

“ concert with persons in foreign parts, with a
“ view to subvert the laws and established con-
“ stitution of this realm, and to destroy all or-
“ der and government therein, and that a spirit
“ of tumult and disorder, thereby excited, has
“ lately shewn itself in acts of riot and insur-
“ rection: and whereas under the present
“ circumstances it is more particularly ne-
“ cessary that, for the immediate suppression
“ of such attempts, some addition should be
“ made, as the exigency of the case may re-
“ quire, to the force which may be in readi-
“ ness to act for the support of the civil
“ magistrate: we, therefore, being determin-
“ ed to exert the powers vested in us by
“ law for the protection of the persons, li-
“ berties and properties of our faithful sub-
“ jects, and fully relying on their zeal and
“ attachment to our person and government,
“ and to the happy constitution established
“ in these kingdoms, have thought fit to de-
“ clare in our Council our Royal intention,

“ for the causes and on the occasion afore-
 “ said, to draw out and embody such part
 “ of our militia forces as may more imme-
 “ diately enable us to provide for the said
 “ important objects. And we do hereby,
 “ in pursuance of the said recited act, notify
 “ to all our loving subjects our said inten-
 “ tion, and the causes and occasion thereof.”

On the 1st of December was issued, like-
 wise, another proclamation, by which the
 meeting of Parliament was fixed for the 13th
 of this month. (12) But before the Par-
 liament assembled, a very numerous meet-
 ing of the merchants, bankers and traders
 of the city of London, was held at Mer-

(12) It is printed in the New Annual Register,
 1792; Public Papers, p. 59. It contains nothing more
 than usual, except the mention of a law, which enacts,
 that if the militia be called out when the Parliament
 is not sitting, and the prorogation will not expire
 within fourteen days, a proclamation shall be issued
 for its assembling within that time.

“ chant-

chant-tailors' Hall, at which the following
Declaration in support of the Constitution of
Great Britain was unanimously resolved. (13)

“ We the merchants, bankers, traders,
 “ and other inhabitants of London, whose
 “ names are hereto subscribed, perceiving
 “ with the deepest concern, that attempts
 “ are made to circulate opinions contrary to
 “ the dearest interests of Britons, and sub-
 “ versive of those principles which have pro-
 “ duced and preserved our most valuable
 “ privileges, feel it a duty we owe to our
 “ country, ourselves and our posterity, to in-
 “ vite all our fellow-subjects to join with us,
 “ in the expression of a sincere and firm at-
 “ tachment to the constitution of these king-
 “ doms, formed in remote, and improved
 “ in succeeding ages, and under which the
 “ glorious Revolution in the year 1688 was
 “ effected; a constitution wisely framed for

(13) *Ib.* p. 67.

“ the diffusion of happiness and true liberty,
“ and which possesses the distinguished me-
“ rit, that it has on former occasions been,
“ and we trust in future will be found, com-
“ petent to correct its errors and reform its
“ abuses: our experience of the improve-
“ ments in agriculture and manufactures,
“ of the flourishing state of navigation and
“ commerce, and of increased population,
“ still further impels us to make this public
“ declaration of our determined resolution
“ to support, by every means in our power,
“ the ancient and most excellent constitu-
“ tion of Great Britain, and a government
“ by *King, Lords and Commons*, and to exert
“ our best endeavours to impress on the
“ minds of those connected with us a reve-
“ rence for, and a due submission to, the
“ laws of their country, which have hitherto
“ preserved the liberty, protected the pro-
“ perty, and increased the enjoyments of a
“ free and prosperous people.”

About the same time various associations were formed in support of the ancient constitution of *King, Lords and Commons*, in opposition to those societies who, on the 28th of November, had solemnly announced their design of introducing a *National Convention*. Active measures were taken also both by Government and by the Magistrates of London, to counteract the effects of the projected insurrection. The guard at the Bank was augmented, the Tower was put into a state of defence, and several regiments were assembled in the neighbourhood of the metropolis. On the 13th of December the Parliament met, and was opened by the following speech from the throne :

“ My Lords and Gentlemen,

“ Having judged it necessary to embody
“ a part of the militia of this kingdom, I
“ have, in pursuance of the provisions of the
“ law, called you together, within the time
limit :

“ limited for that purpose, and it is, on
“ every account, a great satisfaction to me
“ to meet you in Parliament at this con-
“ juncture. I should have been happy, if I
“ could have announced to you the secure
“ and undisturbed continuance of all the
“ blessings which my subjects have derived
“ from a state of tranquillity: but events
“ have recently occurred which require our
“ united vigilance and exertion, in order to
“ preserve the advantages which we have
“ hitherto enjoyed. The seditious practices
“ which had been in a great measure
“ checked by your firm and explicit decla-
“ ration in the last session, and by the ge-
“ neral concurrence of my people in the
“ same sentiments, *have of late been more*
“ *openly renewed, and with increased activity.*
“ A spirit of tumult and disorder, the na-
“ tural consequence of such practices, has
“ shewn itself in acts of riot and insurrec-
“ tion, which required the interposition of
“ a military

“ a military force in support of the civil
“ magistrate. The industry employed to
“ excite discontent, on various pretexts, and
“ in different parts of the kingdom, has ap-
“ peared to proceed from a design to at-
“ tempt the destruction of our happy con-
“ stitution, and the subversion of all or-
“ der and government: and this design
“ has evidently been pursued in connection
“ and concert with persons in foreign coun-
“ tries. I have carefully observed a strict
“ neutrality in the present war on the
“ Continent, and have uniformly abstain-
“ ed from any interference with respect
“ to the internal affairs of France: but it is
“ impossible for me to see, without the most se-
“ rious uneasiness, the strong and increasing
“ indications which have appeared there of an
“ intention to excite disturbances in other coun-
“ tries, to disregard the rights of neutral na-
“ tions, and to pursue views of conquest and
“ aggrandizement, as well as to adopt toward

“ my allies, the States General, who have
“ observed the same neutrality as myself, mea-
“ sures which are neither conformable to the
“ law of nations, nor to the positive stipula-
“ tions of existing treaties. Under all these
“ circumstances I have felt it my indis-
“ pensable duty to have recourse to those
“ means of prevention and internal defence
“ with which I am entrusted by law; and
“ I have also thought it right to take steps
“ for making some augmentation of my
“ naval and military force, being persuaded
“ that these exertions are necessary in the
“ present state of affairs, and are best calcu-
“ lated both to maintain internal tranquil-
“ lity, and to render a firm and temperate
“ conduct effectual for preserving the blef-
“ sings of peace. Nothing will be neglected
“ on my part, that can contribute to that im-
“ portant object consistently with the secu-
“ rity of my kingdoms, and with the faith-
“ ful performance of engagements, which

“ we

“ we are bound equally by interest and honour to fulfil.”

When we consider the magnitude of the danger, which immediately, as well as mediately, threatened the British empire, we must admit that his Majesty's speech was couched in terms of great moderation: and this moderation will appear still more conspicuously, if it be compared with the insulting and menacing language which had been lately held by the President of the National Convention. The speech contained no proposal of a declaration of hostilities, but expressed an ardent desire for the preservation of peace. It is true, that an augmentation was proposed both of the naval and military force: but this augmentation was absolutely necessary for the preservation of Britain, and presented the only hope which now remained of securing the continuance of peace with France; because, when one na-

tion is threatened by another, especially by a nation which displayed such ambition and thirst of conquest, it cannot possibly expect to prevent the intended attack by any other means, than by vigorous preparations of defence. If, instead of having recourse to preparations of defence, an Ambassador had been sent to Paris, to make representations to the National Convention, which had already, in the most solemn and public manner, declared itself hostile to the British Government, and consequently to the British Nation, (14) the danger would not have been

(14) Whatever theory be adopted in regard to the origin of the power exercised by a government, or to the source from which that power is derived, every one must admit, that as long as the majority of a nation does not wish for a revolution, a declaration of hostilities against its government and constitution is a declaration of hostilities against the nation at large. But there can be no doubt, that the great body of the British Nation, even in the year 1792, was sincerely attached to the present constitution: and that, though the societies, who wished to establish a National Convention,

averted, but augmented: the Convention would have regarded the measure as a token of fear, the pride and ambition of the French rulers would have received new nourishment, and the resolution expressed on the 28th of November, would have been more strongly confirmed. The result of a conference, which Mr. Pitt, a few days before the meeting of Parliament, had already had with Mr. Maret, (15) affords ample proof of this

vention, were really formidable in consequence of their unremitted assiduity and their connexions with France, they were not, with all their proselytes and advocates, to be compared, either in point of property, or even in point of number, with those who wished to preserve the ancient constitution. For this objection, however, the French rulers had an excellent salvo. “*Les révolutions, répondait-on, ne font qu’avec les minorités: c’est la minorité qui a fait la révolution Française.*” Brissot à ses Commetans, p. 87.

(15) This conference, with the result of it, will be related at large in the thirteenth chapter, where all the diplomatic communications between Great Britain and France will be particularly examined.

assertion

assertion: for Mr. Pitt's bare consent to negotiate with an agent of the Executive Council, was openly attributed in the National Convention, by Le Brun, the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, to a supposed dread of the French power on the part of the British Ministry. Besides, what reception could an Ambassador of his Britannic Majesty have expected from the President of the French Convention, who had received with every mark of friendship, and every token of applause, the deputies of those societies, who declared their resolution of overturning the British Government and Constitution? The United States of America, against whom the present Directory of France acts the same insidious part, as the National Convention acted against England in the year 1792, have, in 1797, attempted an embassy under similar circumstances: and it has ended, as every man acquainted with the politicks and principles of the modern French

French rulers naturally expected. For the American Ambassadors, instead of obtaining satisfaction for past injuries, and security for the future, were not admitted even to an audience, and were obliged to return, after their mission had answered no other purpose than to increase the weight of the indignities which had been already offered to their government and nation. But there is no necessity for having recourse to analogical arguments: for the National Convention solemnly declared, on the 15th of December, 1792, that they acknowledged no political institution which was inconsistent with the sovereignty of the people, and, consequently, according to their own repeated explanations, no kingly government. (16) If, there-

(16) In the introduction to the decree of the 15th of December, (of which more will be said in the following chapter) was declared: "*La Convention Nationale, fidele aux principes de la souveraineté des peuples, qui ne lui permet pas de reconnaître aucune institution qui y porte atteinte, etc.*" *Moniteur*, 17 Dec.

fore, a British Ambassador had been sent to Paris in December, 1792, at a time when projects of revolution and conquest had reduced the National Convention to a state of political intoxication, he would in all probability have been received with an address of the following kind. “Do you come, Sir, “from the British people, or do you come “from the King? If you come from the “people, we are ready to receive you, and to “shew the same friendship and fraternity, “as we shewed to the deputies in the month “of November. But, if you are sent by the “King,” to which the Ambassador must have replied in the affirmative, “our answer “has been already given: we acknowledge “no other sovereignty than that of the peo-

1792.—It is a curious circumstance, that it was on the very day on which the National Convention virtually refused to acknowledge any kingly government, that Mr. Fox made his motion in the House of Commons for sending an Ambassador from his Britannic Majesty to France.

“ple.”

"ple." Thus would the British Government, in sending at that time an Ambassador to Paris, not only have failed of removing the causes of complaint, but would have brought on the whole nation new injuries and insults. Besides, when an unarmed nation negotiates with an armed nation, the latter will always prescribe laws to the former, especially if the unarmed nation takes the first step: for it is to be observed, that as soon as a negotiation was opened by the French Minister in London, the British Ministry continued it. They did not, therefore, absolutely refuse to negotiate with France: and the negotiation could be conducted full as well in London as in Paris. But we shall see, in one of the following chapters, what was the result of it: we shall see that the declarations of the French Government were in direct contradiction to its actions, that the former were as false as the latter were unjust, and that the whole nego-

tiation had no other object than to amuse the British Ministry, till the plan for the destruction of Great Britain was ripe for execution. An armament, therefore, by sea as well as by land, was the only means of warding off the impending danger: and this inference was so obvious, that in the House of Lords the address to his Majesty was voted without a division, and even in the House of Commons the Opposition was reduced to fifty members. (17) The two houses of Parliament, or at least a very great majority, saw further, that beside an armament by sea and land, other measures were necessary, in order to prevent on the one hand the breaking out of the intended insurrection, and on the other hand, to disarm, as much as possible, the French Government, and to throw impediments in the way of its already avowed hostile designs. Of the for-

(17) *New Annual Register*, 1792; *British and Foreign History*, p. 21, 23.

mer kind was the alien bill, and the bill for preventing the circulation of French assignats in England: of the latter kind were the two bills, by which the exportation of corn, arms, and military stores to France were prohibited. But as each of these bills was made a subject of complaint, it will not be superfluous to take a cursory review of them.

The alien bill was brought into the Upper House, by Lord Grenville, on the 19th of December, 1792, and on the 4th of January, 1793, it finally passed the Commons. (18) On this bill, which equally affected strangers of every country, and included royalists as well as democrats, no government in Europe made the least complaint, except the French. It was regarded as a matter of national police, which every nation is entitled to regulate according to the existing circum-

(18) *Ib.* p. 35, 43.

stances: and it was acknowledged, that more than usual precaution was requisite to counteract the machinations of the numerous emissaries; with which England was at that time over-run. But the National Convention made most bitter complaints, which was not at all extraordinary, as the alien bill presented a very material obstacle to its correspondence with the societies, with which it acted in concert. As this reason, however, could not be openly alleged, it was necessary to seek a pretext for complaint elsewhere: and they discovered a most excellent one, as they supposed, in the fourth article of the treaty of commerce. (19) But this

(19) The article runs thus: "*Il sera libre aux sujets et habitants des états respectifs des deux souverains d'entrer et d'aller, librement et sûrement, sans permission ni saufconduit général ou spécial,*" etc. Martens' *Recueil des Principaux Traités*, tom. ii, p. 682. To this article the French Minister, Le Brun, appealed in his speech in the Convention of 31st December, 1792, and Mr. Chauvelin, in a note to Lord Grenville, of 7th January, 1793. See the *Moniteur*, Jan. 3, 17,

article, though it has been quoted for the same purpose, likewise, by British orators and British writers, was the most unfortunate which could have been adopted: for it had been violated, seven months before the period in question, by a decree of the National Assembly, (20) which still continued in force; and consequently the article was no longer binding on Great Britain. On the 18th of May, namely, the National Assembly had passed a decree, relative to strangers resident in France, which perfectly corresponded to the alien bill proposed in

(20) Yet Mr. Chauvelin, in his note to Lord Grenville of the 7th January, 1793, had the assurance to say: "C'est ainsi que le Gouvernement Britannique le premier voulu rompre un traité à qui l'Angleterre doit une grande partie de sa prospérité actuelle, onéreux pour la France, arraché par l'adresse et l'habileté à l'imperitie ou à la corruption des agens du gouvernement, qu'elle a détruit, traité qu'elle n'a cependant jamais cessé d'observer religieusement." Le Brun, likewise, ventured to assert the same in his speech of 31st December.

the British Parliament in the following month of December, (21) for by that decree was ordained, that every stranger (without any exception in favour of the English) who had arrived in Paris after 1st January, 1792, should, within eight days after the publication of the decree, declare to the committee of the section, where he lodged, his name, his character, his usual place of abode, and his abode in Paris, and likewise present his passport, if provided with one; and it was further enacted, that every stranger, who

(21) Though the decree of the 18th May, 1792, or the French alien act, had probably escaped the notice of those members of the British Senate, who opposed our own alien act, yet, it could not have been forgotten by the French Ministers; and therefore, when they objected to the English alien bill on the ground of its being a violation of the fourth article of the treaty of commerce, they made the objection with the consciousness of having already broken it themselves. This is one of the many instances of hypocrisy and duplicity displayed by the virtuous republicans of France in their dealings with England

neglected

neglected to make the required declaration, should be fined an hundred livres, and sentenced to an arrest not exceeding three months, (22) but that whoever made a false declaration, should be fined a thousand livres, and condemned to an arrest not exceeding six months. (23) Further, every

(22) In a preceding debate on the French alien bill, Carnot proposed that every stranger, who neglected to make the required declaration within twenty-four hours after his arrival in Paris, should be imprisoned to the end of the war: and this proposal, though it was modified on the 18th of May, when the decree finally passed the Assembly, was received at the time with great applause. In the words of the original, Carnot's proposal run thus: "Tout voyageur, étranger
"et particulier, qui n'habite point Paris depuis le
"1 Mars dernier, sera tenu dans les 24 heures de re-
"mettre à la police un bulletin signé de deux citoyens
"actifs, contenant l'indication de son nom, de son
"état, de sa demeure, *sous peine de prison jusqu'à la*
"*fin de la guerre.*" (On applaudit.) *Moniteur*, 17th May, 1792.

(23) The first and fifth articles of the decree of the 18th May are as follow:

1, "Toute personne venue à Paris depuis le 1 Jan-

Englishman, who travelled at that time in France, can attest, that he was not permitted to go from one place to another, till he was furnished with a passport as accurately descriptive of his person, as when a thief is advertised in a public newspaper: and it was even dangerous to deviate from the route which had been once assigned, and which was specified in the passport. (24) The

“ vier, 1792, fera dans la huitaine de la publication
 “ du présent décret, au comité de sa section, la déclara-
 “ tion de son nom, son état, son domicile habituel,
 “ et son domicile à Paris; et il exhibera son passeport,
 “ s’il en a un.

5. “ Les étrangers, que ne feront pas la déclaration
 “ exigée, seront condamnés à une amende de 100
 “ livres, et à une détention, qui ne pourra être de plus
 “ de trois mois. Ceux qui font de fausses déclarations
 “ seront condamnés à 1000 livres d’amende, et fix
 “ mois de détention.” *Moniteur*, 19 Mai, 1792.

(24) The French passports delivered to Englishmen in the year 1792, long before our own alien bill was introduced, contained a clause not generally known, namely, an order to arrest every one who departed, from

municipal officers were likewise so strict in the examination of passports, that the British Ambassador himself, when he returned from Paris in August, 1792, was detained more than once on the road, and was obliged to send messengers to Paris, in order to remove the difficulties which were thrown in his way. (25) On these police regulations in France, which were a violation of the fourth article of the commercial treaty, to say the least of them, in an equal degree with any thing contained in the alien bill afterwards introduced in England, the Eng-

from the specified route (*"s'il se détourne de la dite route, de le mettre en état d'arrestation"*). Whether all the French passports delivered to Englishmen at that time contained this clause I cannot say: but I myself know an instance at least of one, and have no reason to suppose that it formed an exception to the general rule.

(25) For this assertion I have no other authority than the newspapers of the day: but, as it has never been contradicted, we may conclude that it is true.

lish Government made no complaint, because it was declared in the National Assembly, that they were absolutely necessary to preserve internal tranquillity. (26) But similar regulations were at least as necessary in December, 1792, to preserve the internal tranquillity of England. Consequently, as the English Government made no objection to the ground on which the French alien bill was framed, notwithstanding the fourth

(26) On the 15th of May, 1792, when the French alien bill was proposed, the necessity of it was alledged in the following terms: “ Une des causes des inquiétudes de cette grande cité vient de la circulation rapide d'étrangers, que la curiosité, le besoin, ou leurs affaires y attire; elle doit accueillir sans doute tous ceux qui viennent accroître la masse de ses richesses, mais non recevoir les monstres, qui voudraient déchirer son sein. Les habitans de Paris n'ont pas de plus mortels ennemis, que ceux qui se couvrent d'un nom sacré pour former les projets les plus horribles.” *Moniteur*, 17 Mai, 1792. This description applies to the situation of London in December, 1792, still better than it applied to that of Paris in May, 1792.

article

article of the commercial treaty, by which it had been stipulated, that every Englishman should travel without a passport, without detention, and as freely in France as in England, the French Government ought, likewise, to have admitted the validity of the reasons in favour of the English alien bill. This, however, they thought proper to refuse, and by so doing subscribed their own condemnation: for their appeal to the treaty of commerce involved a tacit acknowledgment, that this very treaty had been already violated on the part of France by the decree of the 18th of May, and consequently could no longer be enforced on Great Britain. In whatever light, therefore, the British alien bill be viewed, the National Convention had no right to complain of it: (27)

(27) Another objection, however, occurs to me, which I cannot pass over in silence. It has been said, that the English Ministry ought to have offered to the Executive Government of France some explanation on the alien bill. But it may be asked in reply, Why

and, when we further take into the account, that when the French alien act was made, which no more excepted British subjects, than the British alien act excepted French subjects, the British Government had not deviated from the strictest neutrality, (28) but

was it necessary that the Government of Great Britain should make a diplomatic communication on this subject to that of France, when the French Government, at the time its own alien bill passed, made no such communication to the Government of Great Britain? And if we further ask in what the required explanation should have consisted, they who censure the omission of it, will find it difficult to give a satisfactory answer. For the explanation must either have implied, that the National Convention acted in concert with persons who were attempting to overturn the British constitution, or it must have implied the contrary. But an explanation, which implied the former position, would certainly not have satisfied either the French or their friends: and an explanation, which implied the latter, would have contained an absolute falsehood.

(28) See Le Brun's acknowledgment, made at the end of August, 1792, and quoted at the beginning of ch. ix. It deserves likewise to be noted, that Chauvelin's

that before the British alien bill was introduced, the National Convention had publicly expressed its readiness to assist in the overthrow of the British constitution, the charge which has been laid to Britain recoils with ten-fold force on France.

While the alien bill was still under the consideration of Parliament, the assignat bill was brought in by the Attorney General on the 26th of December, and passed in a few days, with hardly any opposition from either House. This bill, of which the object was to make both the payment and the tender of French assignats illegal, was equally necessary with the preceding: for, not to mention the immense loss which would have been finally sustained by a continued circulation's letter of the 28th April, containing the most positive assurances of the pacific dispositions of the British Cabinet, was read in the National Assembly on the 7th of May, only a week before the French alien bill was proposed. See Ch. v. Note 2.

lation of French assignats, (29) the National Convention, as long as its paper was taken in payment, could create at its pleasure, even in Great Britain, whatever sums it thought proper, and employ them as the means of effecting the intended insurrection. Merely during the time that Cambon was at the head of the Committee of Finance, assignats were issued to the amount of three thousand millions of livres: (30) and hence we may conclude, that the quantity which circulated in England in December, 1792, was not inconsiderable. Further, that Cambon sent thither, immediately from the National Treasury, at least as much paper, as

(29) I have been informed, from very good authority, that the city of Hamburg lost not less than four-and-twenty millions of livres, or a million of pounds sterling, by the French assignats.

(30) “Son génie est dans un mot: émettre et toujours émettre des assignats. Il en a augmenté la masse de plus de trois milliards en dix-huit mois.” Brissot à ses Commettans, p. 95.

was necessary to purchase five-and-twenty millions of livres, appears from a passage quoted in the preceding chapter (31) from Brissot's address to his constituents and that these five-and-twenty millions were purchased with *secret* views, is evident from the circumstance, that no account, as Brissot himself acknowledges, (32) was ever given of them. Lastly, that the *secret* views of the French rulers, in making these remittances to England, was to promote the rebellion which they expected would soon break out, appears likewise from their own confessions. (33) Under these circumstances, the intro-

(31) Note 42. The expression used by Brissot: "Vingt cinq millions de numéraire achetés en Angleterre," clearly proves that the remittance was made, not in hard cash, but in assignats, or other promissory notes from the French treasury.

(32) *Ib.*

(33) See Note 40 and 41 to the preceding Chapter. The French assignats were considered also as fit instruments for ruining the bank of England, as Chauffard acknowledges, p. 17: and that they were likewise an

duction of the assignat bill was a very wise and a very necessary measure, as it deprived the French Government of one of the most powerful engines, which it intended to employ in overturning the British Constitution.

Before the close of December, the two other bills were brought into Parliament, by which the exportation of arms and corn from Great Britain to France was prohibited. The necessity of this prohibition was so obvious, that it is extraordinary how any one could call it in question: for, as soon as one government has reason to believe that another is hostilely inclined (and the hostile designs of the National Convention against the British Government and Constitution

plied to the purpose of draining Great Britain of bullion as well as of coin, appears from Chalmers' Estimate of the Comparative Strength of Great Britain, where it is shewn that, in the year 1792, not less than 2,909,000 ounces of silver were purchased with assignats, and sent to France.

were already recorded in its own public acts), it would be the height of infatuation if the former continued to augment the strength of the latter by a further supply of the two grand materials of war, arms and bread. On the prohibition of the exportation of arms, neither Mr. Chauvelin, nor the National Convention made the least complaint, being conscious that a complaint of this kind would be too gross even for themselves: but as some writers have really ventured to make it, and to assert, that the arms and ammunition bill was a violation of the treaty of commerce, it will not be superfluous to note, that the National Assembly, thirteen months before the period in question, had strictly prohibited the exportation of arms and ammunition of every kind from France, (34) and consequently that, *if* such a prohibition was a violation of the treaty

(34) See the 13th Article of the decree of 8th Nov. 1791.

of commerce, France itself had already violated the treaty, likewise, in *this* point, and hence had forfeited all pretensions to the observance of it on the part of England.

With respect to the corn bill, it must be observed, that the exportation of wheat grown in England is subject to different regulations from that of foreign wheat, which has been imported into England. To prevent scarcity in our own country, his Majesty, with the advice of his Privy Council, is empowered by an act of parliament, made long before the present war, to prohibit, by a public order, the exportation of British wheat. An order of this kind was issued on the 15th of November, 1792, and was printed in the London Gazette. It was a *general* order, and affected all other countries as well as France; and it was nothing new, because at all times, when circumstances require it, a stop is put to the exportation

portation of British wheat. The French themselves had already adopted a similar measure : for during the whole of the year 1792, no wheat of French growth was exported from France, because they wanted it for their own consumption. On the order, therefore, which was published on the 15th of November, the French Government could make no complaint ; and Mr. Chauvelin himself, in his letter to Lord Grenville, of the 7th of January, (35) admitted, that it was nothing more than “ the effect
“ of the foresight and prudence of the Eng-

(35) To prevent mistakes, it is necessary to observe, that Mr. Chauvelin sent two letters to Lord Grenville, on the 7th January, 1793. They are both of them printed in the *Moniteur*, 17th Jan. 1793 ; but the former, which related to the alien bill, and has been already quoted, is there termed, “ *Note remise par le citoyen Chauvelin à Lord Grenville :*” the latter, which relates to the corn bill, and is meant in the present place, is termed “ *Lettre du citoyen Chauvelin à Lord Grenville.*”

“lish Administration.” (36) But the act of parliament which passed at the end of December included foreign corn, which had been imported into England, and prohibited the exportation of it in any vessel bound to France. (37) This act affected, therefore, France alone, and consequently had the National Convention acted amicably toward Great Britain, would have been an instance of blameable partiality. But who will venture to blame this partiality, who has read the facts recorded in the preceding chapter? (38) An enemy has no right to expect

(36) His own words were “un effet de la prévoyance et de la sagesse de l’Administration Anglaise.”

(37) About a week before the bill was brought into the House of Commons, Government had issued orders to stop the sailing of vessels laden with corn for France, till the Parliament should come to a decision on the subject, for which reason the bill was called “the corn indemnity bill.”

(38) Mr. Chauvelin, however, whose *temperateness* of language has been highly extolled, presumed, in his

that he should be treated as a friend; and as the National Convention had publicly professed itself, a whole month before the corn-bill passed, an enemy to the British Government, it could not be supposed that the latter would further contribute to the support of the former. Besides, there is great reason to believe, that the orders given by the French Government toward the close of the year 1792, for the purchase of corn in England had not merely the supplying of France for its object; for, though there was already as much wheat in France as was necessary for the consumption of the country, (39) it was purchased in England by

his letter to Lord Grenville of the 7th of January, to term it, "*un acte de perfidie*." He must undoubtedly have taken for granted that the British Ministers were wholly unacquainted, not only with the *secret* machinations of the French Convention, but even with the *public* declarations made on the 28th of November.

(39) This is expressly asserted in the report made by the Comité des Subsistances to the National Con-

the French Minister of the Interior, at the beginning of December, at a much higher price than it could have have been purchased elsewhere. (40) The French Government, therefore, had, without doubt, *secret* views; and these secret views were, to occasion a scarcity of corn in England; to excite thereby a general discontent, and thus promote the wished-for insurrection. (41) Didvention, on the 29th of November. See the *Moniteur*, 1st December, 1792.

(40) In the fitting of the 6th of December, 1792, Marat brought the following complaint against the Minister of the Interior. "Un citoyen honnête, qui a été dans le commerce des grains s'est présenté au Ministre de l'Intérieur; il lui a offert de procurer des grains à 27 livres le septier, tandis que le Ministre les achete à 54 livres dans les ports d'Angleterre." *Moniteur*, 8 Dec. 1792. It is true, that Marat's word is in general of no great authority; yet he would have hardly been so absurd, as to assert so simple a fact before the National Convention, which, had it been false, the Minister of the Interior could and would have instantly confuted.

(41) Brissot himself says, (*A ses Commettans* p. 78.)

France deserve then to be treated on the same footing with friendly nations? and is the complaint about partiality founded on justice? No one, who has a regard for truth, will venture to assert it, or to maintain that the British Government ought to have diminished its own, and have encreased the strength of its enemy. Self preservation is not only a right, but a duty; and the preservation of the British Government and Constitution was a duty, which Ministers owed to the nation at large.

It is evident, therefore, that the four acts of Parliament, which have been the subjects of the preceding inquiry, were nothing more than measures of precaution, which the danger then impending over Great Britain required. And as to the naval armament, which was ordered at this time, it was so

p. 78.) “Ainsi nous pouvions gêner les approvisionemens de nos ennemis, en désolant leur commerce, et exciter des mouvemens chez eux par la disette et la cherté de ces provisions.”

very moderate, that it did not equal the number of ships which the French had already in commission. Only nine thousand seamen and marines were voted on the 20th of December, in addition to the peace establishment which was sixteen thousand: (42) and no further addition was made till ten days after the National Convention had declared war. (43) But five and twenty thousand seamen and marines were hardly sufficient to man eighteen ships of the line, with the proportionate number of frigates, sloops, and cutters: whereas the French, even three months before the present period, had not less than twenty-one ships of the line, thirty frigates, eighteen sloops, four and twenty cutters, and ten ships armed *en flute*, not only in commission, but actually at sea. (44)

(42) See the supplies granted by Parliament for the year 1793, in the *New Annual Register*; *Public Papers*, p. 121.

(43) *Ib.*

(44) See the report of the Minister of Marine, on the

The guards and garrisons in Great Britain amounted in December, 1792, to only fifteen thousand seven hundred men: and even this small number was not augmented, before the declaration of war, with more than sixteen hundred. (45) Hence, in that part of his Majesty's speech, which was particularly addressed to the House of Commons, it was estimated, that the preparations then making would be amply defrayed from the excess of the actual revenue beyond the or-

the 23d of September, 1793, quoted in the preceding chapter, Note 5. Brissot likewise (*A ses Commettans* p. 157) says: "L'Angleterre, qui n'a commencé d'armer *que trois mois après nous etc.*" and p. 56: "Dès le mois d'Octobre on avait prévu la possibilité d'entrer en guerre avec les puissances maritimes: le Comité diplomatique et de défense générale en avaient prévenu Monge; on avait mis à sa disposition des sommes considérables."

(45) Compare the army supplies granted by Parliament in February 16th, 1793, with those which were voted December 26th, 1792.

dinary expenditure.” (46) But it appears from the fourth chapter of the present work, that this excess, which had been added to the sinking fund, did not after the reduction of the taxes that had taken place in the preceding session, amount to more than two hundred thousand pounds: and with two hundred thousand pounds it was not possible to fit out a fleet, which, if we consider the forward state of the French navy at that time, could do more than act on the defensive. The French Minister for Foreign Affairs, in his report to the National Convention on the 19th of December, speaking of the preparations then making in England, said himself: “*There is nothing in these armaments, which ought to alarm us, since they exceed by only four ships of the line the number which has been commissioned in the preceding years; since among the six-*

(46) New Annual Register, 1792; Public Papers, p. 61.

“teen ships now in commission, there are
 “at least ten, which are known by the
 “name of guardships, that is, the oldest and
 “the least serviceable in the English navy;
 “and lastly, since the King has declared that
 “these armaments would require no addi-
 “tional taxes, and that they would be de-
 “frayed by the additional sum appropriated
 “to the extinction of the national debt.” (47)

On the 31st of December, the same French Minister, after several ships of the line had been put in commission, in addition to the four which he had mentioned on the 19th.

(47) “Ces armemens n’ont rien qui doive nous allar-
 mer, puisqu’ils n’excèdent que de 4 vaisseaux de ligne
 ceux qui ont eu lieu dans les années précédentes;
 puisque sur 16 vaisseaux en armement il y a au moins
 10 connus sous la dénomination de garde-côtes, c’est
 à dire, les plus vieux et les plus détériorés de la marine
 Anglaise; puisqu’enfin le Roi a déclaré, que ces arme-
 mens ne nécessiteraient aucun impôt extraordinaire, et
 qu’il suffirait, pour y subvenir, des fonds destinés à
 l’amortissement annuel de la dette nationale.” *Mo-
 niteur*, 21 Dec. 1792.

still acknowledged that France had no great reason to be alarmed. (48) Indeed he could not with truth, have asserted the contrary; for he well knew that France had a more considerable fleet in readiness than Great Britain was then preparing, and that great exertions were making for a further augmentation of it. With great injustice, therefore, and with equally great inconsistency, were complaints made of the naval armament of Great Britain in December, 1792. For even, if the National Convention had betrayed no desire of conquest on the Continent, had seized neither on Savoy nor on

(48) His own words were: "*préparatifs qui toute-fois ne sont pas encore trop effrayans, si nous considérons que les ordres pour l'armement de 13 vaisseaux de ligne n'ont été donnés que depuis quinze jours, si nous songeons à la grande difficulté de compléter l'équipage de ces gros vaisseaux par le manque de matelots etc.*" Monit. 3 Janv. 1793. Even on the 12th of January, 1793, Brissot made a similar acknowledgment, which will be quoted at length in the following

the Netherlands, had neither subdued a part of Germany, nor threatened Holland with an invasion, the mere circumstance that France had fitted out a formidable fleet, would have justified an equal armament on the part of Britain; and since the National Convention on the 28th of November, had formally declared itself the enemy of the British Government, the latter was not only justified, but in duty bound, to counteract the machines which were then at work for its destruction. The reproach, therefore, which was made to the British Government on account of the naval armament in December, 1792, deserves, like many other censures, which have been made to it during the present war, to be wholly inverted: and France itself must be reproached, not only with having armed at sea three months before Britain even made a commencement, (49) but with having ordered the armament at a time, when, by the acknow-

judgment of the National Convention, the British Government had not transgressed the strictest limits of neutrality. (50)

In this situation of affairs, while the British Government was taking only measures of defence, a war between France and Great Britain might have been still avoided, had it been the will of the National Convention, and the Executive Council. (51)

(50) The introduction to the decree of 13th Jan. 1793, is as follows: "La Convention Nationale informée par le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères des préparatifs extraordinaires de l'Angleterre, considérant le changement de conduite de ce pays relativement au caractère de neutralité, qu'il avait conservée jusqu'ici touchant les affaires de la France," etc. Moniteur 16 Janv. 1793. By this acknowledgment the National Convention has undesignedly subscribed its own condemnation.

(51) The following is an extract from a letter written by Mr. Miles on 2d January 1793 to Le Brun, the French Minister for Foreign Affairs: "Je vous ai tracé la route que vous avez à suivre; et si vous suivez mes conseils, le Cabinet Anglais ne s'avisera pas

That it depended entirely on the French Government, whether peace should be pre-

*pas de vous déclarer la guerre. Mais soyez de
bonne foi ; ne me trompez pas ; n'écoutez pas ces
petits messieurs qui vous entourent, et vous flattent ;
et qui aimeraient mieux jouer du plus fin, que de
marcher droit. Rappelez vous toujours, que vous
tenez entre vos mains, par le hazard le plus extra-
ordinaire et le plus bizarre, la destinée, pour ainsi
dire, de l'Europe entière, et qu'en vous écartant
des principes que je vous ai tracés dans une lettre
précédente, et que Maret vous a certainement ré-
pétés selon les instructions que je lui ai données,
vous prononcerez un arrêt de mort contre des mil-
lions peut-être de vos semblables. Pouvez-vous,
osez-vous y penser sans frémir ? La paix, je vous
le répète, est facile à conserver ; et la paix une fois
assurée, voilà la pierre fondamentale posée de cette
alliance entre nos deux pays, alliance que j'ai tant
désirée, et que pour l'obtenir je suis prêt de sacrifier
ma vie. La nation Anglaise est bien disposée vers
la France, et comme la nation compte pour beau-
coup dans ce pays-ci, le gouvernement n'osera
jamais marcher en sens contraire : mais de votre
côté il ne faut pas effaroucher ni fatiguer le peuple,
en décrivant une Constitution à laquelle elle est at-
tachée d'une manière que rien ne peut ébranler.
Voilà cependant l'écueil, sur lequel je crains*

served or not, has been admitted by French writers, who were not only intimately ac-

“ vous n'alliez échouer, et sans parler de l'indécence
 “ qu'il y aurait à vouloir s'immiscer dans les affaires
 “ intérieures d'une autre nation, il faut convenir
 “ qu'une démarche si peu mesurée serait aussi indé-
 “ cente, qu'injuste et dangereuse. Le malheur est,
 “ que vous semblez avoir le manie de vous mêler de
 “ tout; et souvenez-vous, mon ami, qu'en se mêlant
 “ de tout, on gâte tout. Ecoutez-moi encore un
 “ fois et une fois pour tout; *ne rendez pas la guerre*
 “ *nécessaire, ni comme mesure de precaution, ni par né-*
 “ *cessité, pour repousser une agression de votre part, et*
 “ *vous ne l'aurez pas*; comptez là dessus et je répon-
 “ drai du reste. J'entrevois même des dispositions
 “ très favorables *en faveur de la paix*: ne forcez donc
 “ pas Mr. Pitt, par votre imprudence, à se déclarer
 “ contre vous.” Authentic Correspondence, etc.

Appendix, p. 94—97. On the false report, which was propagated with great industry, that Mr. Pitt had then intermeddled in the internal affairs of France, in order to effect a counter-revolution, Mr. Miles had already written to Le Brun on the 18th Dec. 1792, as follows: “ Le rapport également dénué de tout fonde-
 “ ment que Mr. Pitt était l'ennemi juré de la revo-
 “ lution, fut reçu avec cette facilité aveugle, qui
 “ donne toujours aux mensonges la victoire sur la
 “ vérité. J'ose vous renvoyer à toutes les déclara-
 “ tions

quainted with the state of politics at that time, but were themselves in high and official employments. I will quote at the bottom of the page (52) only a few passages

“ tions publiques et reconnues du Ministre Anglois,
 “ depuis le commencement de la revolution, pour
 “ vous convaincre, qu’il s’est fait un devoir de ne
 “ point se mêler des affaires intérieures de votre
 “ gouvernement. Je crois qu’il a toujours rejeté
 “ avec fermeté toutes les propositions d’attaques qui
 “ lui ont été faites contre les Français, et qu’il n’a
 “ jamais voulu s’engager en aucun projet de contre-
 “ revolution ; s’il s’est fait un devoir de ne jamais se
 “ mêler de vos affaires, il se fait aussi une gloire,
 “ d’être resté attaché à ses principes sages et équi-
 “ tables.” Ib. p. 75.

(52) “ La Clos, qui venait d’être nommé com-
 mandant dans l’Inde, proposait qu’on le fit partir avec
 quinze mille hommes et quinze vaisseaux de guerre,
 ce qui supposait nécessairement la guerre avec les An-
 glais et les Hollandais, guerre qui n’était point dé-
 clarée, et qu’il eût été très-facile et très-nécessaire d’évi-
 ter.” Mémoires de Dumouriez, tom. i. p. 105, éd. 2de.
 “ Dans cette position on aurait pu négocier une paix
 avantageuse. L’Empire et le Corps Helvétique n’au-
 raient certainement pas rompu la neutralité que c

from the writings of Dumouriez and Brissot, which remove the question beyond the possibility of doubt. That the views of Mr. Pitt were pacific, and that he really wished to avoid a war with France, is a fact, which even his enemies have been obliged to admit; for Kerfaint, a leading man in the National Convention, and who was moreover decidedly in favour of a war with England,

dernier peuple a conservée jusqu' à présent. *La Hollande et l'Angleterre ne seraient pas non plus déclarées. L'Europe serait en paix, et la nation Française n'aurait pas comblé tous ses crimes par le meurtre de la famille royale, par la destruction de la religion et des lois, et par une anarchie barbare.*" Vie de Dumouriez, tom. iii. p. 251.—" Cette guerre (avec l'Autriche) promettait les plus heureux succès; la chute de la maison d'Autriche, la liberté des Pays-Bas devait en être l'infaillible conséquence, si l'on avait eu la prudence d'éviter une guerre maritime." Brissot à ses Commettans, p. 68. Brissot wrote this in May, 1793; and his acknowledgment, that France might have avoided the war with England, is the more worthy of notice, as he himself, only a few months before, had been one of the principal advisers of the declaration of it.

entered,

entered, on 1st January, 1793, into a very minute examination of the views and interests both of the ministerial and the opposition party in England, and thence deduced the following conclusion: "*Pitt, therefore, does not wish for war.*" (53) It was, in.

(53) His own words were: "*Pitt ne veut pas donc la guerre.*" *Moniteur*, 3 Jan. 1793. Yet this very Kerfaint said, in a subsequent part of his speech: *C'est sur la ruine de la Tour de Londres que vous devez signer, avec le peuple Anglais détrompé, le traité qui réglera les destins des nations.*" The pacific views of the British Cabinet, and the hostile views of the French Government were acknowledged, therefore, without reserve, at one and the same time. Carra likewise, who was not only a violent but even virulent adversary of the British Administration, said, in his speech of the 2d January, 1793: "*Ne jugez donc point de ce que vous devez craindre par les préparatifs de l'Angleterre, et la comédie qui s'est jouée dans le parlement de concert, avec la cour, et croyez que l'intention de la cour n'est réellement pas de nous faire la guerre, mais seulement d'intimider la Convention Nationale.*" *Moniteur*, 4 Jan. 1793. That the British Government wished to deter the National Convention from the execution of its ambitious projects, could

deed, impossible that he should, for he must have foreseen that the execution of his favourite projects, the diminution of the national debt, the abolition of taxes, and the promotion of the general welfare of Great Britain, would be impeded by the expences resulting from a war with France. No man can wish to be disturbed in his darling occupation, no man can desire to be prevented from finishing a work, which he himself beholds with admiration; nor is it possible to derive gratification from destroying the fruits of one's own ingenuity and labour. Lastly, the armament itself, which was so arranged, that the expences of it should be defrayed by the excess of the revenue above the ordinary

hardly be thought blameable, even by the French themselves. On the 12th of January, 1793, Brissot also, in a speech which is full of sophistry and contradictions, said: “Je n'étendrai pas plus loin ces réflexions qui doivent vous prouver, *que vous ne devez pas craindre de voir le Cabinet d'Angleterre se joindre à vos ennemis.*” *Moniteur*, 15th Jan. 1793.

expenditure,

expenditure, without either loan or taxes, shews how firmly he held, and how unwilling he was to part with his adopted plan. But the National Convention wrested it from his hands; and, as will appear from the following chapter, left him no other choice than either to prepare for a serious combat, or to lay his country at the feet of France. (54)

(54) Chronological order would require, that a few words should be said here in regard to the well known Mr. Maret, who was in London at the beginning of December, 1792. But as the thirteenth chapter will be wholly devoted to the diplomatic communications between Great Britain and France, the story, that Mr. Maret was at this time authorized by the French Executive Council, to treat with the British Ministers, will be there examined, and confuted.

CHAP. XII.

Decree of the 15th Decemb^r, 1792, and the Interpretation of it by the Executive Council. New Exhortation to all Nations, who were inclined to Insurrection. Menace in the National Convention, of an Appeal from the Government to the People of Great Britain, with Brissot's Interpretation of it. Barailon's Proposal, to except Great Britain from the Decree of the 19th of November, rejected by the National Convention. Circular Letter of the Marine Minister, Monge, to the Inhabitants of the French Sea Ports, to rouse them to a War with Great Britain, and to attempt the Conquest of it. Attack on a British Ship of War before the Harbour of Brest. Mission of Mr. Genet to the United

United States of America, with Proposals of an Alliance with France against Great Britain. Order issued by the French Executive Council to General Miranda, on the 10th of January, 1793, to invade Dutch Flanders and the Province of Zealand, at furthest, within twelve Days. Armament of thirty Ships of the Line and twenty Frigates, in Addition to the twenty-two Ships of the Line and thirty-two Frigates already in Commission, in Order to act against Great Britain.

WHILE the British Government was engaged in taking measures of defence, in consequence of the danger with which it was already threatened, the National Convention still continued its hostile projects, and gradually converted the probability, that it was determined to involve Great Britain, as well as Holland, in a war with France, into absolute certainty.

By the decree of the 19th of November, and the conduct of the National Convention on the 28th of the same month, its sentiments relative to Great Britain had been already laid open to public view: but as various persons, either through ignorance, or with the view of throwing ridicule on the uneasiness expressed by the British Cabinet, had represented that decree as an empty gasconade, and since this notion, had it become prevalent, might have excited in the minds of many, who were inclined to insurrection, a distrust in the promised assistance of France, the National Convention judged it necessary, by a new decree of the same kind, to satisfy the world, that its intentions of overturning the neighbouring governments were really serious. On the 15th of December, therefore, a decree was made, which was prefaced by the following introduction: "The
" National Convention, after having heard
" the report of the united finance, military,
" and

“ and diplomatic committees, faithful to the
 “ principles of the sovereignty of the people,
 “ which does not permit them to acknowledge
 “ any institution, that, militates against it, (1)
 “ and willing to fix the regulations to be
 “ observed by the generals of the armies of
 “ the republic, in those countries to which
 “ they may carry their arms, decrees as fol-
 “ lows.” (2)

(1) Thus the National Convention virtually declared, that it acknowledged no kingly, and, consequently, not the British Government; for kingly government of every description had been repeatedly reprobated, as an institution inconsistent with the sovereignty of the people.

(2) Séance du 15 Décembre. “ La Convention Na-
 “ tionale, après avoir entendu le rapport de ses comités
 “ de finance, de la guerre, et diplomatique réunis,
 “ fidele aux principes de la souveraineté des peuples,
 “ qui ne lui permet pas de reconnaître aucune institution
 “ qui y porte atteinte, et voulant fixer les règles à suivre
 “ par les Généraux des armées de la république dans
 “ les pays où ils portent les armes, décrète ce qui
 “ suit.” *Moniteur*, 17 Dec. 1792.