

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

"I wish

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

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

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

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

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

\* or

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

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

(18) No. 6 and 7.

(19) See No. 8.

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



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

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

of the British Government was *not* to conclude a peace, that Lord Malmesbury had *secret* instructions, which were designed to counteract his ostensible instructions, that the proposal to include the allies of Great Britain had been made, in order to protract and render fruitless the whole negotiation, that the British Government had commenced it with no other view than to throw the blame of hostilities on the French Government, and thus induce the people of Great Britain more readily to furnish supplies for the continuance of the war. To which Lord Malmesbury replied : (22) “ With regard to the offensive and injurious insinuations which are contained in that paper, and which are only calculated to throw new obstacles in the way of the accommodation which the French Government professes to desire, the King has deemed it

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

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

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

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

(23) No. 25.

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

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

port.



port. (26) *Great Britain will restore all the conquests which it has made from France, under the three following conditions: 1. That France restore to the Emperor the Austrian Netherlands: 2. That France conclude a peace with the Germanic empire: 3. That Italy be evacuated by the French troops.* Such were the grand out-lines of the proposals made by the British Government: but Lord Malmesbury accompanied them with a note, dated the 17th of December, (27) in which he declared his readiness, in case objections should be made to them, "*to enter into the discussion of any counter-project which might be transmitted to him on the part of the Executive Directory.*" The same declaration he repeated (28) on December 19: but the Executive Directory not only rejected the conditions proposed by the British Government, but refused likewise to communicate any proposals whatsoever on

(26) No. 28. (27) No. 27. (28) No. 32.



*their* part: and, on the very day on which Lord Malmesbury had a second time requested a counter-project, sent him an order to depart from Paris within eight and forty hours. (29)

It is evident, therefore, that the French Directory broke off the negotiation, not because it disapproved the terms of peace which were offered by the British Cabinet, but because it was resolved to make peace with Great Britain *under no conditions whatsoever*: for, otherwise, it would certainly not have refused, at the repeated request of the British Ambassador, to deliver a counter-project. He who is disposed to peace will, undoubtedly, in case he thinks the terms proposed by his adversary unacceptable, reply, when requested to propose *his own* terms, "though not on *those* conditions, I, will "make peace with you on *these*." He would meet at least with civility an opponent who,

obviate the well-grounded suspicion which it justly apprehended, would result from its *own* conduct : and as an open refusal to negotiate at all had been deemed imprudent, lest the people, who were desirous of peace, should be irritated by the too glaring conduct of their governors, they thought it expedient to take such measures as should not only render the whole negotiation fruitless, but at the same time remove from themselves, in the opinion of the illiterate multitude, the blame of that ill success on which they had resolved even before the negotiation began.

If further proof of the position, that the Directory was determined under no condition to make peace with Great Britain, were necessary, we might appeal to the well known expedition to Ireland under General Hoche. The preparations for this expedition, which Lord Edward Fitzgerald and Arthur O'Connor had already settled with  
General

General Hoche, and of which the plan had been finally arranged with Mac Nevin, who came over to Paris, as deputy of the Irish Union, for that very purpose, (32) were carried on with the utmost activity during the whole time of Lord Malmesbury's embassy in Paris. Nor was any doubt entertained by the Directory, that the expedition would be attended with success : (33) and, as after the conquest of Ireland the further preservation of England appeared highly improbable,

(32) See the Report of the Secret Committee of the Irish House of Commons, on August 20, 1798.

(33) In the *Redacteur*, Dec. 22, 1796, where the sailing of the fleet from Brest is announced, is given the following account : “ La totalité de l'escadre est composée de 21 vaisseaux de ligne, outre les frégates, corvettes et transports. Elle porte à bord des troupes de débarquement, et est abondamment pourvue en munitions et instrumens de guerre. Le succès qu'a eu l'expédition précédente du citoyen Richery, sur la destination de laquelle un inviolable secret avait trompé toutes les conjectures des Anglais, peut faire augurer, que celle-ci obtiendra, sur les mêmes auspices, les mêmes résultats.”

it was thought inconsistent, as well with the interest of France, as with the ambition of its governors to grant peace and independence to a country, which, it was fondly expected, would be reduced in a short time to the degraded situation of a French dependency. If it be objected that, though the *preparations* for the Irish expedition were made during Lord Malmesbury's residence in Paris, the *execution* of it was left subordinate to the issue of the negotiation, such an objection will be at once removed by the time when the execution of it took place: for it was on the *seventeenth* of December that Lord Malmesbury first delivered to the French Minister the particular conditions of peace, which were offered by his court; and it was on the *fifteenth* of December, that the fleet sailed from Brest. (34) So far therefore

(34) This circumstance, though it does not appear to attract the public notice, which it deserved, is proved by the following passage in the *Redacteur*, 22d December, 1796: "*L'escadre armée à Brest a mis à la*

were the French Directors from making the Irish expedition subordinate to the issue of the negotiation, that the final order for the execution of it was given several days, before they even knew the terms, which the British Government would give as the price of peace. (35)

In the sanguine expectation however, that Ireland would fall a prey to France, which had been the grand inducement to the breaking off of the negotiation, the Directory was disappointed: General Hoche was obliged to return, without having effected a

*voile le 25 Frimaire.* • That Frimaire 25 corresponds to December 15, is known to every one acquainted with the new French calendar.

(35) In defiance of the plain and undeniable facts, which have been here recorded, Lord Malmesbury's embassy to Paris has been as shamefully perverted, as the negotiations before the declaration of war. But as the preceding narrative is sufficient to confute the various misrepresentations on this subject, it is unnecessary to examine them in detail.



landing; two ships of the line (36) with seven frigates were lost or sunk; two other frigates, which had brought over twelve hundred convicts to the coast of Wales, were taken, and the Spanish fleet, destined to co-operate with that of France, was defeated at Cape St. Vincent. On the other hand, the French arms made a rapid progress at this very time on the continent; and at the end of April, 1797, the Emperor was obliged by the preliminaries signed at Leoben, to renounce his possessions in Lombardy and in the Low Countries.

As in consequence of this formal cession, the Austrian Netherlands, which the British Cabinet, for obvious reasons, had been desirous of preserving for the Emperor, ceased to be a subject of contention, it was hoped that a new negotiation might be opened with better success, especially since the ex-

(36) The *Séduisant* and the *Droits de l'Homme*.

pedition to Ireland, which had so much influence on the former negotiation, had totally failed. Accordingly on June 1, 1797, Lord Grenville sent a note to the French Minister for Foreign Affairs in Paris, with the proposal of a new negotiation. (37) The proposal was likewise accepted; (38) and after an exchange of several notes relative to passports to the place of negotiation, and other preparatory steps, (39) the ambassadors of the respective powers met at Lisle in the beginning of July. On the 8th of this month the British Ambassador, Lord Malmesbury, presented a note, in which the conditions of peace, proposed by the British Cabinet, were delivered in the most precise and unequivocal terms. These conditions were nothing less than the following.

(37) As the papers relative to this negotiation, which were published as soon as it was ended, are all numbered, I shall quote each note, as before, by the number prefixed to it. Lord Grenville's note of the 1st of June is No. 1.

(38) No. 2. (39) No. 3.—11.

*Great Britain will restore all the conquests, without exception, which have been made from France; and of the conquests which France has made, Great Britain requires a restitution of none.* (40) Further, with the allies of France, (Spain and Holland,) the British Cabinet offered to make a peace at the same time, on the condition of retaining the island of Trinidad, the Cape of Good Hope, Trincomale in the isle of Ceylon, and of exchanging Negapatnam for the town and fort of Cochin. (41) To these proposals it was answered the 15th of July, that the Directory required, as an *indispensable preliminary*, the consent of his Britannic Majesty to cede *all* the conquests which Great Britain had made, as well from Spain and Holland as from France itself. (42) To this demand, which was proposed, not as the price of peace, but as a mere preliminary article of negotiation, the British Government, as

(40) No. 13, 14. (41) *Ib.* (42) No. 20.

might naturally be expected, made various objections; (43) and the Directory itself appeared at least to admit the exorbitance of the demand, as it remained for some time unresolved, and pretended to consult with the Spanish and Dutch Governments, whether some part of it could not be remitted. In the mean time several weeks elapsed, during which the ambassadors had several conferences, and exchanged several notes, (44) though without being able to effect any thing decisive; till at last, on the 28th of August, Lord Malmesbury was informed, that the answer which had been received from Holland was *unsatisfactory*, but that a second message had been sent to the Hague; and that the reply of the Batavian Directory might be expected to arrive in the course of eight or ten days. (45) This ridiculous farce, for a ridiculous farce it certainly was, when the French Directory pretended to be under

(43) No. 21.—23. (44) No. 26—33. (45) No. 34.



the necessity of previously obtaining the consent of a government, which was absolutely at its disposal, is to be ascribed to the circumstance, that the Directory itself, as well as the two Councils of France, was divided into two parties, one of which was desirous of a peace with England, while the other persisted in the maxim, that *modern Carthage must be destroyed*. (46) Hence arose the irresolution of the French Government, and the delay, with which the negotiation had been hitherto conducted. But as soon as the struggle between the two parties was ended, and the pacific Barthelemi, with his associates, had fallen a sacrifice to the fury of Barras and his hostile accomplices, all irresolution ceased : and the eighteenth of Fructidor, or the 4th of September, decided the fate of the negotiation with England. The French Ambassadors, La Tourneur and

(46) On this subject see the interesting work of Camille Jourdan, entitled ; *A ses Commettans sur la révolution du 18 Fructidor*, especially p. 87—90.



the well-known Maret, who had hitherto negotiated with Lord Malmesbury, were instantly recalled, (47) and two other negotiators, Treilhard and Bonnier, whose principles were more in unison with those of the victorious party, were appointed in their stead. It was now formally insisted on, that the British Cabinet should consent to *cede* all its conquests, as a preliminary step to any negotiation whatsoever: (48) and when Lord Malmesbury replied, that nothing would then be left for a subject of negotiation, he received for answer, “ *that this would not be the case, that many articles would still remain to be proposed, and many points for important discussion.* (49) A compliance,

(47) Three persons had been appointed to negotiate on the part of France: but the third, Pleville le Pelley, had already left Lille. Indeed we find his name affixed to the none the French notes, which bear a later date than July 15.

(48) No. 42, 43.

(49) No. 42. So early as the 10th of July, the former,

therefore, with the demand of the Directory, would have laid Great Britain at the mercy of an unrelenting foe : it was answered, as it merited, with a formal refusal : (50) and on the very day, on which the answer was returned, the British Ambassador received from the French Plenipotentiaries, agreeably, as they expressly declared, to their instructor French Ambassadors had demanded the restitution of as many ships of war, as had been taken or destroyed at Toulon (see No. 16), that is fourteen ships of the line and twenty-four frigates. But, among *the points for important discussion*, this was undoubtedly one of the least consequence : for, as the French Government stood in very close connexion with the heads of the Irish Union, who had at that time in Paris a regularly accredited ambassador, and, as during the course of the negotiation it had been positively and repeatedly declared, that the French Directory could in no case detach itself from the engagements made with its allies, we may be assured, that one of the points for important discussion was the separation of Ireland from Great Britain, and the establishment of a republic there, under the auspices of the Great Nation.

tions, an order to depart from Lisle within four and twenty hours. (51)

Thus ended the last negotiation between Great Britain and France, which, if any doubt had remained, that nothing but the total overthrow of the British empire could satisfy the ambition of the French rulers, must entirely remove it. But the confident expectations of these political enthusiasts have been disappointed in a manner, which

(51) No. 45. It is impossible to imagine any thing more absurd, than the conduct of the French Plenipotentiaries on this occasion. They accompanied the order for Lord Malmesbury's departure, which completely put an end to the negotiation, with the assurance, that it was the desire of the French Government to restore peace: they pretended that the order was given with no other view, than that the British Ambassador should go and persuade his Court to comply with the demand of the Directory: and, as if they seriously expected that he would return, they remained for some time in Lisle, that they might be able to pretend the negotiation had not failed through *their* fault. If the ministers of any other nation than France had acted in this manner, they would have become objects of ridicule and detestation.

they little imagined : (52) for, from the rupture of the negotiation at Lisle to the close of the year 1798, a period during which the single island of Britain, deserted by its former friends, had not only to combat alone with the enormous power of France and its allies, but to struggle with a most formidable insurrection in Ireland, the page of history presents one continued series of French disasters and of British triumphs. The indignation of Britons has been roused : and under the guidance of a Ministry, whose talents and whose efforts are proportioned to the great emergency, they have shewn themselves equal to the conflict, to which they have been driven, and have displayed an energy, which shall make the haughty rulers of republican France repent of their insolence and their presumption.

*August 1, 1796.* <sup>103</sup>

(52) It is well known, that they presumed to mortgage Great Britain, as a security for the loan, which was raised to defray the expences of the intended conquest of it.

POSTSCRIPT



POSTSCRIPT  
TO  
THE APPENDIX.

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23d March, 1800.

**A**T length the haughty rulers of France, convinced of the impossibility of executing their favourite project, the subjugation of the British isles, of which the fond expectation had induced them to continue, as it had induced them to commence the present war, and exposed on all sides to difficulties, which not only prevented them from continuing to overturn the kingdoms of Europe,\* but threatened France itself with a further diminution of its newly acquired aggrandisement, have condescended to propose a negotiation of peace to the British Government. Never, perhaps, were the

\* On the avowed designs of the French rulers, see the History of the Possicks, &c. Ch. vii. x. xiv.



Ministers of any nation placed in so critical a situation, as the Ministers of Great Britain were placed by this proposal. If they answered in the negative, they exposed themselves, in the first place, to the charge of inconsistency, and of having refused what they themselves had solicited, though solicited in vain : they inverted the situations, in which the Governments of Great Britain and France had been hitherto placed, and loaded on themselves the blame of continuing the war, which till that time had been borne by their adversaries : they ran the risk of damping that noble enthusiasm, which Britons had displayed, while they combated for their political existence, and of rousing that spirit among the French, which the lately-acquired conviction of having hitherto wasted their blood and treasure, only to gratify the ambition of their rulers, had materially diminished. With such powerful inducements to accept the proposal, and to  
hear

hear at least the conditions, which the enemy might offer, before a decisive answer was given in the negative, the British Government must have been influenced by still weightier motives on the other side, if its conduct can be justified in the eye of the public. Let us examine, therefore, what those weightier motives were.

In the first place, as a negotiation with the Consul of France, in conjunction with the Emperor of Russia, was at that time out of the question, we will suppose that Ministers had consented to negotiate with Buonaparte, in conjunction with Austria, and inquire what would have been the result.

The grand objects of Buonaparte were, to retain the Netherlands, to insure his dominion over Holland, to keep possession of Malta, to secure his favourite colony in

Egypt, at *that* time occupied by a French army, to monopolize the commerce of the Levant, and at the same time to regain the colonies, which had been conquered by Great Britain. But all these objects, though of the highest consequence to us, were matters of indifference to the House of Austria; and, indeed, the Continent in general, envious of the maritime power, and the commanding commerce of Great Britain, would have no objection to measures which tended to the diminution of them. The great, if not the sole object of the cabinet of Vienna was, to secure its dominion over Italy, by retaining the territories of the late Cisalpine Republic, as well as those, which formerly constituted the States of Venice. And Buonaparte, however desirous he might be to restore the Cisalpine Republic, which was a work of his own creation, would probably have deferred this project to a more convenient opportunity, in order to obtain

obtain the above-mentioned advantages, which are infinitely more desirable for France. At a Congress, therefore, consisting of the Plenipotentiaries of France on the one hand, and of those of Great Britain and Austria on the other (for, after the defection of Russia no other ally would have been left, which could have been entitled to a voice), Buonaparte would have proposed, with all the speciousness of justice, to make a general peace on the principle of compensation; and, when the objects of compensation came to be specified, they would have consisted in the proposal, to cede the Cisalpine Republic to our ally the Emperor, and to make, perhaps, some other arrangements in Italy, on condition of our ceding all our colonial conquests, while France was to retain the Netherlands, Malta, and Egypt. The consequence of such a proposal would have been an immediate disagreement between Great Britain and Austria: the former would have justly objected



to it as incompatible with its own interest, whereas the latter, for a contrary reason, would have thought it highly acceptable. In this situation, would Austria have continued to make a common cause with Great Britain? Would the Cabinet of Vienna, after its own object was attained, have consented to carry on the war, in order to obtain advantageous conditions also for its ally? This question may certainly be answered in the negative: for, at the time when the proposals of peace were made to the British Ministry, the Cabinet of Vienna had not pledged itself, either directly or indirectly, to make a common cause with Great Britain, and to act only in concert with its ally. And, as Buonaparte, who, unlike the late Directory, knows how to proportion his means to his ends, would not have regarded the disengagement of the Austrian Cabinet, as purchased at too dear a rate by a temporary cession of the Cisalpine Republic, the consequence would have been a separate

a separate peace between France and Austria, and we should have been left in the same condition as in 1797.

Why, then, it will be said, did not our Ministry resolve to negotiate for Great Britain alone? Why did they not accept, without loss of time, the proposal of the French Government, and, by being the first to make a separate peace, endeavour to obtain advantages which afterwards they might seek in vain? From this step they were deterred both by honour and by policy. When they had engaged the Emperor of Russia in their cause, when that cause had derived from him essential service, and the plan even of the next campaign was nearly settled, it would have been a flagrant breach of honour to have deserted our ally, and to have negotiated for ourselves alone. On the other hand, if honour be set aside, and the possibility of being de-

ferted by an ally be thought an excuse for infidelity on our part, at a time when there was no reason to suppose that our ally would forsake us, a separate negociation did not promise the advantages which superficial observers might expect. The first object of Bonaparte was to detach the Emperor of Russia from the coalition, by procuring the consent of the British Government to hear at least his terms of pacification : and, when that object was attained, the next step was to make proposals of a separate peace to the Cabinet of Vienna. Now, whatever doubts the British Ministers might have entertained on the question, whether this Cabinet would have made a separate peace with France, even though Great Britain had remained faithful to its alliance, they could have had none in regard to the question, whether a consent on their part to enter into a separate negociation would induce the Cabinet of Vienna immediately to do the same. In  
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this case the circumstance of our having given *the first consent to negotiate* would by no means have secured us from the danger of being *the last to make peace*. For it must not be supposed that the Consul of France, the subtlety of whose politicks surpasses even his talents for war, would have delivered his conditions to the British Government immediately and unequivocally; and that, though he affects to despise the ordinary diplomatic forms, he would not convert them to his own advantage. It would have been easy, therefore, to protract the negotiation with Great Britain till the negotiation with Austria had been already set on foot: and thus by keeping the two powers at bay at the same time, he could have granted to either of them the priority of pacification, as best suited his own interest. Now on which side this interest lies, it requires no deep knowledge of politicks to discover. As France has been already sufficiently aggrandized



dized by the acquisition of the Netherlands, and of the left bank of the Rhine, Buonaparte, in a separate negotiation with Austria, would have had no further cession of territory to demand, at least not for France itself; and in order to secure these acquisitions, it would have been no great sacrifice to give up the Cisalpine Republic, which was already occupied by the Austrians, and which, if reconquered, could never be incorporated into France. On the other hand, in a negotiation with Great Britain, the interest of France requires the restitution of the colonies, which have been conquered in the East and West Indies, as well from the Dutch and the Spaniards as from the French themselves; while the cession of the Netherlands, which the interest of Great Britain loudly demands, is doubly inimical to the interest of France, which would lose not only a very valuable territory, but its present sovereignty over Holland.

land. It would evidently, therefore, have been the policy of Buonaparte to have first signed the peace with Austria; and thus we should have been again reduced to the situation in which we stood in 1797.

Since, therefore, the acceptance of Buonaparte's proposal at the beginning of January, 1800, whether we determined to negotiate alone, or in conjunction with Austria (for a negotiation with the Consul of France in conjunction with Russia was out of the question) would not have produced the beneficial effects, which many persons at first sight might have imagined; and since the bare consent to negotiate, however prejudicial the result, would have deprived us of all hopes of being further assisted by our allies, the British Ministers would surely not have consulted the good of their country, or of Europe in general, if, after the many strenuous and the successful efforts of  
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the last year to confine the power of France within its proper limits, they had resolved to leave the work incomplete, to exchange a substance for a shadow, and to abandon probable advantages when no compensation could be expected for such a sacrifice. It is true, that the events of war are uncertain; yet the mere hopes of an honourable peace are preferable to the certainty of a disgraceful one. It is true, likewise, that we may be deserted by our allies, though we remain faithful to them; but even if this should unfortunately happen, we shall be reduced only to the situation to which *we* should have reduced *ourselves*, had we acceded to the proposal of Buonaparte; and, what would have failed us in the latter instance, we shall enjoy at least the consolation, that we were neither the instruments of our own distress, nor were guilty of infidelity to our friends.

Further

Further, the character of the persons with whom we should have had to treat deserved particular attention. The conduct of Buonaparte, who is now absolute sovereign of France, has been hitherto marked with the most glaring duplicity. He is a real Proteus, and is capable of assuming whatever shape accords with his present interest. In Italy he was a faithful son of the Pope; in Egypt a true disciple of Mohammed. By the addresses from his army he promoted the revolution of September, 1797, which put an end to the negotiation at Lisle; and that very revolution he now affects to condemn. Before his departure for Egypt he encouraged the Directory to carry on the war with the utmost vigour; and after his return he was not ashamed to censure the continuation of those very hostilities of which he himself was the principal agent. He has no equal in France, and yet he talks of equality: his power is unlimited,



unlimited, yet his subjects have perfect liberty. Nor does he confine himself merely to the 'secret arts of deception; for his character is blotted with the most abominable treachery. Was it not treachery to amuse the Venetians with the doctrines of freedom, and then to sell them to a foreign master? Was it not treachery to pretend friendship for the Turks, and then insidiously to rob them of one of their most valuable provinces? Was it not treachery, unheard-of treachery, when an armistice of four-and-twenty hours had been concluded before the walls of Acre, to storm the town during that very armistice, while the unsuspecting Turks were employed in burying their dead? Was it not treachery again when he instructed General Kleber to make a convention with the Porte, and then to contrive means of evading the execution of it? An offer of peace from *such* a man cannot possibly be considered as sincere:

his

his maxim is to treat only to deceive; and his negotiations are more dangerous than his arms.

If to these considerations we add the motives above alledged, we shall cease to wonder that the proposal of Buonaparte was rejected. Those motives, indeed, which related to the probable conduct of our allies, could not be openly assigned by *Ministers*; but they will suggest themselves, if not to the nation at large, at least to every man who is experienced in politicks, and will vindicate the conduct of the British Government. Should the fact therefore, to which Ministers have appealed, that the present situation of affairs in France affords no security, either for Europe in general, or for Great Britain in particular, be thought an insufficient reason of itself for rejecting the negotiation, or should even the fact appear doubtful, notwithstanding the many instances

instances of treachery already displayed by the French Consul, yet since a bare consent to negotiate would have destroyed every advantage, which there was reason to expect, since we should have sacrificed our honour on the one hand, and have become the dupes of French politicks on the other, we can have no reason to censure Administration for the step which has been taken.

Lastly, the effect, which a consent to negotiate with the present Consul of France, would have produced on the Emperor of Russia, was not unworthy of attention. As he had uniformly avowed, that it was his intention to restore the Bourbon family to the throne of France, it is evident that a negotiation with the new Government of that country, would have instantly detached him from our alliance. Was it the business of Ministers then, it will be objected, to continue the war till the Bourbon family

was restored to the throne, and because the Emperor of Russia had avowed this project, must they resolve to do the same? Certainly not. The war was neither begun nor continued for any such reason: and in the late note of Lord Grenville to the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, it was again declared, that however desirable might be the restoration of royalty in France, the British Cabinet did not presume to dictate forms of Government to a foreign nation. But, whatever was the object of our allies (for it would be absurd to suppose, that they have been fighting merely for our sakes), yet, when the bare *pursuit* of that object had a necessary tendency to secure the British Empire from future dangers, and to set bounds to a torrent, which has deluged Europe with blood, it was a duty, which Ministers owed their country, to co-operate, as far as lay in their power, till *this* desirable object was attained. And by so doing they have avoid-



ed at the same time the reproach, in case our allies should desert us, of having been themselves the cause.

But, however desirable it may be, that France should be deprived either of the power, or of the will, of disturbing any longer the tranquillity of Europe, or that we should have proofs of sincerity and moderation on the part of our enemy, before we listen to his offers; yet, as neither the justice of a cause, nor the wisdom of councils can always insure success, it would be absurd to declare, that a peace can *in no case* be concluded, before those objects are attained. Still, however, we may hope, from the energy of our Government, and the co-operation of those allies, who were preserved to us by our refusal to treat, that those objects will ultimately be attained; and, that though both honour and interest forbid a negotiation at the time when it was proposed,

proposed, the period will arrive, at which a negotiation will be inconsistent with neither. When this period actually is arrived, Ministers themselves must be best able to determine : and then we may trust, that the same principle, which induced them, not only to avoid the war till it was forced on them by France, but repeatedly to solicit the termination of it, will again operate, and perhaps with better success, than on former occasions. But, whether peace be near or distant, is a matter of still less importance, than whether it come accompanied or unaccompanied with that grand object, for which alone we have been struggling above seven years—the *security of the British Empire.*

FINIS.

THE  
HISTORY  
OF  
THE POLITICKS  
OF  
GREAT BRITAIN AND FRANCE,  
VINDICATED  
FROM  
A LATE ATTACK  
OF  
MR. WILLIAM BELSHAM.

---

BY HERBERT MARSH, B. D. F. R. S.  
AND FELLOW OF ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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**A**S the following Vindication may fall into the hands of persons who have never read the History of the Politicks of Great Britain and France, it will not be improper, before I enter on my Defence, to state the principal facts, which were successively proved by authentic documents, in the sixteen chapters, of which that work is composed.

1. In the celebrated conference at Pillnitz in August, 1791, the British Government took not the most distant part: and if any treaty was concluded there, which is itself a matter of great doubt, the British Government not only never acceded to it, but was never apprised even of its contents.—Further, when the British Government was requested in 1791 to join a coalition against France, it gave a positive and unequivocal refusal.



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

3. When Louis XVI. formally accepted the new constitution, in September, 1791, and sent circular letters to the different Courts of Europe signifying his assent, the Court of Great Britain was one of the first which returned an answer; and the answer was couched in very respectful terms, whereas some other courts either did not answer at

at all, or in a manner displeasing to the National Assembly. Yet, on the other hand, an event took place about this very time, which shewed how very little the National Assembly cared about the neutrality of Great Britain.

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

ters did not suffer themselves to be disturbed in their system of neutrality.

5. After France had declared war against Austria, on the 20th of April, 1792, the British Government proved, both by its actions and declarations, that it was determined to remain neutral in the contest between the two powers. The French Minister in London, Chauvelin, sent official information, on the 28th of April, to his Court, that the British Cabinet was resolved to preserve neutrality: and, on the first of May, the King of France wrote a letter of thanks to his Britannic Majesty, and acknowledged his obligations for the refusal to join the coalition. On the 15th of May, Mr. Chauvelin delivered a note, in which, after an attempt at a justification of the National Assembly in declaring war against Austria, the British Government was requested to forbid all British subjects to accept of commissions from any power which was hostile to France. This request was punctually complied with, and a Royal proclamation to that purpose was issued on the 25th of May. At this friendly

friendly conduct the French Government again expressed its satisfaction.

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

7. When the British Cabinet, on July 8, in answer to the proposal to act as mediator between France and the other Belligerent Powers, replied, that it could not do so, unless the mediation were requested by *all* the

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parties



parties concerned, the refusal was so far from indicating a disposition to hostilities, that it proved the very reverse: and this is confirmed by Mr. Chauvelin's acknowledgment in his letter of July 17, and by the acknowledgment of Le Brun, in his note to Lord Gower. Besides, the mediation was requested in the name of the King of France, at a time when his authority was expiring: and though he was not *formally* deposed before the 10th of August, yet the events of the 20th of June had transferred the whole power of France, executive as well as legislative, to the National Assembly: and this assembly was so far from being solicitous for peace, as certain persons have very falsely, and very artfully, asserted, in order to throw the blame of the war on the British Government, that it was determined, at all events, to prosecute the war.

8. When an alarm was spread in France, in July, 1792, in consequence of the sailing of five ships of the line, and a few frigates, from Portsmouth, merely to perform naval evolutions in the channel, Mr. Chauvelin sent a note

a note to his own Government, in which he testified the pacific dispositions of the British Cabinet, and even complained of the false notions which were entertained on this subject. On the 4th of August, Mr. Chauvelin's note was read in the National Assembly: and it was declared that Mr. Chauvelin's testimony to the pacific dispositions of the British Cabinet was satisfactory.

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

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

10. In the month of November, 1792, after the Dutchy of Savoy, the Austrian Netherlands, and a part of Germany, had been conquered,

conquered, the French rulers threw off the mask, and declared to the whole world the revolutionizing system which they had hitherto only followed in the dark. Not only was it decreed, on the 19th of November, that all nations which chose to rebel against their governments should receive assistance from France, but, on the 28th of November, when deputies from certain British societies appeared at the bar of the National Convention, and signified their intention of overturning the British Constitution, they were received with applause from the whole Assembly, and were assured by the President himself, that the period was not far distant, when Frenchmen would come to congratulate the National Convention of Great Britain. After this declaration, it ought no longer to be a question: Who were the aggressors? Further, toward the close of the year 1792, England was overrun with French emissaries, who were engaged in the plot for the overthrow of the British Constitution, and were supplied, for that purpose, with immense sums from the French Government.



ment. A considerable fleet also was fitted out in France three months before Great Britain even began to arm.

11. When the British Parliament assembled in the month of December, in consequence of the danger, with which the country was threatened from France, all the measures, which were taken, were purely defensive: and a war might have easily been avoided, had it been the will of the National Convention, and of the Executive Council.

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

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

13. In the diplomatic communications between Great Britain and France, the British Ministers displayed no unwillingness to negotiate : and, though no negotiation could be considered at that time as strictly official, Mr. Chauvelin's credentials having been received from the deposed King of France, yet he was assured by Lord Grenville, that outward forms would be no hindrance to his Britannic Majesty, whenever the question related to explanations which might be satisfactory and beneficial to both parties. Mr. Pitt, likewise, in a conference which he had with Mr. Maret, expressed his readiness to negotiate

negotiate with Mr. Maret as a confidential person of the French Executive Council; but this Council not only refused to grant instructions to Mr. Maret, but forbade him even to converse with Mr. Pitt on political subjects. When the negotiation was conducted between Lord Grenville and Mr. Chauvelin, the notes which were delivered, on the part of the French Government, were so far from containing satisfactory explanations, that a firm resolution was avowed in them of continuing those very aggressions of which the British Government complained. And when, notwithstanding this avowal, the Executive Council endeavoured, by all the arts of sophistry, to impose a belief of its pacific intentions, its actions uniformly contradicted its assertions. Nor was it ashamed to utter the most solemn declarations, even with the consciousness of their falsehood. Its whole mode of conducting the negotiation, betrayed as much insolence as hypocrisy: and an appeal to the people of Great Britain was threatened in the very first note. On the other hand, the conditions of peace, proposed

posed by the British Government, had no reference whatsoever to any particular form of government in France; they related only to the external power of that country; they were absolutely necessary for the salvation of Britain, and were so far from being degrading to France, that they required only an adherence to that principle, which the republican rulers had repeatedly declared to be the basis of their system of politicks. These conditions were rejected: and at the same time it was announced, that, if the preparations then making in the British ports (which had been ordered merely in self-defence, and which could not possibly be stopt, after the Executive Council had rejected the conditions, which alone could insure safety to Great Britain) were still continued, a declaration of war would be the consequence. It was no longer in the power, therefore, of the British Government to avoid a rupture with France.

14. A war with Great Britain had been resolved on in the French Cabinet, not only before the negotiation was ended, but even before



before it commenced: and the object of the Executive Council was not to produce a reconciliation, but to amuse the British Government, and to deceive the nation, till the plan which had been laid for the destruction of the British empire, was fully ripe for execution. The mad ambition of the French rulers, their determination to extirpate all kingly governments, and the confident expectation of insurrections in every part of Europe, aided by the necessity of finding employment for their turbulent armies, were their motives to war in general: and their firm belief, that, the inhabitants of Great Britain were so disaffected to their Government, that French assistance would induce them to an immediate revolt, the inconsiderable number of troops at that time<sup>a</sup> in Great Britain, in comparison with those which could easily be spared from France, the forward state of the French navy, the persuasion that a landing on the British coast would be attended with no difficulty, and the immense advantages expected from the acquisition of the British wealth, commerce and marine, in the prosecution

execution of their conquests on the continent, all these motives, added to the innate desire of crushing an ancient and formidable, but at that time despised rival, induced them to a war with Great Britain in particular.

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

16. The pretexts alleged by the National Convention, to justify the declaration of hostilities, were either futile or false, or were events, which had not taken place, till after a war with Great Britain and Holland had been resolved on. Lastly, though the two great parties in France, the Girondists and the Jacobins, formed a junction on the question

question of a war with Great Britain: yet, as soon as they found that it did not answer their expectations, they accused each other of having been the authors of it. And this mutual accusation is a tacit acknowledgement from both parties, that the blame did not attach to the British Government.

After a statement of these premises, all of which were proved by unanswerable documents, in the History of the Politicks of Great Britain and France, every shadow of doubt must be removed in regard to the origin of that war, which was declared by the National Convention on the 1st of February, 1793. It was a war of aggression, of injury; and of insult, on the part of France, as well in the motives which gave it birth, as in the open declaration of it: and, on the part of Britain, it was just and necessary, as being strictly a war of self-defence.

VINDICATION.

## VINDICATION.

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THE inference, which has been just drawn at the close of the Introduction, appears to be the unavoidable result of the preceding statement; and unless an adversary can prove, that the facts themselves are unfounded, it seems useless to persist in denying the consequence. Now Mr. Bellham is so far from having called my facts in question, (which indeed he knew was impracticable, as they were founded on official documents) that he has made many remarkable concessions in regard to points, on which the gentlemen of his party used very strenuously to insist. Instead of asserting that the coalition in 1791 was formed by the intrigues of the British cabinet, he very fairly admits, that the part which it acted on that occasion, was, "rather *friendly* than

C 2                      inimical



inimical to France.\* He allows that his Majesty's speech at the opening of Parliament on Jan. 31, 1792, was "penned in a truly *pacific spirit*:"† he even says that "the disposition of the British ministry at this time was *unquestionably pacific*:"‡ and he admits, not merely the falsehood of the report, that the British government acceded to the treaty of Pavia, but the spuriousness of the treaty itself.§ He makes no scruple to assert, that, when the British cabinet, after the declaration of war against Austria, still maintained its professions of neutrality, Mr. Chauvelin the French Ambassador, appeared to be perfectly satisfied with their *sincerity*.|| Instead of representing the celebrated Proclamation of May 21, 1792, as a libel against France, Mr. Bellham very ingenuously says, that "it *ought not*, and in fact *did not* give the least offence to the French government."¶ He totally discards the well-known story of Mr. Pitt and Mr. Maret, though it has been fre-

\* P. 5.

† P. 8.

‡ Ib.

§ Ib.

|| P. 10.

¶ P. 12.

quently urged even in Parliament, as one of the strongest proofs, that we were the aggressors in the present war: he even grants that the charge must be inverted, that it was Mr. Pitt, and not Le Brun, who proposed a negotiation with Mr. Maret,\* and that its failure arose from the refusal of the French minister to grant instructions, not from any refusal of the British minister to accept them.† He further says, “it is much to be wished that the *request of Mr. Pitt* had been complied with:”‡ and, though an adversary, he has borne honourable testimony to the “*real desire of peace* which actuated,” even in December 1792, the minister of Great Britain.§

On the other hand Mr. Belsham un-

\* Namely in Dec. 1792.

† P. 81. ‡ Ib.

§ Ib. He says again, p. 114, that Mr. Pitt “*certainly wished for peace*,” and there the subject relates to the end of January 1793, just before the French declared war. Mr. B. therefore acknowledges, that Mr. Pitt, in his desire for the preservation of peace, was firm to the very last.

quivocally admits, that, when the Parliament met in December 1792, the conduct of the French “afforded *just and weighty* grounds of complaint.”\* He does not deny that the French Convention permitted certain societies in England to present addresses “filled with bold, insolent, and seditious expressions:” and that answers were returned to those addresses “*in a congenial spirit.*”† He goes so far as to admit that “many‡ violent patriotic members of the Convention aspired to the glory of *revolutionizing England;*”§ and that “after the decisive victory of Gemappe “the licentious enthusiasm of that democratic and anarchic body|| knew no bounds.” Lastly, as he had acknowledged at the beginning of his pamphlet,¶ that the “French government must

\* P. 30.

+ P. 28.

‡ If Mr. B. had said “most of the members,” instead of “many,” he would have acknowledged the *whole* truth.

§ P. 27.

|| So Mr. B. himself terms the French convention, P. 28.

¶ P. 3.

bear its *share* of blame" in regard to the origin of the war, so he has made, toward the close of it,\* the following remarkable declaration, which certainly implies something more. "Had France uniformly acted upon a system of moderation and discretion, it would indeed have been extremely easy, as M. Dumouriez justly affirms, to have avoided a war with England." Since then, as Mr. Dumouriez affirms, and Mr. Belsham admits, it would have been extremely easy for the French rulers to have avoided a war with England, had they uniformly acted upon a system of moderation and discretion, it necessarily follows, that the *want* of moderation and discretion, on the part of the French rulers, was the *impediment* to the continuance of peace, and consequently that it was their *indiscretion and immoderation*, which gave birth to the present war.

It is extraordinary therefore, that Mr. Belsham should labour so hard, to confute



what I have said, when it was the avowed object of my history to establish this very point. And it is still more extraordinary, that he should close his inquiry \* by asserting, that the British Ministers “ stand charged before God and their country, for precipitating the nation into a destructive and ruinous contest,” not only, when he had given no proof of so black a charge, but when he had granted, that the continuance of peace was prevented by the mad ambition of the French rulers. However, as Mr. Belsham has thought proper to be guilty of this inconsistency, I think myself in duty bound to follow him through the whole of his pamphlet, lest, if any objection should be left unanswered, his friends should fondly imagine that it were unanswerable.

His objections, as I have already observed, relate, not to the *facts*, which I have alleged, but to the *use*, which I have made of those facts, and the *inferences*, which I have

deduced from them. My two "fatiguing volumes," as Mr. Belsham calls them, (and not without reason, as they were undoubtedly fatiguing to *him*) are accused of containing, not only "harsh, forced, and perverse constructions,"\* but even "*innumerable fallacies and misrepresentations.*"† In support of this accusation, which, it must be confessed, is a pretty extensive one, Mr. Belsham has collected, from various parts of my history, such examples, as, in his opinion, clearly demonstrate, either a perverseness of construction, or a fallacy of reasoning. These examples therefore shall be very minutely examined, in the order of the chapters in my history, to which they relate. And, since my prudent adversary has not only, (as we may reasonably presume,) selected such examples, as were the most suitable to his purpose, but has himself declared, that he proposed to examine my "*principal arguments,*" and to neglect only what he calls *minutiae*;‡ since he has like-

P. 82.

† P. 83.

‡ P. 3.

wise

wife admitted, that, " if the *principal* points at issue are placed in a just and clear light, it will be easy to decide on the merit of *subordinate* considerations,"\* he can have no objection to let the charge, which he has brought against me, depend on the validity of those examples. But if the *majority* of those examples, instead of militating against the accused, should prove only strange misrepresentations, on the part of the accuser, he will have justly brought down the condemnation of the public on his *own* head.

As the orators of ancient Rome employed both confirmation and confutation in their public harangues, so Mr. Belsham, though he has not preserved Ciceronian arrangement, has attempted to confirm his own opinions, as well as to confute the opinions of his adversary. For this purpose, he has not produced, either new documents,† or

P. 83.

† All the documents, which he has produced, were already contained in my work. He has indeed made some few additions: For instance, he has added, in one place, something from a speech of Brissot.

new facts ; but he has endeavoured to represent known facts † in a different light from that, in which I had represented them. We must examine therefore, whether Mr. Belsham's light be not delusive ; whether the colour of the objects, which he presents to the spectator, arises from the natural texture of their surface, or from the coloured rays, which the optician throws on them. And as the examples of objection to my statements will be canvassed in the order of the chapters, to which they relate, Mr. Belsham's new representations shall be canvassed in the same order. To this two-fold canvass we now proceed.

I have, in another place something from a speech of Kerfaint, from which speeches I had already quoted the material parts. Nor has Mr. Belsham, as will appear in the sequel, at all benefited his own cause by the additional quotations.

† Though Mr. B. has taken all his facts from my work, yet, as it would be unjust to claim more than one's due, I acknowledge, that the *use*, which Mr. B. has made of them, is entirely *his own*.



## CHAP. I.

Mr. Bellham has brought no charge against me, for any thing advanced in this chapter. Nor has he endeavoured to place in a new light, any fact, which is recorded there.

## CHAP. II.

The same may be said of this chapter.

## CHAP. III.

The same may be said of this chapter.

## CHAP. IV.

In this chapter Mr. Bellham objects to two passages. The one relates to an opinion, which I had advanced; the other to an inference, which I had drawn.

He finds fault with me (p. 8.) for representing it only as a matter of doubt, whether the treaty of Pavia were genuine, or not, when, according to Mr. B. it may "safely be pronounced spurious." Now I believe, as well as Mr. Bellham, that the treaty of Pavia, like the instructions ascribed to M. Maret, was fabricated merely

to serve the purposes of a party. I believed so, when I wrote the passage in question, and quoted the authority of a very good judge, in support of that opinion. But, as several opposition writers had strenuously asserted, that the treaty was genuine, I thought proper to express myself with caution on a subject, which I did not take upon me to investigate: And, as I knew that I could vindicate the British government, with which alone I was concerned, from the charge of having acceded to the treaty, even *if* it were genuine, I chose to combat my adversaries on their own hypothesis, in order to preclude every species of objection. Mr. Belsham's affectation, therefore, in taking part with the foreign powers, who were said to have signed the treaty, and correcting my supposed doubts on the subject, is truly ridiculous.

The inference, to which Mr. Belsham objects, was deduced from the following facts: That though the British government, in February 1792, having views, as Mr. B. himself admits, unquestionably pacific, had

not

not only abolished taxes, diminished the land forces, and given up the treaty with Hesse Cassel, but had even reduced the number of seamen, in his Majesty's pay, to *sixteen* thousand; it was proposed, a few weeks afterwards, in the French national assembly, by the committee for naval affairs, to augment the number of seamen, in the pay of France, to *eighty* thousand. Hence I deduced, at the end of chap. iv. the following inference: "It is true, that these  
 " were only *preparatory* steps to an augmen-  
 " tation of the French marine; but as they  
 " were taken at a time, when England had  
 " just made so considerable a diminution of  
 " its own naval force, the conduct of the  
 " National Assembly unavoidably *excited the*  
 " *suspicion of an hostile disposition toward Eng-*  
 " *land.*"

To obviate this conclusion, Mr. B. says (p. 9), that the Committee meant only to state, that "*in case of a naval war,*" eighty thousand sailors would be requisite to man the French navy. But the Committee most earnestly recommended the *immediate* execu-  
 tion

tion of this plan; of which Mr. B. could not have been ignorant, because I quoted the following passage from their report—"It is in the name of those troops, whose courage always supported the honour of the French flag—that your Committee request you, *not to defer* the organization of the naval artillery, and of the naval troops." It was certainly therefore not intended, that the proposed augmentation should take place, merely *in case* of an attack from Great Britain, because at the time, when it was proposed that the augmentation should take place, there was not the most distant prospect of any such attack. Mr. Belsham's *case* therefore can denote only the case of an attack on the part of France. But, says Mr. Belsham, "it would have been a strange time to have indulged their inclination for a naval war, with a land war in full prospect, when, according to the report of M. de Molleville, the Marine Minister, quoted by Mr. Marsh himself some pages before, the French sailors were almost universally in a state of insurrection," &c. Now it



it is true that I quoted M. de Mollville, not some *pages*, but two *chapters* before, to prove that the French sailors, in the *Autumn* of 1791, were in a state of insurrection. But does it follow therefore that they were, in the same state in the *Spring* of 1792? As well might Mr. B. have quoted a newspaper, containing an account of the insurrection at the Nore in May 1797, to prove that the sailors of Lord Duncan's fleet were in a state of insurrection, in the following month of October. And as to the argument, that the probability of soon engaging in a war by land must have prevented all thoughts of engaging likewise in a war by sea, though it might be applied to cautious statesmen, who regulate their conduct by the rules of common prudence, yet it is wholly inapplicable to a set of enthusiasts, who declared that " vast ideas, grand designs, and an object sublime and difficult, were necessary to form men and a great nation," who made no scruple to assert, that they were resolved " to break with *all* the courts,"—*all*

all Europe at defiance,"—"to set the four corners of Europe on fire \*."

After all, it is so obvious, that mere "preparatory steps†" toward so considerable an augmentation of the French marine, (whether the plan itself was fully executed or not, and whether the French rulers meant to avail themselves of it, as soon as it was executed, or to wait till a more convenient opportunity offered) indicated a "hostile disposition‡" towards a Government, which, far from having afforded any motive for such an augmentation, had just reduced its own naval establishment to a fifth part of what was then proposed in France, that we may justly wonder, how any man can think of cavilling about it.

\* See the History of the Politics, Ch.vii. Notes 14, 15, 16, 34.

† These are the very words, which I used in Ch. iv. though Mr. B. says (p. 9), that whoever judges from my representation would suppose that 30,000 sailors were at this time *actually engaged* in the service of France.

‡ These were likewise the words which I used.

Not would the cause of my adversary be at all promoted, if I were mistaken in this instance: for, whatever doubts may be entertained of the hostile disposition of the French rulers in the *Spring* of 1792, that disposition displayed itself so openly, and so strongly, a few months afterwards, that Mr. B. himself is then forced to allow it\*.

## C H A P. V.

Mr. B. makes no direct objection to any thing, which I have said in this chapter: but he has very artfully endeavoured to excite a suspicion against the British Government, on the subject of the Letter written by the King of France to the King of Great Britain on May 1, 1792. In this Letter the King of France, after thanking his Britannic Majesty for not taking part with Austria against France, speaks in *general terms* of the advantages, which would arise from a continuance of the friendship, which then sub-

\* See the passages quoted above from his pamphlet.

sisted, between the two nations : but, as the Letter contained no *specific proposition*, or proposal of *terms* of alliance, it was unnecessary to make a particular reply. In fact, the only answer which was necessary, and the only answer, which was returned, was that, which the British Cabinet gave by its *conduct*, in continuing the friendship solicited by his Most Christian Majesty. Yet Mr. Belsham talks, as if a specific answer had been given, though no one ever heard of it, and ventures to say (p. 12.), "The specific answer to this truly noble and generous overture is not known : it appears only from the event, that it was rejected."——

On the contrary, it appears, from the *event*, that the friendship, subsisting between the Courts of Great Britain and France, was so far from being disturbed by any act on the part of the former, that a royal proclamation was issued about three weeks afterwards, prohibiting all British subjects from entering into the service of any State at war with France. And it is equally manifest, that, if the British Cabinet had given any



answer, which was unfriendly to France, Mr. Chauvelin would not have been ordered, six weeks afterwards, by the French Government, to thank his Britannic Majesty for his "*friendly dispositions, his sentiments of humanity, of justice, and of peace*."—When Mr. Belsham therefore talks of the incalculable mischiefs, which might have been avoided, if the answer of the British Cabinet, an answer, which exists only in his own imagination, had not been unfriendly, and when he adds sentimentally, that "the idea is too painful to dwell upon †," it is all empty declamation, or rather it is worse than empty declamation, inasmuch as its tendency is mischievous.

## CHAP. VI.

Mr. Belsham finds no fault with any thing in this chapter.

\* See M. Chauvelin's Note, dated June 18, 1792. History of the Politics, &c. Ch. v. Note 9.

† P. 12.

## C H A P. VII.

Though Mr. B. still declares himself of opinion, that the British Government ought to have come forward, at the end of June 1792, as mediator between France and Austria; yet, as he has not attempted to controvert any one argument, by which I had proved, that the British Government would have acted very injudiciously in so doing, there is nothing in this chapter, which I am called upon to defend.

Besides, it was clearly proved, in this chapter, that the mediation, which was requested in the name of the King of France, when his authority was expiring, was so far from being seriously desired by the majority of the National Assembly, in whose hands the whole power of France was then vested, that they were determined at all events to prosecute the war, which they had declared against Austria. Add to the detailed proof of this position, which occupies more than three fourths of the seventh chap-

ter, or twenty-nine pages of the second edition, Mr. Belsham has not been able to produce a single objection. In fact he has passed over the whole of that important portion in total silence; as he well knew, that, if the French rulers were resolved, *not* to have peace, his readers must think it very absurd, to censure the British Government, for not endeavouring to procure it for them.

Farther Mr. B. says, p. 16, that if Austria and Prussia had "shown themselves wholly obstinate and refractory, England had in recent instances manifested *in what mode* respect to her mediation could be enforced." Now the mode, of which Mr. B. here speaks, must denote a junction with France; against Austria and Prussia, which many other gentlemen of his party have represented as the best policy which could have been adopted. Yet Mr. Belsham himself (p. 106) calls the French revolution a "political volcano," and a "flaming mountain," from which, he says, it ~~was~~ the duty of the British ministers to stand at a *safe distance*. According to Mr. Belsham's own principles then,

then, a junction with France, in June 1792, would have been downright madness: for, instead of keeping at a safe distance from the burning mountain, we should then have plunged into its very crater.

## CHAPTER VIII.

On this Chapter Mr. B. makes no observation.

## CHAPTER IX.

The arguments, which I had used in this chapter, to vindicate the British government in recalling Lord Gower, after the deposition of the King of France, are left wholly unanswered by Mr. Belsham. But he has taken considerable pains to represent the conduct of the British and French governments, on this occasion, in a different point of view from that in which I had represented them.

In the first place he asserts (p. 18) that "Louis XVI. was unquestionably a traitor to the constitution, which he had sworn to defend."