acre might be taken ere they could land. To prevent such a misfortune, sir Sidney Smith in person proceeded to the disputed tower, at the head of a body of British seamen armed with pikes. They united themselves to a corps of brave Turks, who defended the breach rather with heavy stones than with other weapons. The heap of ruins which divided the contending parties served as a breast-work to both. The muzzles of the muskets touched each other, and the spearheads of the standards were locked together. At this moment one of the Turkish regiments of Hassan's army, which had by this time landed, made a sortie upon the French; and though they were driven back, yet the diversion occasioned the besiegers to be forced from their lodgment. Abandoning the ill-omened tower, which had cost the besiegers so many men, Buonaparte now turned his efforts towards a considerable breach that had been effected in the curtain, and which promised a more easy entrance. It proved indeed to them but too easy; for Djazzar pacha opposed to the assault on this occasion, a new mode of tactics. Confiding in his superior numbers, he suffered the French, who were commanded by the intrepid general Lannes, to surmount the breach without opposition, by which they penetrated into the body of the place. They had no sooner entered, however, than a numerous body of Turks mingled among them with loud shouts, and ere they had time or room to avail themselves of their discipline, brought them into that state of close fighting, where strength and agility are superior to every other acquirement. The Turks, wielding the sabre in one hand and the poniard in the other, cut to pieces almost all the Frenchmen who had entered. General Rambaud lay a headless corpse in the breach. Lannes was with difficulty brought off severely wounded. The Turks gave no quarter; and instantly cutting off the heads of those whom they slew, they carried them to Djazzar, who sat in public distributing money to those who brought him the bloody trophies which now lay piled in heaps around him. This was the sixth assault upon these tottering and blood-stained ramparts. "Victory," said Napoleon, "is to the most persevering;" and, contrary to the advice of Kleber, he resolved upon another and yet more desperate attack.

This last and final effort was made on the 21st of May, 1799. The attack in the morning failed, and colonel Veneux renewed it at mid-day. "Be as sured," said he to Buonaparte, "Acre shall be yours to-night, or Veneux will die on the breach." He kept his word, but it was at the expense of his life! Bon was also slain, whose division had been the executioners of the garrison of Jaffa. The French now retreated, dispirited, and despairing of
success. The contest had been carried on at half a musket shot distance; the bodies of the dead lying around, putrefied under the burning sun, and spreading disease among the survivors. An attempt was made to establish a suspension of arms, for removing this horrible annoyance. Miot says, that the pacha returned no answer to the proposal of the French; but air Sidney Smith stated in his official report, that the armistice for this humane purpose was actually agreed upon, but broken off by the French firing upon those who were engaged in the melancholy office, and then rushing on to make their last unsuccessful charge and assault upon the breach.

The siege of Acre had now continued sixty days from the time of the opening of the trenches. The besiegers had marched no less than eight times to the assault, while eleven desperate sallies were evidence of the obstinacy of the defence. Several of the best French generals were killed; among the rest Caffarelli, an officer for whom Napoleon had a particular esteem; and the army was greatly reduced by the sword and pestilence which raged at once among their devoted bands. Retreat, therefore, became inevitable; yet Buonaparte endeavoured to gloss it over so as to make the measure seem on his part voluntary. At one time he would announce that his object in going to Acre was sufficiently accomplished when he had battered down the palace of the pacha; at other times he affirmed, that he had left the whole town a heap of ruins; and finally, he informed the directory that he could easily have taken the place, but that the plague raging within its walls, and it being impossible to prevent the troops from seizing on infected clothes for the sake of booty, he had declined the capture of Acre, rather than run the risk of introducing this horrid malady among his soldiers! What his real feelings must have been, while covering his chagrin with such flimsy pretexts, may be conjectured from the following frank avowal to his attendants at Saint Helena. Speaking of the dependance of the most important affairs on the most trivial incidents, he remarked, that the mistake of a captain of a frigate, who bore away instead of forcing his passage to the place of his destination, had prevented the face of the world from being totally changed. “Acre,” he said, “would otherwise have been taken; the French army would have flown to Damascus and Aleppo; in the twinkling of an eye they would have been on the Euphrates; the Syrian Christians would have joined us—the Druses, the Armenians would have united with us.” Some one replied, “We might have been re-inforced to the number of an hundred thousand men.”—“Say six hundred thousand,” said Napoleon; “who can calculate the amount? I would have reached Constantinople and the Indies—I would have changed the face of the world.”

The siege of Acre being raised, the French army retreated to Jaffa, where their military hospitals had been established during the siege. On the 27th of May, leaving Jaffa, Buonaparte was under the necessity of continuing his retreat, and in the mean time such of the patients as were convalescent were sent forward on the road to Egypt, under the necessary precautions for their safety. There remained about twenty or thirty whose condition was desperate; their disease was the plague, and to carry them onward, seemed to threaten the army with infection; while to leave them behind, was abandoning them to the cruelty of the Turks, by whom all stragglers and prisoners were cruelly murdered, often with protracted torture. It was on this occasion that Buonaparte submitted to Desgenettes, chief of the medical staff, the propriety of ending the misery of these poor fellows by a dose of opium! The physician answered, with the heroism belonging to his profession, that “his art taught him how to cure men, not to kill them.” The report, however, was current in the French army, that this tragical experiment had been carried into effect upon several hundred men—but there are good grounds for discrediting it in toto, however consonant to Napoleon’s creed.

Buonaparte continued his retreat from Syria, annoyed by the natives, who harassed his march, and on whom he retaliated the injuries he received, by plundering and burning the villages which lay in the course of his march. On the 14th of June he re-entered Cairo, with a reputation not so much increased by the victory at Mount Tabor, as diminished and sullied for the time
by the retreat from Acre. However, it now became a subject of momentous enquiry to him, what course he should pursue for the future. All his splendid visions of eastern glory and universal dominion had vanished before Acre; the victory of the Nile had cut off the possibility of the return of his army to Europe, except as prisoners of war: and, though he himself might fortunately escape the English cruisers, there were obvious objections to the attempt being made under existing circumstances. It would not do to return to France under the humiliating recollection of the defeat which he had met with at Acre; at any rate, it became desirable by some grand military movement to efface, as far as possible, the strength of these impressions. He therefore continued in Egypt from the middle of June to the middle of August, no doubt, deeply pondering on his fate. During the period of his expedition into Syria, Egypt had remained generally tranquil, and seemed entirely at the command of the French. Dessair, whom Napoleon had left in charge of the conquered country, had been engaged in several skirmishes, with detached parties of the Mamelukes, and particularly with Murad Bey, one of their ablest chiefs; but he had been uniformly successful, and had ultimately compelled them, with their allies the Arabs, to take shelter in the desert. But in the course of three or four weeks after Buonaparte’s return from Syria, this flattering state of tranquillity seemed on the point of being disturbed. Murad Bey, re-entering Upper Egypt, with his Mamelukes and allies, descended the Nile in two bodies, one occupying each bank of the river. Ibrahim Bey, formerly his partner in the government, made a corresponding movement towards the frontiers of Syria, as if to communicate with the right hand division of Murad’s army. LaGrange was dispatched against those who under the Bey himself, were descending the Nile. The French amused themselves with the idea of the two Murats, as they termed them, from the similarity of their names, meeting and encountering each other; but the Mameluke Murad retreated before Le beau sabreur, the handsome swordsman of the French army.

The cause of this incursion was now sufficiently developed by the appearance of a Turkish fleet off Alexandria, from which eighteen thousand men were disembarked at Aboukir. This Turkish army possessed themselves of the fort, and proceeded to fortify themselves, expecting the arrival of the Mamelukes, according to a plan which had been previously concerted for expelling the French from Egypt. This news reached Buonaparte while near the Pyramids, to which he had advanced, in order to insure the destruction of Murad Bey. The arrival of the Turks instantly re-called him to Alexandria, whence he marched to Aboukir to repel the invaders. He joined his army, which had assembled from all points within a short distance of the Turkish camp, and was employed late in the night making preparations for the battle on the following morning. Murat was alone with Buonaparte, when the latter suddenly made the oracular declaration: “Go how it will, this battle will decide the fate of the world.”—“The fate of this army, at least,” replied Murat, who seems not to have taken in the full import of Napoleon’s secret meaning.—Murat added, “but the Turks are without horse, and if ever infantry was charged to the teeth by cavalry, they shall be so charged to-morrow by mine.” Buonaparte’s meaning, however, referred not to Egypt only, but to Europe, whither, in all probability, he now meditated an unexpected return, which must have been prevented had he not succeeded in obtaining a most decisive victory over the Turks.

On the morning of the 25th of July, Buonaparte commenced an attack on the advanced posts of the enemy, and succeeded in driving them in upon the main body, which was commanded by Seid Mustapha Pacha. In their first attack the French were eminently successful, and pursued the fugitive Turks to their entrenchments, doing great execution. But when the batteries opened upon them from the trenches, while they were exposed at the same time to the fire from the gun-boats in the bay, their impetuosity was checked, and the Turks sallying out upon them with their muskets slung at their backs, made such havoc among the French with their sabres, poniards, and pistols, as compelled them to retreat in their turn. The advantage, how-
ever, was lost by the eagerness of the Turks to possess themselves of the heads of their fallen enemies, for which they received a certain reward. To obtain these bloody testimonials, they threw themselves confusedly out of the entrenchments and were in considerable disorder, of which the French troops availed themselves, suddenly rallied, charged them with great fury, drove them back into the works, and scaled the ramparts along with them. Murat had made good his promise of the preceding evening, and had been constantly in the front of the battle. When the French had surmounted the entrenchments, he formed a column which reversed the position of the Turks, and pressing them with the bayonet, threw them into utter and inextricable confusion. Fired upon and attacked on every point, they became, instead of an army, a confused rabble, who, in the impetuosity of terror, threw themselves by hundreds and thousands into the sea, which at once seemed covered with turbans. It was no longer a battle but a massacre, and it was only when wearied with slaughter, that quarter was given to about six thousand men—the remainder of the Turkish army, originally consisting of eighteen thousand; all the rest perished on the field or in the waves. Buonaparte returned in triumph to Cairo, on the 9th of August, having previously set on foot a negotiation for the liberation of the Turkish prisoners. This splendid and most decisive victory concluded Napoleon’s career in the east. It was imperiously necessary, ere he could have ventured to quit the command of the army, with the hope of preserving his credit with the public; and it enabled him to plead that he left Egypt for the time in perfect security.

While these events were transacting in Africa, a sad reverse of fortune was taking place in regard to French affairs, on the continent of Europe. A file of English newspapers, sent him by sir Sidney Smith, in the way of taunt, is said to have been the means of apprising Napoleon of the confusions which distracted the French councils at home, and of the successes of the Russians in Italy, under the command of marshal Suwarow; and he lost no time in acting upon it. Despairing of being able to realize in the east the visions of glory which had haunted his imagination, he turned his attention towards Europe, as now offering a more promising field for his own ambitious views, and the advancement of his interests; and he at once determined to try his fortune at Paris. With all the secrecy which such a step required, he ordered admiral Ganteaume, who had been with the army ever since the destruction of the fleet, to make ready for sea, with all possible expedition, two frigates, then lying in the harbour of Alexandria; and selecting, of military chiefs, Berthier, Murat, Lannes, Marmont, Desaix, Andreossy, and Bessieres, the best and most attached of his staff officers, to accompany him, he committed the command of the army to Kleber and Menou. As soon as he heard the frigates were ready for sea, he left Cairo, making a visit to the Delta the pretext of his tour, and on the 23rd of August he embarked from an unfrequented part of the beach, leaving behind him a proclamation, apprising the army that news of importance from France had re-called him to Europe, but promising that they should soon hear tidings of him. After a perilous and tedious voyage, during which he was repeatedly in danger of being captured by the English cruisers, on the 9th of October, he was safely landed at St. Rapheau, near Frejus. He had departed from Europe at the head of a powerful fleet, and a victorious army, on an expedition designed to alter the destinies of the most ancient nations of the world. The result had been far from commensurate to the means employed or the expectations formed. The fleet had perished—the army was blockaded in a distant province, at a time when their arms were more necessary at home; and the conqueror of Italy returned from his eastern expedition, clandestinely and almost alone. Yet providence designed that in this apparently deserted condition, he should be the instrument of more extensive and more astonishing changes, than the efforts of the greatest conquerors had ever before been able to effect upon the civilized world.

I shall close the present letter with a rapid sketch of the affairs of our own country at this fearful juncture.

The British ministry now fully aware of the designs of France upon the
sister kingdom, which were obviously that of promoting a separation between England and Ireland, determined to frustrate it; and with that view a plan was submitted to parliament, for uniting the two islands into one kingdom, under the name of "The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland." During the month of January 1799, Mr. Pitt, in his place, brought forward the subject, and it was speedily carried into effect. The particular enactments of the union were, that the succession to the crown should be limited and settled as heretofore—that the United Kingdom should be represented by one common parliament, in which a number of lords and commons, should have a seat on the part of Ireland—that the churches of England and Ireland be preserved as then by law established—that the king's subjects of Ireland be entitled to the same privileges, in point of trade and navigation, with those of Great Britain—that the charge for the payment of the interest of the debt of each kingdom incurred previous to the union, should continue to be a distinct concern and defrayed by each country separately; but that the future ordinary expenses of the United Kingdom should be defrayed by them jointly, according to proportions, to be established by the parliament of each kingdom, as agreed upon previous to the union—that all laws in force at the time of the union, and all the courts civil and ecclesiastical in each kingdom, should remain as heretofore, subject only to such alterations as from circumstances may seem requisite to the united parliament. Such was the basis of the union then carried into effect between the two countries.

The military affairs of the continent of Europe during this year 1799, were thought sufficiently interesting to encourage an effort on the part of England for recovering Holland from the grasp of French fraternization. A plan was accordingly concerted between the courts of Great Britain and St. Petersburg for a joint expedition to the Dutch coast, in the hope that they would be relieved by the people as their deliverers from a galling servitude. A body of troops was collected, early in August, on the coast of Kent, and on the 13th of that month, sir Ralph Abercrombie, who was entrusted with the command, set sail with admiral Mitchell, and joined the fleet of lord Duncan in the north seas. After encountering some very unfavourable weather, they came to anchor off the Helder, a point which commands the entrance to the Zuyder Zee, where on the 27th the troops were disembarked. The fort of the Helder being abandoned by its garrison, was taken possession of and strengthened, and the island of the Texel was occupied by the fleet. On the 30th, admiral Mitchell summoned the Dutch fleet to surrender, and to hoist the Orange flag, which was complied with without a shot being fired. The number of ships were eight of the line, three of fifty-four guns, eight of forty-four, seven of inferior rates, and four Indiamen. The French and Batavian troops under general Bruno, amounting to twenty-five thousand men, occupied a position between the Helder and Alkmaar, and on the 10th of September they made an attack on the British forces, but were repulsed with considerable loss.

His royal highness the duke of York landed in Holland on the 13th of September to take the chief command of the army, which when joined by all its reinforcements now consisted of about thirty-five thousand men, of whom seventeen thousand were Russians. On the 19th a general attack being determined on, the army advanced in four columns through a tract of country intersected with ditches, and forced their way with great gallantry; but the Russian column being, through their own impetuosity, thrown into disorder, they were repulsed with great loss, and their generals D'Herman and Tschorchoff were made prisoners, the latter being dangerously wounded. The English lost in this action near two thousand men in killed, wounded, and prisoners, and the Russians between three and four thousand; but the loss of the French and Dutch was still more considerable; upwards of three thousand of them with sixty officers, being made prisoners. The British army also destroyed sixteen pieces of cannon and large supplies of ammunition, which the peculiar state of the country prevented them from carrying away.

Re-inforcements having arrived from England, the army renewed its attack on the 2nd of October, and after a warm action of a whole day, the
French were again defeated with great loss, and the duke of York took possession of Alkmaar, obliging the French army to take up a new position near Berwyck, almost at the extremity of North Holland. An attempt made on the 6th to force this position proved unsuccessful; and the French having received a reinforcement of six thousand men, and occupying a strongly fortified post, which it was necessary to dislodge them from before the army could advance; the state of the weather, the season of the year, the badness of the roads, and the consequent want of necessary supplies, presented insurmountable obstacles to the further success of the expedition, and it was resolved to persist no longer in fruitless efforts. The consequence was that a suspension of arms was agreed upon by the respective commanders, the conditions of which were, that all prisoners should be given up on either side; and that, as the price of permitting the British to embark without molestation, eight thousand seamen, Dutch or French prisoners in England, should be liberated. The army was to evacuate Holland before the close of November, which in fact was done without delay. The Russians were landed and quartered in the islands of Guernsey and Jersey; and thus terminated an expedition prepared at a vast expense, and of which the most sanguine expectations had been formed; but which cost the English and Russian armies little short of thirteen thousand men. The principal advantage that resulted from it to Great Britain was the capture of the Dutch fleet, an event which nearly annihilated the naval power of Holland.

In the month of August 1800, a British fleet under the command of sir John Borlase Warren, sailed on a secret expedition, having on board a land force under the command of sir James Pulley. Having looked into Belleisle, which was found to be defended by works, the strength of which discouraged any attempt upon it, the armament proceeded to the coast of Spain, and on the 25th of the month arrived before the fort of Ferrol. The troops landed without opposition, and marched to the heights overlooking the harbour, where they had a successful skirmish with the Spaniards. But a survey of the place from that eminence, and the report of the prisoners whom they had made, convinced the commander that an attempt to carry it would be attended with more hazard than hope of success; he therefore re-embarked his troops, and returned home. Thus terminated an expedition which afforded little satisfaction to the public.

The different nations now began to sigh for peace; and during some of the autumnal months of the year 1800, it was notified to the French government by the Austrian ambassador, that the British minister resident at Vienna, had expressed the wish of his court to be included in a negotiation for peace which was then carrying on between the emperor and the French republic. In consequence of this communication, M. Otto, the French commissioner for prisoners in England, was authorized to demand an explanation of the proposals of the British cabinet, and to request that a truce might be concluded between the forces of the two countries by sea and land. The English ministry declared their readiness to send a plenipotentiary to any place that might be appointed, but objected to an armistice respecting naval operations. This topic became a subject of much discussion between M. Otto and lord Grenville, and various schemes were brought forward by each party, which were as constantly objected to by the other. At length, in the month of October, it was signed by M. Otto, that events having occurred which entirely changed the ground of the proposed truce, the negotiation was at an end; but that the first consul was ready to receive any overtures for a separate peace with Great Britain. This, however, was decidedly objected to by the English ministry.

Peace being now restored on the continent of Europe, the most important point that remained to be settled in its political state related to the maritime confederacy of the northern powers, the direct object of which was to annul the marine code maintained by England, and by which she arrogated a kind of naval dominion. This confederacy, openly declared at the close of the last year, now occupied the fixed attention of the British ministry; and on the 14th of January 1801, an embargo was laid on all the ships in the
British ports, belonging to any of the confederate powers, Prussia excepted, and letters of marque were issued for the seizure of their vessels at sea. A note was at the same time delivered to the Danish and Swedish ambassadors, explaining the reason of this procedure, and endeavouring to bring back these courts to their former amicable relations. In the answer returned to these official notes, the courts of Denmark and Sweden expressed a resolution to persevere in their determination to liberate neutral commerce, and they retaliated by an embargo on all English shipping in their ports.

With Prussia, a negotiation was carried on for some time by the British ministry, in the hope of prevailing on her to abandon the coalition, an adherence to which it was foreseen would endanger the king’s German dominions; but it proved unsuccessful. On the 30th of March the king of Prussia notified to the electoral college of Hanover, his intention not only to shut the mouths of the Elbe, the Weser, and the Ems, but also to take possession of the States belonging to the king of England in Germany, at the same time demanding the disarming of the Hanoverian troops—a requisition with which the regency of Hanover found it expedient to comply. The Prussian troops then entered the Hanoverian territory, and an embargo was laid on the English shipping, but those that were laden with corn were allowed to put to sea. About the same time a body of Danish troops took possession of Hamburgh, for the alleged purpose of stopping the British trade of that port.

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

The succeeding armistice terminated hostilities in the Baltic; for an event had already taken place which altered the whole state of affairs in the north of Europe. The emperor Paul, whose conduct sufficiently indicated insanity, and who was become intolerable to his subjects, and dangerous to those about him, was hurled from his throne by the only mode of deposition practicable under a despotic monarchy! On the 2nd of March it was officially announced, that he was found dead in his bed. His son Alexander succeeded him in the throne, and immediately on his accession declared for the laws and institutions of his august grandmother. One of his first acts was to liberate and bring back from their places of confinement, all the British sailors belonging to the sequestrated ships. Negotiations were entered into with the court of London, and on the 17th of June a convention was signed at Petersburg by lord St Helens and the Russian ministers, in which all disputes were adjusted. The courts of Denmark and Sweden also acceded to the same amicable compact, by which were obtained a limitation and explicit defini-
tion of the right of search and the principle of blockade, together with a re-
duction of articles considered as contraband of war, to those of real military
or naval ammunition. The Danish troops evacuated Hamburg; the navi-
gation of the German rivers was restored; and the court of Berlin engaged
to evacuate Bremen and Hanover, after certain arrangements had been
made.

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

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

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

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

vantageously posted on a ridge between the canal of Alexandria and the sea.

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

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

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

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

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

General Hutchinson now proceeded to the reduction of Cairo, rather than to commence the siege of Alexandria, and commenced his march towards that city. In the mean time, colonel Lloyd, with a detachment of troops from Bombay, arrived at Suez, and after suffering excessively from the heat in crossing the desert, a distance of more than sixty miles, arrived on the 10th of June at the camp of the grand vizier.

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

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

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

Thus terminated this celebrated expedition, in which the British troops acquired great glory, and sustained less loss than might have been expected, from the circumstances of their not being injured to the climate, and from the strength of the enemy. Humanity, indeed, mourns over the effusion of so much blood, and the expenditure of so much money, in this expedition, when we recollect that the French army evacuated Egypt on nearly the same conditions as had been stipulated at El-Arisch. In justification, however, of the British ministers, who had refused to ratify that convention, it must be observed, that the stipulations of El-Arisch tended only to remove the French army from Egypt, and to place it in Italy, where it might have immediately proceeded to act against the Austrians, who were the allies of England. It should be kept in mind, that when general Menou capitulated, circumstances were changed: a treaty of peace was concluded between Austria and France; and Russia had declared herself hostile to Great Britain. It was, therefore, no longer necessary to prevent the return of the French army to Europe.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

LETTER XXXII.

Continuation of the internal affairs of France from the insurrection of the
Sections in 1795, to the end of the Directorial government in 1800.—Jaco-
binical conspiracy frustrated.—Elections of May 1797.—Royalist attempt
at conspiracy, and exile of many members of the councils.—Return of Bu-
naparte to Paris, May 1798.—His expedition to Egypt.—Return of Neapo-
leon, October 1799—he obtains the Consulate and dissolves the legislative
body, 1800.

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

(1) Dodaley’s Annual Register, 1797—1803.—Dr. Aikin’s Annals of George III.—Dr.
Bisset’s History of the Reign of George III.—Debrett’s State Papers.—London Ga-
zette.—Boulainvilliers’ History of Malta.—Intercepted Letters from Buonaparte in Egypt.—
Southerly’s Life of Lord Nelson.—Precis des Evénemens Militaires, 1789.—History of the
Campaign in Holland, in the year 1799.—Baldwin’s political recollections concerning
Egypt.
a more general and superficial survey of the state of their domestic concerns from this period.

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

When the directory succeeded the convention, the contest between the classes had become much less violent than heretofore. The most considerable persons in each of them, however, formed a party, which still struggled for the possession of power and the establishment of its own form of government, but the mass of the population which had been so profoundly shaken from 1789 to 1795, longed for repose, and was ready to conform to the new order of things. It was at this period that the general impulse in favour of liberty came to a pause; and a better order of things in regard to civilization commenced; the revolution, after the troubles and commotions attending the first years of its existence, and the total destruction of its immense labours, now assumed its second character—a character of order, of solidity, and repose. This second period was marked by this peculiar feature, that it seemed as if the nation had in some measure abandoned all idea of liberty. Parties finding themselves no longer able to enjoy it in a lasting and exclusive manner, grew discouraged and retired from the ardent pursuit of politics to a more peaceful and private life. The revolution now became every day more consolidated: after giving birth to a nation of partisans, it produced first a nation of labourers and then of soldiers.

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

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

Carnot projected a new plan for the ensuing campaign, and it had for its object to carry the arms of the republic into the very heart of the hostile states. Buonaparte, who, as we have already seen, had been made general of the interior, after the insurrection of October, was now appointed to the command of the army of Italy. Jourdan was continued at the head of the army of the Sambre and Meuse; and Moreau was chosen to succeed Pichegru in the command of the army of the Rhine. An offer was made to the latter, whose treason, though not proved, was strongly suspected by the directory, to appoint him ambassador to the court of Sweden, but the offer was refused, Pichegru preferring to retire to Amboise, his native place. It was arranged that the great armies under the command of Buonaparte, Jourdan, and Moreau, should attack the Austrian territories by way of Italy and Germany, form a junction at the passage of the Tyrol, and by degrees march upon Vienna. This great movement, the success of which would render the republican mistress of the chief seat of the continental coalition, the generals prepared to execute.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The principal effect of the late measure was the return of the revolutionary government, a little modified. The two ancient privileged classes were again driven into the back ground; the refractory priests were a second time exiled. All who had formed a part of the military household of the Bourbons, the superior agents of the crown, the members of parliament, the commanders of the orders of the Holy Ghost and of St Louis, the knights of Malta—all, in short, who had protested against the abolition of the nobility and retained its titles, were ordered to quit the territory of the republic. The old nobles, as well as those recently created, were rendered incapable of exercising the rights of citizens until the expiration of seven years, after having served, as it were, an apprenticeship to the republic. Thus did this party, in its thrist for rule, bring back the dictatorship. The directory at this time reached the height of its power. The armies of the republic had been every where victorious; and now freed from all intestine opposition, it imposed peace on Austria, by the treaty of Campo Formio, and on the empire by the congress of Rastadt. The coalition of 1792, and three was now dissolved, and England was the only belligerent power that remained. To pacify the people of the latter country lord Malmesbury was sent, in the character of plenipotentiary, first to Paris and then to Lisle. The negotiations were twice broken off, and the war between the two powers continued. Whilst England was negotiating at Lisle, she was preparing at St. Petersburgh the triple alliance, or second coalition.

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

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

The directory, which was desirous of procuring the neutrality of the Ottoman Porte, that it might attack the English, violated that of Switzerland, that it might expel the emigrants from its territories. Republican principles had penetrated into Geneva, and the Pays de Vaud: but the policy of the Swiss confederation was, the influence of the aristocracy of Berne, avowedly of a counter-revolutionary cast. They had driven from the cantons all the Swiss who had shown themselves partisans of the French republic. Berne was the head-quarters of the emigrants, and there most of the plots against the revolution were hatched. The directory complained but received no satisfaction. The Vaudois, placed by ancient treaties under the direction of France invoked its support against the tyranny of Berne. The appeal of the Vaudois, its own grievances, and the desire of extending its own system in Switzerland, much more than the temptation to seize the petty treasure of Berne, with which it has been reproached, decided the directory. After some negotiations, which led to nothing, the war commenced. The Swiss defended themselves with great courage and obstinacy; they thought of bringing back the times of their forefathers; but they were at length compelled to yield. Geneva was re-united to France, and Switzerland exchanged its ancient constitution for that of the year three. From that moment two parties existed in the confederation, one of which advocated the cause of France and the revolution, and the other that of Austria and a counter-revolution. Switzerland, from this period, ceased to be a common barrier, and became the high road of Europe.

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

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

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

Whilst the republican plenipotentiaries were still negotiating a peace with the emperor at Rastadt, the second coalition commenced its campaign. The treaty of Campo-Formio was nothing more than a suspension of hostilities between the republic and Austria, and England had no difficulty in engaging her in a new confederacy, in which all the European powers, with the exception of Prussia and Spain, took a part. The subsidies of the British cabinet, and the attractions of the West, decided Russia; the Porte and the Barbary states embraced the confederacy on account of the invasion of Egypt; the empire, in order to recover the left bank of the Rhine; and the petty princes of Italy, for the purpose of destroying the new republics. They were discussing at Rastadt the treaty relative to the cession of the left bank of the Rhine, the navigation of that river, and the demolition of some fortresses on the right bank, when the Russians passed into Germany, and the Austrian army began to move. The French plenipotentiaries were taken by surprise, and received orders to depart within twenty-four hours; they instantly obeyed, and, after having obtained safe conduct from the enemy’s general, commenced their journey. At some distance from Rastadt they were stopped by a party of Austrian hussars, who having ascertained their names and titles, assassinated them: Bonnier and Roberjot were killed, and John de Bry was left for dead. This unexampled violation of the law of nations, a premeditated assassination of three men invested with a sacred character, excited universal horror. The legislative body indignantly decreed war against the governments to which the guilt of this enormous crime attached.

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

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

The coalition, which had the advantage of the republic in preparations and in effective force, attacked it by the three great openings of Italy, Switzerland, and Holland. A strong Austrian force debouched in the duchy of Mantua, defeated Shéres twice upon the Adige, and was soon afterwards joined by the whimsical, and until then victorious Suwarrow. Moreau succeeded Shéres, and was, like him, defeated: he retreated on the side of
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PART III.

France, in order to protect the barrier of the Apennines, and to join the army commanded by Macdonald, who was also routed at Trebia. The

Russians next directed their principal force against Switzerland. Some

French corps joined the archduke Charles, who had defeated Jourdan on

the upper Rhine, and was making preparations for crossing the Helvetian frontier. The duke of York at the same time landed in Holland with

forty thousand Anglo-Russian troops. The small republics which protected

France were invaded, and, after some new victories, the confederates were

enabled to penetrate into the very seat of the revolution.

In the midst of these military disasters, to which was added the discontent

declared themselves permanent, and Barras deserted his colleagues. The animosity of the councils was directed solely against Treilhard, Merlin, and La Réveillère, the last support of the old directors. They

remained Treilhard, because the interval of a year had not elapsed between his legislative and directorial functions, as required by the constitution. The

ex-minister of justice, Goethe, was immediately put in his place. The orators of the council next vigorously attacked Merlin and La Réveillère, whom, as they could not depose, they wished to compel to resign. The directors, who were thus menaced, sent a justificatory message to the councils, and proposed peace. On the 18th of June, the republican Bertrand (du Calvados), ascended the tribune; and, after having examined the offers of the directors, proceeded in these terms: "You have proposed a reunion; and I propose "that you should consider whether you can still retain your offices. If you "desire the welfare of the republic, you will not hesitate to decide. You "have no power to do good: you will never have either the confidence of "your colleagues, or that of the people, or that of the representatives, with- "out which it is impossible for you to execute the laws. Thanks to the con- "stitution, there already exists in the directory a majority which enjoys the "confidence of the people, and of the national representatives. Why do you "hesitate to restore unanimity both in design and principle, between the two "first authorities of the state? You have no longer even the confidence of "those vile flatterers who have hollowed out your political grave. Termi- "nate your career by an act of devotion, which the sound hearts of republicans will alone know how to appreciate."

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

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

As effects similar to those which had been produced, between the 14th and 27th of July, by the people, in conjunction with a part of the government, had since the 2nd of October been brought about by the army, Siéyès determined to avail himself of the latter. For this purpose, it was necessary to have the assistance of a general, and he cast his eyes upon Joubert, who was put at the head of the army of the Alps, in order that he should first, by means of victories, and the liberation of Italy, gain a great political reputation.

The constitution of the year three, however, was still supported by the two directors Gohier and Moulins, and by the council of five hundred, and out of doors by the party of the Manège. The decided republicans had assembled as a club in that hall in which the first assembly had held its sittings. The new club, formed of the wreck of that of Salm, which had existed before the 4th of September, of that of the Panthéon, which had existed at the commencement of the directory, and of the old society of Jacobins, professed republican principles with enthusiasm, but not the democratic opinions of the lower orders. Each of the two parties also possessed a share in the ministry, which had been renewed at the same time as the directory. Cambacérès had the department of justice; Quinette, the home department; Reinhard, who had been placed in office during the ministerial inter-regnum of Talleyrand, was minister of foreign relations; Robert Lindet, of the finances; Bourdon (of Vatry) of the marine; Bernalot, of war; and Bourguignon, soon afterwards succeeded by Fouche (of Nantes), of police.

Barras, this time, remained neuter between the two divisions of the legislature, of the directory, and of the ministry. Perceiving that affairs were proceeding to a more considerable change than that of the 18th of June, he imagined that the destruction of the republic would bring along with it the restoration of the Bourbons, and he began to treat with Louis XVI. It appears that Barras, in negotiating for the restoration of monarchy by his agent David Mounier, by no means forgot himself. He espoused nothing through conviction, and never failed to declare himself for the party which had the greatest chance of victory. After having been a democratic Mountainist on the 31st of May; a re-actionary Mountainist on the 27th of July; a revolutionary director against the royalists on the 4th of September; an ultra-republican director against his old colleagues on the 16th of June; he now became a royalist director against the government of the year three.

The faction which had been disconcerted by the 4th of September and by the peace of the continent, had also resumed its courage. The military success of the new coalition, the law of the forced loan, and that of the hostages, which obliged each family of emigrants to give securities to the government, had induced the royalists of the south and west to take up arms. They re-
appeared in bands which became every day more formidable, and which recommenced the petty but disastrous warfare of the Chouans. They expected the arrival of the Russians, and believed in the speedy restoration of monarchy. This was the moment for a new contest between all parties. Each of them aspired to the inheritance of the expiring constitution, as was seen at the end of the conventional session. In France they are warned by a sort of political odour that a government is dying, and all parties immediately fly to the prey.

Happily for the republic, the war changed its aspect upon the two principal frontiers of the higher and lower Rhine. The allies, after having acquired Italy, attempted to penetrate into France through Switzerland and Holland; but their progress, until then victorious, was arrested by generals Massena and Brune. Massena advanced against Korsakov and Suwarrow, and in a series of grand combinations and consecutive victories, during twelve days, running first to Constance and then to Zurich, the Russians were repulsed and forced to retreat, and the coalition was thus disorganized. Brune also defeated the duke of York in Holland, and compelled him to reembark, and to renounce his attempt at invasion. The army of Italy alone was less successful: Joubert, its general, was killed at the battle of Novi, whilst charging the Austro-Russian army. But notwithstanding the defeat of Novi, this frontier, which was at a great distance from the centre of events, was not passed, but was skilfully defended by Championnet. The republican troops were themselves likely very soon to be in a situation to cross it; for after having been for a moment beaten, they began to resume their superiority at every fresh conflict, and once more commenced their career of victories. Europe, in giving by its repeated attacks more exercise to the military power, rendered it every day more formidable.

But nothing was changed at home, where divisions, discontent, and uneasiness remained as before. The contest between the moderate and the ultra republicans had become still more decided. Siéyès pursued his projects against the latter. He attacked the Jacobins on the anniversary of the 10th of August, in the Champ-de-Mars. Lucien Buonaparte, who had obtained great influence in the council of five hundred, by his character, his talents, and the military importance of the conqueror of Italy and Egypt, presented a frightful picture of terror to the assembly, and declared that France was in danger of its return. About this time, Siéyès effected the removal of Bernadotte; and Fouché, with his concurrence, closed the assembly of the Maniege. The multitude, to whom it is only necessary to present the phantom of the past, in order to inspire it with dread, ranked themselves, in their apprehension of the return of the system of terrors, on the side of the moderate party; and the ultra republicans failed in an attempt to get the country declared in danger, as at the end of the legislative assembly. Siéyès, after having lost Joubert, looked around for a general who would enter into his designs, one who would protect the republic, without becoming its oppressor. Hoche had been dead more than a year; Moreau no longer possessed the public esteem, on account of his equivocal conduct towards the directory before the 4th of September, and of his sudden accusation of his old friend Pichegru, whose treason he had concealed for more than a year; Massena was not at all a political general; and Bernadotte and Jourdan were devoted to the party of the Maniege. Siéyès, finding himself in this situation of poverty, adjourned his political machinations for want of a man.

Buonaparte while in Egypt had learned the state of France. His expedition, of which I have given you the chief incidents in my former letter, and which, therefore, I will not here repeat, had been brilliant, but had produced no results. After having beaten the Mamelukes, and put an end to their domination in low and in high Egypt, he had advanced into Syria; but his failure in the siege of St. Jean d'Accre had compelled him to return to his first conquest. There, after having defeated an Ottoman army on the banks of Aboukir, so fatal the year before to the French fleet, he decided upon quitting this land of fame and of banishment, that he might render the new crisis in France subservient to his elevation. He left general Kleber in com-
mand of the army of the east, and crossed the Mediterranean, which was
covered with English vessels, in a frigate. He landed at Fréjus on the 9th
of October 1799, and made a rapid and triumphal progress from the coast of
the Mediterranean to Paris. His expedition, which had the appearance of a
fabulous story, astonished all France, and added still more to a reputation
which the conquest of Italy had already raised to a great height. These two
enterprises had distinguished him from all the other generals of the republic.
The remoteness of the theatre upon which he had fought had already allowed
him to prepare the way for his career of independence and authority. A vic-
torious general, an acknowledged diplomatist, the founder of republics, he
had treated all interests with address, all creeds with moderation. Preparing
his plans of ambition at a distance from the capital, he had taken care not to
make himself the partisan of any system; and he had so managed all parties,
as to effect his elevation with their consent. Ever since his victories in
Italy, he had entertained thoughts of usurpation. If the directory had been
vanquished by the council on the 4th of September, he proposed to march
against the latter with his army, and seize the protectorate of the republic.
Finding, after the 4th of September, that the directory was too powerful, and
the inactive state of the continent too dangerous for him, he accepted the
expedition to Egypt, that he might not fall into obscurity and be forgotten.
On the news of the disorganization of the directory on the 16th of June, he
repaired with all possible expedition to the seat of action.

His arrival excited the enthusiasm of the moderate part of the nation; he
received general congratulations, and was emulously sought after by all the
different parties who were equally anxious to gain him. The generals, the
directors, the deputies, even the republicans of the Manège, waited upon him,
and sounded him. They amused him with feasts and entertainments; he
appeared grave, simple, observing, and not very eager; he already possessed
the familiarity of a superior, and displayed involuntary habits of command.
Notwithstanding his apparent want of eagerness, and the absence of overtures,
it was manifest that he entertained ulterior designs: without saying it, he
allowed it to be divined: for, in order to accomplish a thing, it is necessary
that it should be expected. He could not rely upon the republicans of the Ma-
nège, who wished neither for a stroke of state policy, nor a dictator; and as
to Siéyès, his apprehension that Buonaparte would be too ambitious to enter
into his constitutional views, was not without foundation. But, through the
importunity of common friends, an interview at length took place, which ter-
minated in an alliance. On the 5th of November they arranged their plan of
attack against the constitution of the year three. Siéyès undertook to prepare
the councils by the commissions of inspectors, who had an unlimited confidence
in him. Buonaparte was to gain over the generals and the different bodies of
troops, which were stationed at Paris, and who displayed much enthusiasm and
devotion for his person. They agreed to convocate an extraordinary meeting of
the most moderate members of the councils; to lay before the councils a de-
scription of the public dangers; and, after exhibiting to them the menacing
position of the Jacobins, to demand the removal of the legislative body to St.
Cloud, and the appointment of general Buonaparte to the command of the
armed force, as the only man who could save the country. They then pro-
posed, by means of the new military power, to effect the disorganization of
the directory, and the momentary dissolution of the legislative body. The
morning of the 8th of November was appointed for carrying this enterprise
into effect.

During the three intervening days the secret was faithfully kept. Barras,
Moulins, and Gohier, who formed the majority of the directory, of which the
last was then president, might, by anticipating the conspirators, as on the
4th of September, have disconcerted their projects. But they thought of
their own hopes and not of other person’s schemes. On the morning of the
8th of November, the members of the ancients were convoked in an unusual
manner by the inspectors; they repaired to the Tuileries, and entered on
their session about seven o’clock, under the presidency of Lemercier. Cor-
nudet, Lebrun, and Farque, three of the most influential conspirators in the
council, presented a most alarming picture of the public situation: they assured it that the Jacobins were coming in crowds from all the departments, that they wished to re-establish the revolutionary government, and that terror would again desolate the republic if the council had not the courage and the wisdom to prevent its return. Another conspirator Reignier (de la Meurthe) proposed that the ancients, who were already giving way, should, by virtue of the power vested in them by the constitution, transfer the seat of the legislative body to St. Cloud, appoint Buonaparte to the command of the 17th military division, and instruct him to superintend the removal. Either the whole council was an accomplice of this manœuvre, or was struck by a real panic after so precipitate a meeting, and such alarming speeches: however this may be, it granted every thing that the conspirators required.

Buonaparte waited impatiently in his house, in the street Mont-Blanc, for the result of this discussion; he was surrounded by generals, by the commandant of the guard of the directory, Lefèvre, and three regiments of cavalry, which he was about to review. The decree of the council of ancients, which was passed at eight o'clock, was brought to him by a messenger of state at half-past. He received the congratulations of those who formed his cortège, and the officers drew their swords in token of fidelity. He placed himself at their head, and they marched to the Tuileries, where he had no sooner arrived, than he repaired to the bar of the council of ancients, took the oath of fidelity, and named Lefèvre, the commandant of the directorial guard, for his lieutenant.

This, however, was only the beginning of his success; for, although he was at the head of the military power, the authority of the directory and the legislative power of the councils still existed. In the contest which must infallibly ensue, it was not clear that the grand, and until then victorious, energy of the revolution, would not prevail. Sièyes and Roger-Ducos proceeded from the Luxembourg to the legislative and military camp of the Tuileries, and delivered in their resignations. Barras, Moulins, and Gobier, being apprized, though at a late hour, of what was passing, attempted to use their authority, and secure the protection of their guard; but the latter having, through Buonaparte, received intelligence of the decree of the ancients, refused to obey them. Barras became discouraged, sent in his resignation, and set out for his estate of Grosbois. The directory was in fact dissolved; and there was one antagonist less in the contest. The council of five hundred and Buonaparte alone remained in the field.

The decree of the council of ancients, and the proclamations of Buonaparte, were posted on the walls of Paris, the inhabitants of which experienced that agitation which always accompanies extraordinary events. The republicans felt, and not without reason, serious apprehensions for liberty. But when they manifested alarm as to the designs of Buonaparte, in whom they beheld a Caesar or a Cromwell, they received a reply in the words of the general: "Bad parts, worn-out parts, unworthy of a man of sense, if not of an honest man. It would be sacrilegious to think of attempts against the represenative government, in an age of intelligence and liberty. None but a fool would wish wantonly to lose the stake of the republic against royalty, after having supported it with some danger as well as credit." Nevertheless the importance which he assumed in his proclamations was but a bad omen! and he also reproached the Directory with the situation of France in a most extraordinary manner. "What have you done," said he, "with that France which I left you so brilliant? I left you peace, I have found war: I left you victories, I have found defeats: I left you the millions of Italy, and I have found nothing but spoliation and misery. What have you done with the hundred thousand Frenchmen whom I knew, all of them my companions in glory? they are dead. This state of things cannot last: before three years it will lead us to despotism." It was the first time during the last ten years, that one man referred every thing to himself, and demanded an account of the republic as of his own estate. One is grievously surprised at seeing a single individual, brought forward by the revolution,
thus introduce himself into the inheritance so laboriously acquired by a whole people.

On the 9th of November, the members of the council repaired to St. Cloud. Thither also Siéyès and Roger Ducos accompanied Buonaparte, with the view of opposing the designs of the conspirators. Siéyès, who understood the tactics of revolutions, proposed, in order to secure the success of their scheme, that their chiefs should be provisionally arrested, and that none but the moderate party should be admitted into the council; but Buonaparte refused to accede to this proposal; for being no party man, and having hitherto only acted and conquered with soldiers, he thought that he could move the legislative body like an army by the word of command. The gallery of Mars was prepared for the council of ancients; the Orangery for that of the five hundred. A considerable armed force surrounded the seat of the legislature, as the mob on the 2nd of June surrounded the convention. The republicans assembled in groups in the gardens, and waited for the opening of the session: they were agitated with a generous indignation against the military brutality with which they were threatened, and communicated to each other their projects of resistance. The young general, followed by a few grenadiers, traversed the courts and the apartments, and prematurely yielding to his natural character, he said, like the twentieth king of a dynasty: "I will have no more factions: there must be an end of them. I positively will have no more of them." About two o'clock in the afternoon the councils assembled in their respective halls, to the sound of instruments which played the air of la Marseillaise.

As soon as the session opened, Emile Gaudin, one of the conspirators, ascended the tribune of the five hundred, and proposed a vote of thanks to the council of the ancients for the measures which it had adopted, and that its opinion should be requested as to the means of saving the republic. This motion became the signal of the most violent tumult; cries arose against Gaudin from all sides of the hall. The republican deputies besieged the tribune and the chair in which Lucien Buonaparte presided. The conspirators Cabanis, Boulay (de la Meurthe), Chazal, Gaudin, Lucien, &c., grew pale upon their seats. After a protracted commotion, amidst which no one could be heard, order was for a moment restored, and Delbrel proposed that they should renew the oath to the constitution of the year three: no voice being raised against this motion, which at such a juncture was vital, the oath was taken with a burst of enthusiasm, and a unanimity which endangered the conspiracy.

Buonaparte being informed of what was passing in the council of five hundred, and seeing himself in great peril of desertion and defeat, presented himself before the council of ancients. If the latter, which inclined towards the conspiracy, was led away by the enthusiasm of the younger council, he was lost. "Representatives of the people!" said he, "you are placed in no ordinary circumstances; you are upon a precipice. Yesterday, when you summoned me to notify the decree of removal, and entrusted me with the execution of it, I was at ease: I immediately assembled my comrades; we flew to your assistance. Well, to-day I am overwhelmed with calamities. They talk of Caesar, they talk of Cromwell, they speak of military government! If I had wished to oppress the liberties of my country I should not have submitted to the orders you gave me; I should not have had occasion to receive this authority from your hands. Representatives of the people! I swear to you that the country has not a more zealous defender than myself; but it is upon you that its safety depends. The government no longer exists: four of the directors have delivered in their resignation; the fifth (Barra) has been placed under surveillance for security; the council of five hundred is divided; the council of ancients alone remains. Let it adopt the necessary measures; let it but speak, I am here to execute them. Let us save liberty, let us save equality." A republican member (Linglet) then rose and addressed him: "General, we applaud what you say: swear then with us, obedience to the constitution of the year three, which can alone maintain the republic." It had been all over with him if this proposition
had been hailed with the same enthusiasm as it was in the council of five hundred. It however surprised the council, and Buonaparte was for a moment disconcerted. But he soon resumed: “The constitution of the year three! you no longer have it. You violated it on the 4th of September; you violated it on the 11th of May. The constitution! it is invoked by all factions, and it has been violated by all; it cannot be a means of safety to us, because it no longer possesses the respect of any body; the constitution being violated, we must have another compact, and other guarantees.” The council applauded the reproaches which Buonaparte addressed to it, and rose up as a sign of their approbation.

Buonaparte, deceived by the easy success which his demeanour had obtained for him in the council of ancients, imagined that his presence alone would appease the stormy council of five hundred. Thither he repaired at the head of some grenadiers, whom he left at the door, but in the interior of the hall, and he advanced alone with his hat in his hand. At the sight of the bayonets the whole council rose by a sudden impulse. Conceiving that his entrance was the signal of military violence, they all joined in the cry: Outlaw him! Down with the dictator! Many members rushed towards him, and Bigonet seizing him by the arms: “What are you doing, rash man!” said he; “retire, you violate the sanctuary of the law.” Buonaparte turned pale, became perturbed, retired, and was carried off by the grenadiers who had served him as an escort.

The tumultuous agitation of the council did not cease with his disappearance. All the members spoke at once, every one proposed measures of public safety and defence. They overwhelmed Lucien Buonaparte with reproaches; he justified his brother, but with timidity. After many efforts he at last succeeded in getting to the tribune, and inviting the council to judge his brother with less rigour. He assured them that he had no design against liberty; he recalled his services: but many voices were instantly heard to exclaim, He has destroyed all the merit of them: Down with the dictator! Down with the tyrants! The tumult then became more violent than ever, and they demanded the outlawry of general Buonaparte. “What,” said Lucien, “you would have me pronounce sentence of outlawry against my brother?”—“Yes, yes, outlawry, that is for tyrants!” Amidst this confusion it was proposed, and put to the vote, that the council should be permanent, that it should instantly repair to its palace in Paris; that the troops assembled at St. Cloud should form part of the guard of the legislative body, and that the command of them should be given to Bernadotte. Lucien, astounded by all these propositions, and by the outlawry which he imagined was adopted like the others, quitted the chair, ascended the tribune, and said in the greatest agitation, “Since I have not been able to obtain a hearing in this assembly, I lay down with a deep sense of outraged dignity the ensigns of the popular magistracy.” At the same time he took off his cap, his cloak, and his scarf.

In the mean time, Buonaparte had experienced some difficulty in effecting his retreat from the council of five hundred, in order to recover himself from his perturbation. Little accustomed to popular scenes, he was sensibly affected by the repulse he had so unexpectedly received. His officers surrounded him; and Siéyes, who had more revolutionary practice than himself, advised him to lose no time, but instantly to employ force. General Lefebévre immediately gave orders to bring off Lucien from the council. A detachment entered the hall, proceeded to the chair which Lucien again occupied, took him into their ranks, and returned with him into the midst of the troops. As soon as Lucien came out, he mounted on horseback by the side of his brother, and although deprived of his legal character, he harangued the troops, as president. In concert with Buonaparte, he invented the fable, so often since repeated, of poniards being raised against the general in the council of five hundred, and he exclaimed, “Citizen soldiers! the president of the council of five hundred declares to you that the vast majority of the council is at this moment under the dread of some representatives, who with daggers besiege the tribune, threaten their colleagues with death,
"and carry on the most dreadful deliberations!—General, and you, soldiers, "and all ye citizens! you will only acknowledge as the legislators of France "those who are willing to repair to me. As to those who remain in the "Orangery, let them be driven out by force. Those brigands are no longer "the representatives of the people, but the representatives of the poniard!" "After this furious incentive, addressed to the soldiery by a conspiring presi- "dent, who, according to custom, calumniated those whom he wished to pro- "scribe, Napoleon took up the speech. "Soldiers!" said he, "I have led you "to victory; may I rely upon you?" "Yes, yes! Long live the general!" "—"Soldiers! there was reason to believe that the council would save the "country; it has, on the contrary, given itself up to discord: the factions "endeavour to excite it against me. Soldiers! may I rely upon you?"— "Yes, yes! Long live Buonaparte!"—"Well then, I will bring them to "reason." He instantly commanded some superior officers who surrounded "him, to clear the hall of the five hundred.

The council, after the departure of Lucien, became a prey to extreme "anxiety and the greatest irresolution. Some of the members proposed that "they should issue forth in a body and seek an asylum in the midst of the "people of Paris. Others were anxious that the national representatives "should not abandon their post, but should withstand the interference of mil- "itary violence to the last. During this discussion, a troop of grenadiers slowly "entered the hall, and the officer who commanded it apprized the council that "it must disperse. The deputy Prudhon reminded the officers and soldiers of "the respect due to the chosen representatives of the people, and general "Jourdan depicted to them the enormity of such an attempt. The troop re- "mained for an instant undecided; but a re-inforcement entered in close co- "lumn, and general Leclerc exclaimed, "In the name of general Buonaparte, "the legislative body is dissolved; let all good citizens retire. Grenadiers, "forward!" Cries of indignation arose from every seat in the hall, but "they were drowned by the sound of drums. The grenadiers, presenting "bayonets, advanced slowly along the whole length of the Orangery, and thus "drove the members before them, who still however made the air ring with "the cry of "Long live the republic!" At half-past five o'clock of the 9th "of November 1799, there was no longer a national representation.

Thus was consummated this last violation of law, this final blow against "liberty; and from this period military government commenced its dominion. "The 8th of November was in effect another 31st of May as between the army "and the representatives, except that it was not directed against a party but "against the popular power. On that day the revolution expired: but it is "right that we should distinguish the 18th Brumaire from the consequences "which resulted from it. It might at that time have been supposed that the "army was merely an auxiliary of the revolution, as on the 5th of October, "and the 4th of September, and that this indispensable change would not "solely turn to the advantage of a single individual, who would soon convert "France into a regiment, and who would allow nothing to be heard in the "world, which until then had been agitated by so great a moral commotion, "but the march of his army and the communication of his will.(1)

THE HISTORY OF

LETTER XXXIII.

State of France consequent on the appointment of Napoleon to the Consulship—a provisional government nominated—the Constitution of the Abbé Sièyes entirely changed in the Constitution of the year eight.—Formation of the government.—Pacific professions of Napoleon.—Campaign of Italy, and celebrated battle of Marengo.—Peace of the Continent by the treaty of Lunéville, and with England by the treaty of Amiens. A.D. 1799—1803.

The events which had recently taken place at Paris, and which I have detailed to you, my son, towards the close of my preceding letter, gave rise to much speculation as to their probable results on the liberties of France. From the party of Sièyes to that of the ancient regime, the royalists of 1788, every one was eager to congratulate himself on the future practical advantages of the change which had taken place. The moderate constitutionalists hoped that a defined liberty would be established; the royalists flattered themselves with the expectation of a similar beneficial result; the mass of the people, ill-informed and desirous of repose, reckoned upon the return of order under a powerful protector; while the proscribed and the ambitious anticipated their amnesty or their elevation. During the three months that followed the singular proceedings of the 8th and 9th of November 1799, approbation and hope were general. A provisional government was nominated, consisting of three consuls, Buonaparte, Sièyes, and Roger Ducos, with two legislative commissions who were charged with preparing the constitution, and an order of things which should be definitive.

On the 24th of December 1799, the constitution of the year 8, was published; and it was composed of the wreck of that of the abbé Sièyes which was now regarded as a constitution of slavery. The government was placed in the hands of a first consul, who had for seconds two consuls, with a voice in council. The senate, primarily chosen by the consuls, itself now chose from the list of national candidates the members of the tribunate and the legislative body. The government alone had the initiation of laws. This put an end to the body of electors who nominated the candidates of the different lists, the tribunes of the legislators—an end of the independent tribunes, who pleaded the cause of the people before the legislative assembly—an end of the legislative assembly that emanated from the body of the nation, and which was accountable to it alone—and, finally, an end of the body politic. In the place of all this there arose, under the new order of things, a consul omnipotent, having the disposal of the army and of power—a general and a dictator; a council of state destined to place itself in the front rank of usurpation; and finally, a senate of twenty-four members whose solitary function was to abrogate the influence of the people, to choose tribunes without authority, and legislators who should be silent. The spirit of vitality passed from the nation to the government. It deserves to be remarked that, up to this period, all the constitutions had been derived from the social contract; but that subsequently, until the year 1814, they were all derived from the new-modified constitution of the abbé Sièyes.

The new government, however, was regularly installed. Napoleon was appointed first consul, but he now associated with himself as second and third consuls, Cambacérès and Le Brun. The ex-archbishop Talleyrand, and the ex-mountaineer Fouché were appointed ministers of foreign affairs and of police. Considerable objection was started to the making use of the services of the latter, but Buonaparte wished it and his voice prevailed. "We shall form," said he, "a new epoch—of what has passed, we must re-member only the good, and forget the bad." In fact, he now gave himself little concern under what banner persons had hitherto served, provided they
now ranged themselves under his own, and that they summoned around him the ancient supporters of royalty or the revolution.

One of the first and most popular measures of Buonaparte, on his elevation to the consular dignity, was to make proposals of peace to England. This offer was made early in the year 1800, in a letter, not written according to etiquette, by one of his ministers to the secretary of state for foreign affairs, but addressed by him to the king himself, whose patriotic virtues he did not omit to applaud. He mentioned the necessity of peace, and the true glory derivable from it; and expressed his hope that two nations so enlightened as France and Great Britain would no longer be actuated by false ideas of glory and greatness. The reply to this singular document was returned by lord Grenville at the king’s command, declaring, that his majesty had given frequent proofs of his sincere desire for the re-establishment of secure and permanent tranquillity in Europe, denied that he either was or had been engaged in any contest for a vain and false glory, since he had only endeavoured to maintain against all aggression, the rights and happiness of his subjects; and he added, that it would be useless to negotiate while the French seemed still to cherish those principles which had involved Europe in a long and destructive warfare. The continuation of war was therefore decided, and the consuls issued a proclamation, remarkable for its being addressed to a new class of national feelings. Hitherto France had been summoned to arms, for the defence of liberty; the consuls now began to raise it in the name of honour. “Frenchmen! you desire peace; your government desires it even more anxiously; its first wishes, its constant efforts have been for peace. The English ministry rejects our offers: the English ministry has betrayed the secret of its horrible policy, to sever France, to destroy its marine and its harbours, to blot it from the map of Europe; to degrade it to the rank of secondary powers; to keep all the nations of Europe separated by divisions, to monopolize the commerce of them all, and enrich itself with their spoils. It is to obtain these frightful successes that England expends her treasures, lavishes her promises, and multiplies her intrigues. It is for you to command peace; to command it we must have money, military stores, soldiers; all should be eager to pay the tribute which they owe to the common defence! The young should rush to enrol themselves in the ranks! It is no longer a question of faction! It is no longer for the choice of tyrants, that they are going to arm; it is for the guarantee of all that they hold dear; it is for the honour of France; it is for the sacred interests of humanity.”

Disappointed in the hope of negotiating a peace with England, Buonaparte thus roused the population of France to renewed exertions, and began in good earnest to address himself for one of the most important campaigns of his life; and in which he added, if that were possible, to the high military reputation he had acquired. Committing the charge of the campaign upon the Rhine to Moreau, the first consul reserved for himself the task of bringing back victory to the French standards, on the fields in which he won his earliest laurels. His plan of victory again included a passage of the Alps, as boldly and unexpectedly as in 1795, but in a different direction. That earlier period had this resemblance to the present, that, on both occasions, the Austrians menaced Genoa; but in 1800, it was only from the Italian frontier and the Col de Tende, whereas, in 1795, the enemy were in possession of the mountains of Savoy, above Genoa. Switzerland, too, formerly neutral, and allowing no passage for armies, was now as open to the march of French troops as any of their own provinces, and of this Buonaparte determined to avail himself. He was aware of the Austrian plan of taking Genoa and entering Provence; and he formed the daring resolution to put himself at the head of the army of reserve, surmount the line of the Alps himself, and of the Austrian army, interrupt their communications, carry off their magazines, parks, and hospitals, compel them up betwixt his own army and that of Massena, which was in their front, and compel them to battle, in a situation where defeat must be destruction. But to accom-
plish this daring movement, it was necessary to march a whole army over
the highest chain of mountains in Europe, by roads which afford but a dan-
gerous passage to the solitary traveller, and through passes where one man
can do more to defend, than ten to force their way. Artillery was to be car-
rried through sheep-paths and over precipices impracticable to wheel car-
riages; ammunition and baggage were to be transported at the same disad-
vantages; and provisions were to be conveyed through a country poor in
itself, and inhabited by a nation which had every cause to be hostile to France,
and might therefore be expected prompt to avail themselves of any opportu-
nity which should occur of revenging themselves for her late aggressions.

The strictest secrecy was necessary, to procure even the opportunity of
attempting this audacious plan of operations; and to ensure this secrecy,
Buonaparte had recourse to a singular mode of deceiving the enemy. It
was made as public as possible, by orders, decrees, proclamations, and the
like, that the first consul was to place himself at the head of the army of re-
serve, and that it was to assemble at Dijon. Accordingly, a numerous staff
was sent to that place, and much apparent bustle took place in assembling
six or seven thousand men there, with great pomp and fracas. These, as
the spies of Austria truly reported to their employers, were either con-
scripts, or veterans unfit for service; and caricatures were published of the
first consul reviewing troops composed of children and disabled soldiers,
which was ironically termed his army of reserve. When an army so com-
posed was reviewed by the first consul himself with great ceremony, it im-
pressed a general belief that Buonaparte was only endeavouring, by making
a show of force, to divert the Austrians from their design upon Genoa, and
thus his real purpose was effectually concealed. Bulletins, too, were pri-
vately circulated by the agents of police, as if scattered by the royalists, in
which specious arguments were used to prove that the French army of re-
serve neither did, nor could exist—and these also were designed to withdraw
attention from the various points on which it was at the very moment col-
lecting.

The pacification of the west of France had placed many good troops at
Buonaparte's disposal, which had previously been engaged against the
Chouans; the quiet state of Paris permitted several regiments to be detached
from the capital. New levies were made with the utmost celerity; and the
divisions of the army of reserve were organized separately, and at different
places of rendezvous, but ready to form a junction when they should receive
the signal for commencing operations.

On the 6th of May 1800, seeking to renew the fortunes of France, now
united with his own, the chief consul left Paris, and, having reviewed the
pretended army of reserve at Dijon on the 7th, arrived on the 8th at Geneva
Here he had an interview with the celebrated financier Necker; but a more
interesting conversation with general Marescot, dispatched to survey Mont
Bernard, and who had, with great difficulty, ascended as far as the convent
of the Chartreux. "Is the route practicable?" said Buonaparte.—"It is
barely possible to pass," replied the engineer.—"Let us set forward then,"
said Napoleon, and the extraordinary march was commenced.

On the 13th, arriving at Lausanne, Buonaparte joined the van of his real
army of reserve, which consisted of six effective regiments, commanded by
the celebrated Lannes. These corps, together with the rest of the troops
intended for the expedition, had been assembled from their several positions
by forced marches. Carnot, the minister at war, attended the first consul
at Lausanne, to report to him that fifteen thousand, or from that to the
number of twenty thousand men, detached from Moreau's army, were in the
act of descending on Italy by St. Gothard, in order to form the left wing of
his army. The whole army, in its various divisions, was now united under
the command of Berthier nominally as general-in-chief, though in reality
under that of the first consul himself. This was in compliance with a regu-
lation of the constitution, which rendered it inconsistent for the first consul
to command in person. It was a form which Buonaparte at present evaded,
and afterwards laid aside; thinking truly, that the name, as well as office of
generalissimo, was most fittingly vested in his own person, since, though it
might not be the loftiest of his titles, it was that which best expressed his
power. The army might amount to sixty thousand men, but one third of
the number were conscripts.

During the interval between the 15th and 18th of May, all the columns
of the French army were put into motion to cross the Alps. Turenne, at the
head of five thousand men, directed his march by Mount Cenis, on Exilles
and Susa. A similar division, commanded by Chaban, took the route of the
Little St. Bernard. Buonaparte himself, on the 15th, at the head of the
main body of his army, consisting of thirty thousand men and upwards
marched from Lausanne to the little village called St. Pierre, at which point
there ended every thing resembling a practicable road. An immense, and
apparently inaccessible mountain, reared its head among general desolation
and eternal frost; while precipices, glaciers, ravines, and a boundless extent
of faithless snows, which the slightest concussion of the air converts into
avalanches capable of burying armies in their descent, appeared to forbid
access to all living things but the chamois, and his scarce less wild pursuer.
Yet foot by foot, and man by man, did the French soldiers proceed to ascend
this formidable barrier, which nature had erected in vain to limit human
ambition. The view of the valley, emphatically called "of desolation," where
nothing is to be seen but snow and sky, had no terrors for the first consul
and his army. They advanced up paths hitherto only practised by hunters,
or here and there a hardy pedestrian, the infantry loaded with their arms,
and in full military equipment, the cavalry leading their horses. The mu-
sical bands played from time to time at the head of the regiments, and, in
places of unusual difficulty, the drums beat a charge, as if to encourage the
soldiers to encounter the opposition of nature herself. The artillery, with-
out which they could not have done service, were deposited in trunks of
trees hollowed out for the purpose. Each was dragged by a hundred men,
and the troops, making it a point of honour to bring forward their guns,
accomplished this severe duty, not with cheerfulness only, but with enthu-
siasm. The carriages were taken to pieces, and harnessed on the backs of mules, or
committed to the soldiers, who relieved each other in the task of bearing
them with levers; and the ammunition was transported in the same manner.
While one half of the soldiers was thus engaged, the others were obliged
carry the muskets, cartridge-boxes, knapsacks, and provisions of their com-
rades, as well as their own. Each man, so loaded, was calculated to carry
from sixty to seventy pounds weight, up icy precipices, where a man totally
without encumbrance could ascend but slowly. Probably no troops save the
French could have endured the fatigue of such a march; and no other gene-
ral than Buonaparte would have ventured to require it at their hand.

He set out a considerable time after the march had begun, alone, excepting
his guide. He is described by the Swiss peasant who attended him in that
capacity, as wearing his usual simple dress, a grey surcoat, and three-cor-
nered hat. He travelled in silence, save a few short and hasty questions
about the country, addressed to his guide from time to time. When these
were answered, he relapsed into silence. There was a gloom on his brow,
corresponding with the weather, which was wet and dismal. His countenance
had acquired, during his eastern campaigns, a swart complexion, which
added to his natural severe gravity; and the Swiss peasant who guided him
felt fear as he looked on him. Occasionally his route was stopt by some
temporary obstacle occasioned by a halt in the artillery or baggage; his
commands on such occasions were peremptorily given, and instantly obeyed,
his very look seeming enough to silence all objection, and remove every
difficulty.

The army now arrived at that singular convent, where, with courage equal
to their own, but flowing from a much higher source, the monks of St. Ber-
nard have fixed their dwellings among the everlasting snows, that they may
afford succour and hospitality to the forlorn travellers in those dreadful
wastes. Hitherto the soldiers had no refreshment, save when they dined a
morsel of biscuit amongst the snows. The good fathers of the convent
who possess considerable magazines of provisions, distributed bread and cheese, and a cup of wine to each soldier as he passed, which was more acceptable in their situation, than, according to one who shared their fatigue, would have been the gold of Mexico.

The descent on the other side of Mont St. Bernard was as difficult to the infantry as the ascent had been, and still more so to the cavalry. It was, however, accomplished without any material loss, and the army took up their quarters for the night, after having marched fourteen French leagues. The next morning, 16th of May, the vanguard took possession of Aosta, a village of Piedmont, from which extends the valley of the same name, watered by the river Doree, a country pleasant in itself, but rendered delightful by its contrast with the horrors which had been left behind. Thus was achieved the celebrated passage of Mont St. Bernard, on the particulars of which we have dwelt the more willingly, because, although a military operation of importance, they do not involve the unwearied details of human slaughter, to which our narrative must now return.

Where the opposition of nature to Napoleon's march appeared to cease, that of man commenced. A body of Austrians at Chatillon were overpowered and defeated by Lannes; but the strong fortress of Bard offered more serious opposition. This little citadel is situated upon an almost perpendicular rock, rising out of the river Doree, at a place where the valley of Aosta is rendered so very narrow by the approach of two mountains to each other, that the fort and walled town of Bard entirely close up the entrance. This formidable obstacle threatened for the moment to shut up the French in a valley, where their means of subsistence must have been speedily exhausted. General Lannes made a desperate effort to carry the fort by assault; but the advanced guard of the attacking party were destroyed by stones, musketry, and hand grenades, and the attempt was relinquished.

Buonaparte in person went now to reconnoitre, and for that purpose ascended a huge rock called Albaredo, being a precipice on the side of one of the mountains which form the pass, from the summit of which he could look down into the town, and into the fortress. He detected a possibility of taking the town by storm, though he judged the fort was too strong to be obtained by a coup-de-main. The town was accordingly carried by escalade; but the French who obtained possession of it had little cover from the artillery of the fort, which fired furiously on the houses where they endeavoured to shelter themselves, and which the Austrians might have entirely demolished but for respect to the inhabitants. Meanwhile, Buonaparte availed himself of the diversion to convey a great part of his army in single files, horse as well as foot, by a precarious path formed by the pioneers over the tremendous Albaredo, and so down on the other side, in this manner avoiding the cannon of Fort Bard. Still a most important difficulty remained. It was impossible, at least without great loss of time, to carry the French artillery over the Albaredo, while, without artillery, it was impossible to move against the Austrians, and every hope of the campaign must be given up. In the mean time, the astonished commandant of the fort, to whom the apparition of this large army was like enchantment, dispatched messenger after messenger to warn Melas, then opposed to Suchet, that a French army of thirty thousand men and upwards, descending from the Alps by ways hitherto deemed impracticable for military movements, had occupied the valley of Aosta, and were endeavouring to debouch by a path of steps cut in the Albaredo. But he pledged himself to his commander-in-chief, that not a single gun or ammunition-waggon should pass through the town; and as it was impossible to drag these along the Albaredo, he concluded, that, being without his artillery, Buonaparte would not venture to descend into the plain.

But while the commandant of Bard thus argued, he was mistaken in his premises, though right in his inference. The artillery of the French army had already passed through the town of Bard, and under the guns of the citadel, without being discovered to have done so. This important manœuvre was accomplished by previously laying the street with
dung and earth, over which the pieces of cannon, concealed under straw and branches of trees, were dragged by men in profound silence. The garrison, though they did not suspect what was going on, fired nevertheless occasionally upon some vague suspicion, and killed and wounded artillerymen in sufficient number to show it would have been impossible to pass under a severe and sustained discharge from the ramparts. It seems singular that the commandant had kept up no intelligence with the town. Any signal previously agreed upon—a light shown in a window, for example—would have detected such a stratagem.

A division of conscripts, under general Chabrat, was left to reduce Fort Bard, which continued to hold out, until, at the expense of great labour, batteries were established on the top of Albaredo, by which it was commanded, and a heavy gun placed on the steeple of the church, when it was compelled to surrender. It is not fruitless to observe, that the resistance of this small place, which had been overlooked or undervalued in the plan of the campaign, was very nearly rendering the march over Mont St. Bernard worse than useless, and might have occasioned the destruction of all the chief consul’s army. So little are even the most distinguished generals able to calculate with certainty upon all the chances of war.

From this dangerous pass, the vanguard of Buonaparte now advanced down the valley to Ivrea, where Launay carried the town by storm, and a second time combated and defeated the Austrian division which had defended it, when re-inforced and situated on a strong position at Romano. The roads to Turin and Milan were now alike open to Buonaparte—he had only to decide which he chose to take. Meanwhile he made a halt of four days at Ivrea, to refresh his troops after their fatigues, and to prepare them for future enterprises. During this space, the other columns of his army were advancing to form a junction with that of the main body, according to the plan of the campaign. Turrea, who had passed the Alps by the route of Mount Cenis, had taken the forts of Susa and La Brunette. On the other hand, the large corps detached by Carnot from Moreau’s army, were advancing by Mount St. Gothard and the Simplon, to support the operations of the first consul, of whose army they were to form the left wing. But ere we prosecute the account of Buonaparte’s movements during this momentous campaign, it is necessary to trace the previous operations of Melas, and the situation in which that Austrian general now found himself.

It has been already stated, that, at the commencement of this campaign of 1800, the Austrians entertained the highest hopes that their Italian army, having taken Genoa and Nice, might penetrate into Provence by crossing the frontier at the Var, and perhaps make themselves masters of Toulon and Marseilles. To realize these hopes, Melas, having left in Piedmont a sufficient force, as he deemed it, to guard the passes of the Alps, had advanced towards Genoa, which Massena prepared to cover and defend. A number of severe and desperate actions took place between these generals; but being a war of posts, and fought in a very mountainous and difficult country, it was impossible by any skill of combination to insure on any occasion more than partial success, since co-operation of movements upon a great and extensive scale was prohibited by the character of the ground. There was much hard fighting, however, in which, though none of the Austrians were slain, yet the loss was most severely felt by the French, whose numbers were inferior.

In the month of March, the English fleet, under Lord Keith, appeared, as we have already hinted, before Genoa, and commenced a blockade, which strictly prevented access to the port to all vessels loaded with provisions, or other necessaries, for the besieged city. On the 6th of April, Melas, by a grand movement, took Vado, and intersected the French line. Suchet, who commanded Massena’s left wing, was cut off from that general, and thrown back on France. Marches, manœuvres, and bloody combats followed each other in close detail; but the French, though obtaining advantages in several of the actions, could never succeed in restoring the communication between Suchet and Massena. Finally, while the former retreated towards France, and took up a line on Borghetta, the latter was compelled to con-
vert his army into a garrison, and to shut himself up in Genoa, or at least encamp in a position close under its ramparts. Melas, in the mean time, approached the city more closely, when Massena, in a desperate sally, drove the Austrians from their advanced posts, forced them to retreat, made prisoners twelve hundred men, and carried off some warlike trophies. But the French were exhausted by their very success, and obliged to remain within, or under the walls of the city, where the approach of famine began to be felt. Men were already compelled to have recourse to the flesh of horses, dogs, and other unclean animals, and it was seen that the place must soon be necessarily obliged to surrender. Satisfied with the approaching fall of Genoa, Melas, in the beginning of May, left the prosecution of the blockade to general Ott, and moved himself against Suchet, whom he drove before him in disorder, and who, overborne by numbers, retreated towards the French frontier. On the 11th of May, Melas entered Nice, and thus commenced the purposed invasion of the French frontier. On the 14th, the Austrians again attacked Suchet, who now had concentrated his forces upon the Var, in hopes to protect the French territory. Finding this a more difficult task than he expected, Melas next prepared to pass the Var higher up, and thus to turn the position occupied by Suchet. But on the 21st, the Austrian veteran received intelligence which put a stop to all his operations against Suchet, and recalled him to Italy to face a much more formidable antagonist. Tidings arrived that the first consul of France had crossed St. Bernard, had extricated himself from the Valley of Aosta, and was threatening to over-run Piedmont and the Milanese territory. These tidings were as unexpected as embarrassing. The artillery, the equipment, the provisions of Melas, together with his communications with Italy, were all at the mercy of this unexpected invader, who, though his force was not accurately known, must have brought with him an army more than adequate to destroy the troops left to guard the frontier; who, besides, were necessarily divided, and exposed to be beaten in detail. Yet, if Melas marched back into Piedmont against Buonaparte, he must abandon the attack on Suchet, and raise the blockade of Genoa, when that important city was just on the eve of surrender.

Persevering in the belief that the French army of reserve could not exceed twenty thousand men, or thereabouts, in number, and supposing that the principal, if not the sole object of the first consul’s daring irruption, was to raise the siege of Genoa, and disconcert the invasion of Provence, Melas, resolved on marching himself against Buonaparte with such forces, as, united with those he had left in Italy, might be of power to face the French army, according to his computation of its probable strength. At the same time, he determined to leave before Genoa an army sufficient to insure its fall, and a corps of observation in front of Suchet, by means of which he might easily resume his plans against that general, so soon as the chief consul should be defeated or driven back. The corps of observation already mentioned was under the command of general Ellsmitz, strongly posted upon the Roye, and secured by entrenchments. It served at once to watch Suchet, and to cover the siege of Genoa from any attempts to relieve the city, which might be made in the direction of France. Massena, in the mean time, no sooner perceived the besieging army weakened by the departure of Melas, than he conceived the daring plan of a general attack on the forces of Ott, who was left to carry on the siege. The attempt was unfortunate. The French were defeated, and Soult, who had joined Massena, was wounded, and made a prisoner. Yet Genoa still held out. An officer had found his way into the place, brought intelligence of Buonaparte’s descent upon Piedmont, and inspired all with a new spirit of resistance. Still, however, extreme want prevailed in the city, and the hope of deliverance seemed distant. The soldiers received little food, the inhabitants less, the Austrian prisoners, of whom they had about eight thousand in Genoa almost none. At length the situation of things seemed desperate. The numerous population of Genoa rose in the extremity of their despair, and called for a surrender. Buonaparte, they said, was not wont to march so slowly; he would have been before the walls sooner, if he was to appear at all; he must have been defeated or driven back by the su-
perior force of Melas. They demanded the surrender of the place, therefore, which Massena no longer found himself in a condition to oppose. Yet could that brave general have suspended this measure a few hours longer, he would have been spared the necessity of making it at all. General Ott had just received commands from Melas to raise the blockade with all dispatch, and to fall back upon the Po, in order to withstand Buonaparte, who, in unexpected strength, was marching upon Milan. The Austrian staff-officer, who brought the order, had just received his audience of General Ott, when general Andrieux, presenting himself on the part of Massena, announced the French general's desire to surrender the place, if his troops were permitted to march out with their arms. There was no time to debate upon terms; and those granted to Massena by Melas were so unusually favourable, that perhaps they should have made him aware of the precarious state of the besieging army. He was permitted to evacuate Genoa without laying down his arms, and the convention was signed the 5th of June 1800. Meantime at this agitating and interesting period, events of still greater importance than those which concerned the fate of the once princely Genoa, were taking place with frightful rapidity.

Melas, with about one half of his army, had retired from his operations in the Genoese territory, and retreated on Turin by the way of Coni, where he fixed his headquarters, expecting that Buonaparte would either advance to possess himself of the capital of Piedmont, or that he would make an effort to relieve Genoa. In the first instance, Melas deemed himself strong enough to receive the first consul; in the second, to pursue him; and in either, to assemble such numerous forces as might harass and embarrass either his advance or his retreat. But Buonaparte's plan of the campaign was different from what Melas had anticipated. He had formed the resolution to pass the rivers Sesia and Tesino, and thus leaving Turin and Melas behind him, to push straight for Milan, and form a junction with the division of about twenty thousand men, detached from the right wing of Moreau's army, which, commanded by Moncey, were on their road to join him, having crossed the mountains by the route of St. Gothard. It was necessary, however, to disguise his purpose from the sagacious veteran. With this view, ere Buonaparte broke up from Ivrea, Laines, who had commanded his vanguard with so much gallantry, victorious at Romano, seemed about to improve his advantage. He had marched on Chiavaso, and seizing on a number of boats and small vessels, appeared desirous to construct a bridge over the Po at that place. This attracted the attention of Melas. It might be equally a preliminary to an attack on Turin, or a movement towards Genoa. But as the Austrian general was at the same time alarmed by the descent of general Turreau's division from Mount Cenis, and their capture of Susa and La Brunnetta, Turin seemed ascertained to be the object of the French; and Melas acted on this idea. He sent a strong force to oppose the establishment of the bridge, and while his attention was thus occupied, Buonaparte was left to take the road to Milan unmolested. Vercelli was occupied by the cavalry under Murat, and the Sesia was crossed without obstacle. The Tesino, a broad and rapid river, offered more serious opposition; but the French found four or five small boats, in which they pushed across an advanced party under general Gerard. The Austrians, who opposed the passage, were in a great measure cavalry, who could not act on account of the woody and impracticable character of the bank of the river. The passage was accomplished; and, upon the 2nd of June, Buonaparte entered Milan, where he was received with acclamations by a numerous class of citizens, who looked for the re-establishment of the Cisalpine republic. The Austrians were totally unprepared for this movement. Pavia fell into the hands of the French; Lodi and Cremona were occupied, and Pizzighitone was invested. Meantime, Buonaparte, fixing his residence in the ducal palace of Milan, employed himself in receiving the deputations of various public bodies, and in re-organizing the Cisalpine government, while he waited impatiently to be joined by Moncey and his division, from Mount St. Gothard. They arrived at length, but marching more slowly than accorded with the fiery promptitude of the
first consul, who was impatient to relieve the blockade of Genoa, which place he concluded still held out. He now issued a proclamation to his troops, in which he described, as the result of the efforts he expected from them, "Cloudless glory and solid peace." On the 9th of June his armies were again in motion.

Melas, an excellent officer, had at the same time some of the slowness imputed to his countrymen, or of the irresolution incident to the advanced age of eighty years,—for so old was the opponent of Buonaparte, then in the very prime of human life,—or, as others suspect, it may have been orders from Vienna which detained the Austrian general so long at Turin, where he lay in a great measure inactive. It is true, that on receiving notice of Buonaparte's march on Milan, he instantly dispatched orders to general Ott, as we have already stated, to raise the siege of Genoa, and join him with all possible speed; but it seemed, that, in the mean time, he might have disquieted Buonaparte's lines of communication, by acting upon the river Dorea, attacking Ivrea, in which the French had left much baggage and artillery, and relieving the fort of Bard. Accordingly he made an attempt of this kind, by detaching six thousand men to Chiavaso, who were successful in delivering some Austrian prisoners at that place; but Ivrea proved strong enough to resist them, and the French retaining possession of that place, the Austrians could not occupy the valley of the Dorea, or relieve the besieged fortress of Bard. The situation of Melas now became critical. His communications with the left, or north bank of the Po, were entirely cut off, and by a line stretching from fort Bard to Placentia, the French occupied the best and fairest share of the north of Italy, while he found himself confined to Piedmont. The Austrian army, besides, was divided into two parts,—one under Ott, which was still near Genoa, that had so lately surrendered to them, one with Melas himself, which was at Turin. Neither were agreeably situated. That of Genoa was observed on its right by Suchet, whose army, re-inforced with the garrison which, retaining their arms, evacuated that city under Massena, might soon be expected to renew the offensive. There was, therefore, the greatest risk, that Buonaparte, pushing a strong force across the Po, might attack and destroy either the division of Ott, or that of Melas himself, before they were able to form a junction. To prevent such a catastrophe, Ott received orders to march forward on the Tesino, while Melas, moving towards Alexandria, prepared to resume his communications with his lieutenant general. Buonaparte, on his part, was anxious to relieve Genoa; news of the fall of which had not reached him. With this view he resolved to force his passage over the Po, and move against the Austrians, who were found to occupy in strength the villages of Casteggio and Montebello. These troops proved to be the greater part of the very army which he expected to find before Genoa, and which was commanded by Ott, but which had moved westward, in conformity to the orders of Melas.

General Lannes, who led the vanguard of the French, as usual, was attacked early in the morning by a superior force, which he had much difficulty in resisting. The nature of the ground gave advantage to the Austrian cavalry, and the French were barely able to support their charges. At length the division of Victor came up to support Lannes, and the victory became no longer doubtful, though the Austrians fought most obstinately. The fields being covered with tall crops of grain, and especially of rye, the different bodies were frequently hid until they found themselves at the bayonet's point, without having had any previous opportunity to estimate each other's force; a circumstance which led to much close fighting, and necessarily to much slaughter. At length the Austrians retreated, leaving the field of battle covered with their dead, and above five thousand prisoners in the hands of their enemies.

General Ott rallied the remains of his army under the walls of Tortona. From the prisoners taken at the battle of Montebello, as this action was called, Buonaparte learned, for the first time, the surrender of Genoa, which apprised him that he was too late for the enterprise which he had meditated. He therefore halted his army for three days in the position of Stradella,
unwilling to advance into the open plain of Marengo, and trusting that Melas would find himself compelled to give him battle in the position which he had chosen, as most unfavourable for the Austrian cavalry. He dispatched messengers to Suchet, commanding him to cross the mountains by the Col de Cadibona, and march on the river Scrivia, which would place him in the rear of the Austrians. Even during the very battle of Montebello, the chief consul was joined by Dessais, who had just arrived from Egypt. Landed at Frejus, after a hundred interruptions, that seemed as if intended to withhold him from the fate he was about to meet, he had received letters from Buonaparte, inviting him to come to him without delay. The tone of the letters expressed discontent and embarrassment. "He has gained all," said Dessais, who was much attached to Buonaparte, "and yet he is not "happy." Immediately afterwards, on reading the account of his march over St. Bernard, he added, "He will leave us nothing to do." He immediately set out post to place himself under the command of his ancient general, and, as it eventually proved, to encounter an early death. They had an interesting conversation on the subject of Egypt, to which Buonaparte continued to cling, as to a matter in which his own fame was intimately and inseparately concerned. Dessais immediately received the command of the division hitherto under that of Boudet. In the mean while, the head-quarters of Melas had been removed from Turin, and fixed at Alexandria for the space of two days; yet he did not, as Buonaparte had expected, attempt to move forward on the French position at Stradella, in order to force his way to Mantua; so that the first consul was obliged to advance towards Alexandria, apprehensive lest the Austrians should escape from him, and either, by a march to the left flank, move for the Tesino, cross that river, and, by seizing Milan, open a communication with Austria in that direction; or, by marching to the right, and falling back on Genoa, overwhelm Suchet, and take a position, the right of which might be covered by that city, while the sea was open for supplies and provisions, and their flank protected by the British squadron. Either of these movements might have been attended with alarming consequences; and Napoleon, impatient lest his enemy should give him the slip, advanced his head-quarters on the 12th to Voghera, and on the 13th to St. Juliano, in the midst of the great plain of Marengo. As he still saw nothing of the enemy, the chief consul concluded that Melas had actually retreated from Alexandria, having, notwithstanding the temptation afforded by the level ground around him, preferred withdrawing, most probably to Genoa, to the hazard of a battle. He was still more confirmed in this belief, when, pushing forward as far as the village of Marengo, he found it only occupied by an Austrian rear-guard, which offered no persevering defence against the French, but retreated from the village without much opposition. The chief consul could no longer doubt that Melas had eluded him, by marching off by one of his flanks, and probably by his right. He gave orders to Dessais, whom he had intrusted with the command of the reserve, to march towards Rivolta, with a view to observe the communications with Genoa; and in this manner the reserve was removed half a day's march from the rest of the army, which had like to produce most sinister effects upon the event of the great battle that followed.

Contrary to what Buonaparte had anticipated, the Austrian general, finding the first consul in his front, and knowing that Suchet was in his rear, had adopted, with the consent of a council of war, the resolution of trying the fate of arms in a general battle. It was a bold, but not a rash resolution. The Austrians were more numerous than the French in infantry and artillery; much superior in cavalry, both in point of numbers and of discipline; and it has been already said, that the extensive plain of Marengo was favourable for the use of that description of force. Melas, therefore, on the evening of the 13th, concentrated his forces in front of Alexandria, divided by the river Bormida from the purposed field of fight; and Napoleon, undeceived concerning the intentions of his enemy, made with all haste the necessary preparations to receive battle, and failed not to send orders to Dessais to return as speedily as possible and join the army. That general was
so far advanced on his way towards Rivolta before these counter-orders reached him, that his utmost haste only brought him back after the battle had lasted several hours. Buonaparte’s disposition was as follows:—The village of Marengo was occupied by the divisions of Gardanne and Chambarthac. Victor, with two other divisions, and commanding the whole, was prepared to support them. He extended his left as far as Castel Ceriolo, a small village which lies almost parallel with Marengo. Behind this first line was placed a brigade of cavalry, under Kellermann, ready to protect the flanks of the line, or to debouch through the intervals, if opportunity served, and attack the enemy. About a thousand yards in the rear of the first line was stationed the second, under Lannes, supported by Champeaux’s brigade of cavalry. At the same distance, in the rear of Lannes, was placed a strong reserve, or third line, consisting of the division of Carra St. Cyr, and the consular-guard, at the head of whom was Buonaparte himself. Thus the French were drawn up on this memorable day, in three distinct divisions, each composed of a corps d’armée, distant about three-quarters of a mile in the rear of each other.

The force which the French had in the field in the commencement of the day, was above twenty thousand men; the reserve, under Dessaux, upon its arrival, might make the whole amount to thirty thousand. The Austrians attacked with nearly forty thousand troops. Both armies were in high spirits, determined to fight, and each confident in their general—the Austrians in the bravery and experience of Melas, the French in the genius and talents of Buonaparte. The immediate stake was the possession of Italy; but it was impossible to guess, how many yet more important consequences the event of the day might involve. Thus much seemed certain, that the battle must be decisive, and that defeat must prove destruction to the party who should sustain it. Buonaparte, if routed, could hardly have accomplished his retreat upon Milan; and Melas, if defeated, had Suchet in his rear. The fine plain on which the French were drawn up, seemed lists formed by nature for such an encounter, when the fate of kingdoms was at issue.

Early in the morning, the Austrians crossed the Bormida, in three columns, by three military bridges, and advanced in the same order. The right and the centre columns, consisting of infantry, were commanded by generals Haddick and Kaine; the left, composed entirely of light troops and cavalry, made a detour round Castel Ceriolo, the village mentioned as forming the extreme right of the French position. About seven in the morning, Haddick attacked Marengo with fury, and Gardanne’s division, after fighting bravely, proved inadequate to its defence. Victor supported Gardanne, and endeavoured to cover the village by an oblique movement. Melas, who commanded in person the central column of the Austrians, moved to support Haddick; and by their united efforts, the village of Marengo, after having been once or twice lost and won, was finally carried. The broken divisions of Victor and Gardanne, driven out of Marengo, endeavoured to rally on the second line, commanded by Lannes. This was about nine o’clock. While one Austrian column manoeuvred to turn Lannes’ flank, in which they could not succeed; another, with better fortune, broke through the centre of Victor’s division, in a considerable degree disordered them, and thus uncovering Lannes’ left wing, compelled him to retreat. He was able to do so in tolerably good order; but not so the broken troops of Victor on the left, who fled to the rear in great confusion. The column of Austrian cavalry who had come round Castel Ceriolo, now appeared on the field, and threatened the right of Lannes, which alone remained standing firm. Napoleon detached two battalions of the consular-guard from the third line, or reserve, which, forming squares behind the right wing of Lannes, supported its resistance, and withdrew from it in part, the attention of the enemy’s cavalry. The chief consul himself, whose post was distinguished by the furled caps of a guard of two hundred grenadiers, brought up Mounier’s division, which had but now entered the field at the moment of extreme need, being the advance of Dessaux’s reserve, returned from their half day’s march towards Rivolta. These were, with the guards, directed to support Lannes’ right wing; and a brigade de-
tached from them, was thrown into Castel Ceriolo, which now became the point of support on Buonaparte's extreme right, and which the Austrians, somewhat unaccountably, had omitted to occupy in force when their left column passed it in the beginning of the engagement. Buonaparte, meantime, by several desperate charges of cavalry, endeavoured in vain to arrest the progress of the enemy. His left wing was put completely to flight; his centre was in great disorder; and it was only his right wing, which, by strong support, had been enabled to stand their ground. In these circumstances the day seemed so entirely against him, that, to prevent his right wing from being overwhelmed, he was compelled to retreat in the face of an enemy superior in numbers, and particularly in cavalry and artillery. It was, however, rather a change of position, than an absolute retreat to the rear. The French right still resting on Castel Ceriolo, which formed the pivot of the manœuvre, had orders to retreat very slowly, the centre faster, the left at ordinary quick time. In this manner the whole line of battle was changed, and instead of extending diagonally across the plain, as when the fight began, the French now occupied an oblong position, the left being withdrawn as far back as St. Julian, where it was protected by the advance of Dessaix's troops. This division, being the sole remaining reserve, had now at length arrived on the field, and, by Buonaparte's directions, had taken a strong position, in front of St. Julian, on which the French were obliged to retreat; great part of the left wing in the disorder of utter flight, the right wing steadily, and by intervals fronting the enemy, and sustaining with firmness the attacks made upon them.

At this time, and when victory seemed within his grasp, the strength of general Melas, eighty years old, and who had been many hours on horseback, failed entirely; and he was obliged to leave the field, and retire to Alexandria, committing to general Zach the charge of completing a victory which appeared to be already gained. But the position of Dessaix, at St. Julian, afforded the first consul a rallying point which he now greatly needed. His army of reserve lay formed in two lines in front of the village, their flanks sustained by battalions en potence, formed into close columns of infantry; on the left was a train of artillery; on the right, Kellermann, with a large body of French cavalry, which, routed in the beginning of the day, had rallied in this place. The ground that Dessaix occupied was where the high road forms a sort of defile, having on the one hand a wood, on the other a thick plantation of vines. The French soldier understands better perhaps than any other in the world the art of rallying, after having been dispersed. The fugitives of Victor's division, though in extreme disorder, threw themselves into the rear of Dessaix's position, and, covered by his troops, renewed their ranks and their courage. Yet, when Dessaix saw the plain filled with flying soldiers, and beheld Buonaparte himself in full retreat, he thought all must be lost. They met in the midst of the greatest apparent confusion, and Dessaix thus addressed Napoleon: "The battle is lost!—I suppose I ‘can do no more for you than secure your retreat?’—‘By no means,’ answered the first consul, ‘the battle is, I trust, gained—the disordered ‘troops whom you see are my centre and left, whom I will rally in your ‘rear—push forward your column.’" Dessaix, at the head of the ninth light brigade, instantly rushed forward, and charged the Austrians, wearied with fighting the whole day, and disordered by their hasty pursuit. The moment at which he advanced, so critically favourable for Buonaparte, was fatal to himself. He fell, shot through the head; but his soldiers continued to attack with fury, and Kellermann, at the same time charging the Austrian column, penetrated its ranks, and separated from the rest six battalions, which, surprised and panic-struck, threw down their arms; Zach, who, in the absence of Melas, commanded in chief, being at their head, was taken with them. The Austrians were now driven back in their turn. Buonaparte galloped along the French line, calling on the soldiers to advance, "You know," said he, "it is always my practice to sleep on the field of battle." The Austrians had pursued their success with incalculable hurry, and without attending to the due support which one corps ought, in all circumstances, to be pre-
pared to afford to another. Their left flank was also exposed, by their hasty advance, to Buonaparte’s right, which had never lost order. They were, therefore, totally unprepared to resist this general, furious and unexpected attack. They were forced back at all points, and pursued along the plain, suffering immense loss; nor were they again able to make a stand, until driven back over the Bormida. Their fine cavalry, instead of being drawn up in squadrons to cover their retreat, fled in disorder, and at full gallop, riding down all that was in their way. The confusion at passing the river was inextricable—large bodies of men were abandoned on the left side, and surrendered to the French in the course of the night, or next morning. It is evident in perusing the accounts of this battle, that the victory was wrested out of the hands of the Austrians, after they had become, by the fatigues of the day, too weary to hold it. Had they sustained their advance by reserves, their disaster would not have taken place. It seems also certain, that the fate of Buonaparte was determined by the arrival of Dessaix at the moment he did, and that in spite of the skilful disposition by which the chief consul was enabled to support the attack so long, he must have been utterly defeated had Dessaix put less dispatch in his counter-march. Military men have been farther of opinion, that Melas was guilty of a great error, in not occupying Castel Cerviolo on the advance; and that the appearances of early victory led the Austrians to be by far too unguarded in their advance on St. Juliano.

In consequence of a loss which seemed in the circumstances altogether irreparable, Melas resolved to save the remains of his army, by entering, upon the 15th of June 1800, into a convention, or rather capitulation, by which he agreed, on receiving permission to retire behind Mautua, to yield up Genoa, and all the fortified places which the Austrians possessed in Piedmont, Lombardy, and the Legations. Buonaparte the more readily granted these terms, that an English army was in the act of arriving on the coast. His wisdom taught him not to drive a powerful enemy to despair, and to be satisfied with the glory of having regained, in the affairs of Montebello and of Marengo, almost all the loss sustained by the French in the disastrous campaign of 1799. Enough had been done to show, that, as the fortunes of France appeared to wane and dwindle after Buonaparte’s departure, so they revived with even more than their original brilliancy, as soon as this child of destiny had returned to preside over them. An armistice was also agreed upon, which it was supposed might afford time for the conclusion of a victorious peace with Austria; and Buonaparte extended this truce to the armies on the Rhine, as well as those in Italy.

Two days having been spent in the arrangements which the convention with Melas rendered necessary, Buonaparte, on the 17th of June, returned to Milan, where he again renewed the republican constitution, which had been his original gift to the Cisalpine state. He executed several other acts of authority. Though displeased with Massena for the surrender of Genoa, he did not the less constitute him commander-in-chief in Italy; and though doubtful of Jourdan’s attachment, who, on the 18th of Brumaire, seemed ready to espouse the republican interest, he did not on that account hesitate to name him, minister of the French republic in Piedmont, which was equivalent to giving him the administration of that province. The conciliatory steps had the effect of making men of the most opposite parties see their own interest in supporting the government of the first consul.

The presence of Napoleon was now eagerly desired at Paris. He set out from Milan on the 24th of June, and in his passage through Lyons, paused to lay the foundation-stone for the rebuilding the place Bellecour; a splendid square, which had been destroyed by the frantic vengeance of the Jacobins when Lyons was re-taken by them from the insurgent party of Gironists and Royalists. Finally, the chief consul returned to Paris upon the 2nd of July. He had left it on the 6th of May; yet in the space of not quite two months, how many hopes had he realized! All that the most sanguine partisans had ventured to anticipate of his success had been exceeded. It seemed that his mere presence in Italy was of itself sufficient at once to
obliterate the misfortunes of a disastrous campaign, and restore the fruits of his own brilliant victories, which had been lost during his absence. It appeared as if he was the sun of France—when he was hid from her, all was gloom—when he appeared, light and serenity was restored. All the inhabitants, leaving their occupations, thronged to the Tuileries to obtain a glimpse of the wonderful man, who appeared with the laurel of victory in one hand, and the olive of peace in the other. Shouts of welcome and congratulation resounded from the gardens, the courts, and the quays, by which the palace is surrounded; high and low illuminated their houses; and there were few Frenchmen, perhaps, that were not for the moment partakers of the general joy.

The Austrians, vanquished at Marengo, and then defeated in Germany by Moreau, determined to sue for peace. On the 8th of January 1801, the French republic, the cabinet of Vienna, and the empire, concluded the treaty of Lunéville. Austria ratified all the conditions of the treaty of Campo Formio, and ceded, in addition, Tuscany to the young duke of Parma. The empire recognized the independence of the Batavian, Helvetian, Ligurian, and Cisalpine republics. The pacification now became general by the treaty of Florence, with the king of Naples, on the 18th of February, who ceded the isle of Elba, and the principality of Piombino— with Portugal, by the treaty of Madrid, on the 29th of September, 1801—with the emperor of Russia, by the treaty of Paris, signed on the 8th of October—and finally with the Ottoman Porte, by the preliminaries signed with that power on the following day. The continent laying down arms drove England into a momentary peace; but the circumstances which led to and which accompanied this momentary truce, I have already detailed to you in my former letter, and therefore need not here repeat them. (1)

(1) Histoire de Revolution Francaise, 1789—1814, par A. F. Mignet.—Memoirs for a History of France under Napoleon, written at St. Helena, tom. i.—Marengo, ou la Campagne d'Italie, par Joseph Petit.—Voyage en Suisse et en Italie, fait avec l'armée de Reserve.—Annual Registers, 1800—1802.

END OF PART III.