

History of the English People, Volume VIII

John Richard Green

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John Richard Green



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**HISTORY
OF
THE ENGLISH PEOPLE**

**BY
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VOLUME VIII

MODERN ENGLAND. 1760-1815.

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CHAPTER II

THE INDEPENDENCE OF AMERICA

1767-1782



Colonies of North America at the Declaration of Independence

Growing influence of public opinion.

The Chatham ministry marked a new phase in the relation of public opinion to the government of the State. In 1766 as in 1756 Pitt had been called into office by “the voice of the people” at large. But in his former

ministry the influence he drew from popularity could only make itself effective through an alliance with the influence which was drawn from political connexion; and when the two elements of the administration became opposed the support of the nation gave Pitt little strength of resistance against the Whigs. Nor had the young king had much better fortune as yet in his efforts to break their rule. He had severed them indeed from Pitt; and he had dexterously broken up the great party into jealous factions. But broken as it was, even its factions remained too strong for the king. His one effort at independence under Bute hardly lasted a year, and he was as helpless in the hands of Grenville as in the hands of Rockingham. His bribery, his patronage, his Parliamentary “friends,” his perfidy and his lies, had done much to render good government impossible and to steep public life in deeper corruption, but they had done little to further the triumph of the Crown over the great houses. Of the one power indeed which could break the Whig rule, the power of public opinion, George was more bitterly jealous than even of

the Whigs themselves. But in spite of his jealousy the tide of opinion steadily rose. In wise and in unwise ways the country at large showed its new interest in national policy, its new resolve to have a share in the direction of it. It showed no love for the king or the king's schemes. But it retained all its old disgust for the Whigs and for the Parliament. It clung to Pitt closer than ever, and in spite of his isolation from all party support raised him daily into a mightier power. It was the sense that a new England was thus growing up about him, that a new basis was forming itself for political action, which at last roused the Great Commoner to the bold enterprise of breaking through the bonds of "connexion" altogether. For the first time since the Revolution a minister told the peers in their own house that he defied their combinations.

Chatham's withdrawal.

The ministry of 1766 in fact was itself such a defiance; for it was an attempt to found political power not on the support of the Whigs as a party, but on the support of national opinion. But as Parliament was then constituted, it was only through Chatham himself that opinion could tell even on the administration he formed; and six months after he had taken office Chatham was no more than a name. The dread which had driven him from the stormy agitation of the Lower House to the quiet of the House of Peers now became a certainty. As winter died into the spring of 1767 his nervous disorganization grew into a painful and overwhelming illness which almost wholly withdrew him from public affairs; and when Parliament met again he was unable either to come to town or to confer with his colleagues. It was in vain that they prayed him for a single word of counsel. Chatham remained utterly silent; and the ministry which his guidance had alone held together at once fell into confusion. The Earl's plans were suffered to drop. His colleagues lost all cohesion, and each acted as he willed. Townshend, a brilliant but shallow rhetorician whom Pitt had been driven reluctantly to make his Chancellor of the Exchequer, after angering the House of Commons by proposals for an increase of the land-tax, strove to win back popularity among the squires by undertaking to raise a revenue from America. That a member of a ministry which bore Pitt's name should have proposed to reopen the question of colonial taxation within a year of the repeal of the Stamp Acts was strange enough to the colonists; and they were yet more astonished when, on its neglect to make provision for compensating those who had suffered from

the recent outbreak in due conformity to an Act of the British Parliament, the Assembly of New York was suspended, and when Townshend redeemed his pledge by laying duties on various objects brought into American ports. But these measures were the result of levity and disorganization rather than of any purpose to reopen the quarrel. Pitt's colleagues had as yet no design to reverse his policy. The one aim of the ministry which bore his name, and which during his retirement looked to the Duke of Grafton as its actual head, was simply to exist. But in the face of Chatham's continued withdrawal, of Townshend's death in 1767, and of the increasing hostility of the Rockingham Whigs, even existence was difficult; and Grafton saw himself forced to a union with the faction which was gathered under the Duke of Bedford, and to the appointment of a Tory noble as Secretary of State.

His resignation.

Such measures however only showed how far the ministry had drifted from the ground on which Pitt took his stand in its formation; and the very force on which he had relied turned at once against it. The elections for the new Parliament which met in 1768 were more corrupt than any that had as yet been witnessed; and even the stoutest opponents of reform shrank aghast from the open bribery of constituencies and the prodigal barter of seats. How bitter the indignation of the country had grown was seen in its fresh backing of Wilkes. Wilkes had remained in France since his outlawry; but he seized on the opening afforded by the elections to return and offer himself as a member for the new Parliament. To the surprise and dismay of the ministers he was returned for Middlesex, a county the large number of whose voters made its choice a real expression of public opinion. The choice of Wilkes at such a moment was in effect a public condemnation of the House of Commons and the ministerial system. The ministry however and the House alike shrank from a fresh struggle with the agitator. But the king was eager for the contest. After ten years of struggle and disappointment George had all but reached his aim. The two forces which had as yet worsted him were both of them paralysed. The Whigs were fatally divided, and discredited in the eyes of the country by their antagonism to Pitt. Pitt on the other hand was suddenly removed from the stage. The ministry was without support in the country; and for Parliamentary support it was forced to lean more and more on the men who looked for direction to the

king himself. At a moment when all hope of exerting any influence seemed crushed by the return of Chatham to power, George found his influence predominant as it had never been before. One force of opposition alone remained in the public discontent; and at this he struck more fiercely than ever. "I think it highly expedient to apprise you," he wrote to Lord North, "that the expulsion of Mr. Wilkes appears to be very essential, and must be effected." The ministers and the House of Commons bowed to his will. By his non-appearance in court when charged with libel, Wilkes had become an outlaw, and he was now thrown into prison on his outlawry. Dangerous riots broke out in London and over the whole country at the news of his arrest; and continued throughout the rest of the year. In the midst of these tumults the ministry itself was torn with internal discord. The adherents of Chatham found their position in it an intolerable one; and Lord Shelburne announced his purpose of resigning office. The announcement was followed in the autumn by the resignation of Chatham himself. Though still prostrated by disease, the Earl was sufficiently restored to grasp the actual position of the Cabinet which traded on his name, and in October 1768 he withdrew formally from the ministry.

The withdrawal of Chatham however, if it shook the ministry, only rendered it still more dependent on the king; and in spite of its reluctance George forced it to plunge into a decisive struggle with the public opinion which was declaring itself in tumult and riot against the system of government. The triumph of Wilkes had been driven home by the election of a nominee of the great agitator as his colleague on a fresh vacancy in the representation of Middlesex. The Government met the blow by a show of vigour, and by calling on the magistrates of Surrey to disperse the mobs; a summons which ended in conflicts between the crowd and the soldiers, in which some of the rioters were slain. Wilkes at once published the letter of the Secretary of State with comments on it as a cause of bloodshed; and the ministry accepted the step as a challenge to combat. If his comments were libellous, the libel was cognizable in the ordinary courts of law. But no sooner had Parliament assembled in 1769 than the House of Commons was called to take the matter into its own hands. Witnesses were examined at its bar: the forms of a trial were gone through; and as Wilkes persisted in his charge, he was expelled as a libeller. Unluckily the course which had been adopted put the House itself on trial before the constituencies. No sooner was the new writ

issued than Wilkes again presented himself as a candidate, and was again elected by the shire of Middlesex. Violent and oppressive as the course of the House of Commons had been, it had as yet acted within its strict right, for no one questioned its possession of a right of expulsion. But the defiance of Middlesex led it now to go further. It resolved, "That Mr. Wilkes having been in this session of Parliament expelled the House, was and is incapable of being elected a member to serve in the present Parliament"; and it issued a writ for a fresh election. Middlesex answered this insolent claim to limit the free choice of a constituency by again returning Wilkes; and the House was driven by its anger to a fresh and more outrageous usurpation. It again expelled the member for Middlesex; and on his return for the third time by an immense majority it voted that the candidate whom he had defeated, Colonel Luttrell, ought to have been returned, and was the legal representative of Middlesex. The Commons had not only limited at their own arbitrary discretion the free election of the constituency, but they had transferred its rights to themselves by seating Luttrell as member in defiance of the deliberate choice of Wilkes by the freeholders of Middlesex. The country at once rose indignantly against this violation of constitutional law. Wilkes was elected an Alderman of London; and the Mayor, Aldermen, and Livery petitioned the king to dissolve the Parliament. A remonstrance from London and Westminster mooted a far larger question. It said boldly that "there is a time when it is clearly demonstrable that men cease to be representatives. That time is now arrived. The House of Commons do not represent the people." Meanwhile a writer who styled himself Junius attacked the Government in letters, which, rancorous and unscrupulous as was their tone, gave a new power to the literature of the Press by their clearness and terseness of statement, the finish of their style, and the terrible vigour of their invective.

Parliamentary Reform.

The storm however beat idly on the obstinacy of the king. The printer of the bold letters was prosecuted, and the petitions and remonstrances of London were haughtily rejected. The issue of the struggle verified the forebodings of Burke. If, as Middlesex declared, and as the strife itself proved, the House of Commons had ceased to represent the English people, it was inevitable that men should look forward to measures that would make it representative. At the beginning of 1770 a cessation of the

disease which had long held him prostrate enabled Chatham to reappear in the House of Lords. He at once denounced the usurpations of the Commons, and brought in a bill to declare them illegal. But his genius made him the first to see that remedies of this sort were inadequate to meet evils which really sprang from the fact that the House of Commons no longer represented the people of England; and he mooted a plan for its reform by an increase of the county members, who then formed the most independent portion of the House. Further he could not go, for even in the proposals he made he stood almost alone. The Tories and the king's friends were not likely to welcome proposals which would lessen the king's influence. On the other hand the Whigs under Lord Rockingham had no sympathy with Parliamentary reform. As early as 1769, in his first political publication, their one philosophic thinker, Edmund Burke, had met a proposal to enlarge the number of constituents by a counter-proposal to lessen them. "It would be more in the spirit of our constitution, and more agreeable to the fashion of our best laws," he said, "by lessening the number to add to the weight and independency of our voters." Nor did the Whigs shrink with less haughty disdain from the popular agitation in which public opinion was forced to express itself, and which Chatham, while censuring its extravagance, as deliberately encouraged. It is from the quarrel between Wilkes and the House of Commons that we may date the influence of public meetings on English politics. The gatherings of the Middlesex electors in his support were preludes to the great meetings of Yorkshire freeholders in which the question of Parliamentary reform rose into importance; and it was in the movement for reform, and the establishment of corresponding committees throughout the country for the purpose of promoting it, that the power of political agitation first made itself felt. Political societies and clubs took their part in this quickening and organization of public opinion: and the spread of discussion, as well as the influence which now began to be exercised by the appearance of vast numbers of men in support of any political movement, proved that Parliament, whether it would or no, must soon reckon with the sentiments of the people at large.

Publication of debates.

But an agent far more effective than popular agitation was preparing to bring the force of public opinion to bear directly on Parliament itself. We have seen how much of the corruption of the House of Commons

sprang from the secrecy of Parliamentary proceedings, but this secrecy was the harder to preserve as the nation woke to a greater interest in its own affairs. From the accession of the Georges imperfect reports of the more important discussions began to be published under the title of "The Senate of Lilliput," and with feigned names or simple initials to denote the speakers. The best known reports of this kind were those contributed by Samuel Johnson to the *Gentleman's Magazine*. Obtained by stealth and often merely recalled by memory, such reports were naturally inaccurate; and their inaccuracy was eagerly seized on as a pretext for enforcing the rules which guarded the secrecy of proceedings in Parliament. In 1771 the Commons issued a proclamation forbidding the publication of debates; and six printers, who set it at defiance, were summoned to the bar of the House. One who refused to appear was arrested by its messenger; but the arrest brought the House into conflict with the magistrates of London. The magistrates set aside its proclamation as without legal force, released the printers, and sent the messenger to prison for an unlawful arrest. The House sent the Lord Mayor to the Tower, but the cheers of the crowds which followed him on his way told that public opinion was again with the Press, and the attempt to hinder its publication of Parliamentary proceedings dropped silently on his release at the next prorogation. Few changes of equal importance have been so quietly brought about. Not only was the responsibility of members to their constituents made constant and effective by the publication of their proceedings, but the nation itself was called in to assist in the deliberations of its representatives. A new and wider interest in its own affairs was roused in the people at large, and a new political education was given to it through the discussion of every subject of national importance in the Houses and the Press. Stimulated and moulded into shape by free discussion, encouraged and made conscious of its strength by public meetings, and gathered up and represented on all its sides by the journals of the day, public opinion became a force in practical statesmanship, influenced the course of debates, and controlled, in a closer and more constant way than even Parliament itself had been able to do, the actions of the Government. The importance of its new position gave a weight to the Press which it had never had before. The first great English journals date from this time. With the *Morning Chronicle*, the *Morning Post*, the *Morning Herald*, and the *Times*, all of which appeared in the interval between the opening

years of the American War and the beginning of the war with the French Revolution, journalism took a new tone of responsibility and intelligence. The hacks of Grub Street were superseded by publicists of a high moral temper and literary excellence; and philosophers like Coleridge or statesmen like Canning turned to influence public opinion through the columns of the Press.

Renewed strife with America.

But great as the influence of opinion was destined to become, it was feebly felt as yet; and George the Third was able to set Chatham's policy disdainfully aside and to plunge into a contest far more disastrous than his contest with the Press. In all the proceedings of the last few years, what had galled him most had been the act which averted a war between England and her colonies. To the king the Americans were already "rebels," and the great statesman whose eloquence had made their claims irresistible was a "trumpet of sedition." George deplored in his correspondence with his ministers the repeal of the Stamp Acts. "All men feel," he wrote, "that the fatal compliance in 1766 has increased the pretensions of the Americans to absolute independence." But in England generally the question was regarded as settled, while in America the news of the repeal had been received with universal joy, and taken as a close of the strife. On both sides however there remained a pride and irritability which only wise handling could have allayed; and in the present state of English politics wise handling was impossible. Only a few months indeed passed before the quarrel was again reopened; for no sooner had the illness of Lord Chatham removed him from any real share in public affairs than the wretched administration which bore his name suspended the Assembly of New York on its refusal to provide quarters for English troops, and resolved to assert British sovereignty by levying import duties of trivial amount at American ports. The Assembly of Massachusetts was dissolved on a trifling quarrel with its Governor, and Boston was occupied for a time by British soldiers. It was without a thought of any effective struggle however that the Cabinet had entered on this course of vexation; and when the remonstrances of the Legislatures of Massachusetts and Virginia, coupled with a fall in the funds, warned the ministers of its danger, they hastened to withdraw from it. In 1769 the troops were recalled, and all duties, save one, abandoned. But with a fatal obstinacy the king insisted on retaining the

duty on tea as an assertion of the supremacy of the mother country. Its retention was enough to prevent any thorough restoration of good feeling. A series of petty quarrels went on in almost every colony between the popular assemblies and the Governors appointed by the Crown, and the colonists persisted in their agreement to import nothing from the mother country. As yet however there was no prospect of serious strife. In America the influence of George Washington allayed the irritation of Virginia; while Massachusetts contented itself with quarrelling with its Governor and refusing to buy tea so long as the duty was levied.

The temper of the colonists was in the main that of the bulk of English statesmen. Even George Grenville, though approving the retention of the duty in question, abandoned all dream of further taxation. But the king was now supreme. The reappearance and attack of Chatham at the opening of 1770 had completed the ruin of the ministry. Those of his adherents who still clung to it, Lord Camden, the Chancellor, Lord Granby, the Commander-in-Chief, Dunning, the Solicitor-General, resigned their posts. In a few days they were followed by the Duke of Grafton, who since Chatham's resignation had been nominally the head of the administration. All that remained of it were the Bedford faction and the dependents of the king; but George did not hesitate to form these into a ministry, and to place at its head the former Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord North, a man of some administrative ability, but unconnected with any political party, steadily opposed to any recognition of public opinion, and of an easy and indolent temper which yielded against his better knowledge to the stubborn doggedness of the king. The instinct of the country at once warned it of the results of such a change; and the City of London put itself formally at the head of the public discontent. In solemn addresses it called on George the Third to dismiss his ministers and to dissolve the Parliament; and its action was supported by petitions to the same effect from the greater counties. In the following year it fought, as we have seen, a battle with the House of Commons which established the freedom of the press. But the efforts of the country failed before the paralysis of political action which resulted from the position of the Whigs and the corruption of Parliament. The deaths of Grenville and Bedford broke up two of the Whig factions. Rockingham with the rest of the party held aloof from the popular agitation, and drew more and more away from Chatham as he favoured it. The Parliament

remained steady to the king, and the king clung more and more to the ministry. The ministry was in fact a mere cloak for the direction of public affairs by George himself. "Not only did he direct the minister," a careful observer tells us, "in all important matters of foreign and domestic policy, but he instructed him as to the management of debates in Parliament, suggested what motions should be made or opposed, and how measures should be carried. He reserved for himself all the patronage, he arranged the whole cast of administration, settled the relative places and pretensions of ministers of State, law officers, and members of the household, nominated and promoted the English and Scotch judges, appointed and translated bishops and deans, and dispensed other preferments in the Church. He disposed of military governments, regiments, and commissions; and himself ordered the marching of troops. He gave and refused titles, honours, and pensions." All this immense patronage was persistently used for the creation and maintenance in both Houses of Parliament of a majority directed by the king himself; and its weight was seen in the steady action of such a majority. It was seen yet more in the subjection to which the ministry that bore North's name was reduced. George was in fact the minister through the years of its existence; and the shame of the darkest hour of English history lies wholly at his door.

The Boston tea-riots.

His fixed purpose was to seize on the first opportunity of undoing the "fatal compliance of 1766." A trivial riot gave him at last the handle he wanted. In December 1773 the arrival of some English ships laden with tea kindled fresh irritation in Boston, where the non-importation agreement was strictly enforced; and a mob in the disguise of Indians boarded the vessels and flung their contents into the sea. The outrage was deplored alike by the friends of America in England and by its own leading statesmen; and both Washington and Chatham were prepared to support the Government in its looked-for demand of redress. But the thought of the king was not of redress but of repression, and he set roughly aside the more conciliatory proposals of Lord North and his fellow-ministers. They had already rejected as "frivolous and vexatious" a petition of the Assembly of Massachusetts for the dismissal of two public officers whose letters home advised the withdrawal of free institutions from the colonies. They now seized on the riot as a pretext

for rigorous measures. A bill introduced into Parliament in the beginning of 1774 punished Boston by closing its port against all commerce. Another punished the State of Massachusetts by withdrawing the liberties it had enjoyed ever since the Pilgrim Fathers landed on its soil. Its charter was altered. The choice of its Council was transferred from the people to the Crown, and the nomination of its judges was transferred to the Governor. In the Governor too, by a provision more outrageous than even these, was vested the right of sending all persons charged with a share in the late disturbances to England for trial. To enforce these measures of repression troops were sent to America, and General Gage, the commander-in-chief there, was appointed Governor of Massachusetts. The king's exultation at the prospect before him was unbounded. "The die," he wrote triumphantly to his minister, "is cast. The colonies must either triumph or submit." Four regiments would be enough to bring the Americans to their senses. They would only be "lions while we are lambs." "If we take the resolute part," he decided solemnly, "they will undoubtedly be very meek."

American resistance.

Unluckily the blow at Massachusetts was received with anything but meekness. The jealousies between colony and colony were hushed by a sense that the liberties of all were in danger. If the British Parliament could cancel the charter of Massachusetts and ruin the trade of Boston, it could cancel the charter of every colony and ruin the trade of every port from the St. Lawrence to the coast of Georgia. All, therefore, adopted the cause of Massachusetts; and all their Legislatures save that of Georgia sent delegates to a Congress which assembled on the 4th of September at Philadelphia. Massachusetts took a yet bolder course. Not one of its citizens would act under the new laws. Its Assembly met in defiance of the Governor, called out the militia of the State, and provided arms and ammunition for it. But there was still room for reconciliation. The resolutions of the Congress had been moderate, for Virginia was the wealthiest and most influential among the States who sent delegates, and though resolute to resist the new measures of the government, Virginia still clung to the mother country. At home the merchants of London and Bristol pleaded loudly for reconciliation; and in January 1775 Chatham again came forward to avert a strife he had once before succeeded in preventing. With characteristic largeness of feeling he set aside all half-

measures or proposals of compromise. "It is not cancelling a piece of parchment," he insisted, "that can win back America: you must respect her fears and her resentments." The bill which he introduced in concert with Franklin provided for the repeal of the late Acts and for the security of the colonial charters, abandoned the claim of taxation, and ordered the recall of the troops. A colonial assembly was directed to meet and provide means by which America might contribute towards the payment of the public debt.

Washington.

Chatham's measure was contemptuously rejected by the Lords, as was a similar measure of Burke's by the House of Commons, and a petition of the City of London in favour of the Colonies by the king himself. With the rejection of these efforts for conciliation began the great struggle which ended eight years later in the severance of the American Colonies from the British Crown. The Congress of delegates from the Colonial Legislatures at once voted measures for general defence, ordered the levy of an army, and set George Washington at its head. No nobler figure ever stood in the forefront of a nation's life. Washington was grave and courteous in address; his manners were simple and unpretending; his silence and the serene calmness of his temper spoke of a perfect self-mastery. But there was little in his outer bearing to reveal the grandeur of soul which lifts his figure with all the simple majesty of an ancient statue out of the smaller passions, the meaner impulses, of the world around him. What recommended him for command was singly his weight among his fellow-landowners of Virginia, and the experience of war which he had gained by service in border contests with the French and the Indians, as well as in Braddock's luckless expedition against Fort Duquesne. It was only as the weary fight went on that the colonists discovered, however slowly and imperfectly, the greatness of their leader, his clear judgement, his heroic endurance, his silence under difficulties, his calmness in the hour of danger or defeat, the patience with which he waited, the quickness and hardness with which he struck, the lofty and serene sense of duty that never swerved from its task through resentment or jealousy, that never through war or peace felt the touch of a meaner ambition, that knew no aim save that of guarding the freedom of his fellow-countrymen, and no personal longing save that of returning to his own fireside when their freedom was

secured. It was almost unconsciously that men learned to cling to Washington with a trust and faith such as few other men have won, and to regard him with a reverence which still hushes us in presence of his memory. But even America hardly recognised his real greatness while he lived. It was only when death set its seal on him that the voice of those whom he had served so long proclaimed him “the man first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his fellow-countrymen.”

Declaration of Independence,

Washington more than any of his fellow-colonists represented the clinging of the Virginian landowners to the mother country, and his acceptance of a military command proved that even the most moderate among the colonists had no hope now save in arms. The struggle opened with a skirmish between a party of English troops and a detachment of militia at Lexington on the nineteenth of April 1775; and in a few days twenty thousand colonists appeared before Boston. The Congress reassembled, declared the States they represented “The United Colonies of America,” and undertook the work of government. Meanwhile ten thousand fresh English troops landed at Boston. But the provincial militia, in number almost double that of the British force which prepared to attack them, seized a neck of ground which joins Boston to the mainland; and though on the 17th of June they were driven from the heights of Bunker’s Hill which commanded the town, it was only after a desperate struggle in which their bravery put an end for ever to the taunts of cowardice which had been levelled against the colonists. “Are the Yankees cowards?” shouted the men of Massachusetts as the first English attack rolled back baffled down the hill-side. But a far truer courage was shown in the stubborn endurance with which Washington’s raw militiamen, who gradually dwindled from sixteen thousand to ten, ill-fed, ill-armed, and with but forty-five rounds of ammunition to each man, cooped up through the winter a force of ten thousand veterans in the lines of Boston. The spring of 1776 saw them force these troops to withdraw from the city to New York, where the whole British army, largely reinforced by mercenaries from Germany, was concentrated under General Howe. Meanwhile a raid of the American General Arnold nearly drove the British troops from Canada; and though his attempt broke down before Quebec, it showed that all hope of reconciliation was over. The colonies of the south, the last to join in the struggle, had in fact

expelled their Governors at the close of 1775; at the opening of the next year Massachusetts instructed its delegates to support a complete repudiation of the king's government by the Colonies; while the American ports were thrown open to the world in defiance of the Navigation Acts. These decisive steps were followed by the great act with which American history begins, the adoption on the 4th of July 1776 by the delegates in Congress after a fierce resistance from those of Pennsylvania and South Carolina, and in spite of the abstention of those of New York, of a Declaration of Independence. "We," ran its solemn words, "the representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, solemnly publish and declare that these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, Free and Independent States."

Saratoga.

But the earlier successes of the colonists were soon followed by suffering and defeat. Howe, an active general with a fine army at his back, cleared Long Island in August by a victory at Brooklyn; and Washington, whose force was weakened by withdrawals and defeat and disheartened by the loyal tone of the State in which it was encamped, was forced in the autumn of 1776 to evacuate New York and New Jersey, and to fall back first on the Hudson and then on the Delaware. The Congress prepared to fly from Philadelphia, and a general despair showed itself in cries of peace. But a well-managed surprise and a daring march on the rear of Howe's army restored the spirits of Washington's men, and forced the English general in his turn to fall back on New York. England however was now roused to more serious efforts; and the campaign of 1777 opened with a combined attempt for the suppression of the revolt. An army which had assembled in Canada under General Burgoyne marched in June by way of the Lakes to seize the line of the Hudson. Howe meanwhile sailed up the Chesapeake and advanced on Philadelphia, the temporary capital of the United States and the seat of the Congress. The rout of his little army of seven thousand men at Brandywine forced Washington to abandon Philadelphia, and after a bold but unsuccessful attack on his victors to retire into winter quarters on the banks of the Schuylkill, where the unconquerable resolve with which he nerved his handful of beaten and half-starved troops to face Howe's army in their camp at Valley Forge is the noblest of his triumphs. But in the

north the war had taken another colour. Burgoyne's movement had been planned in view of a junction with at least a part of Howe's army from New York; a junction which would have enabled him to seize the line of the Hudson and thus cut off New England from her sister provinces. But Howe was held fast by Washington's resistance and unable to send a man to the north; while the spirit of New England, which had grown dull as the war rolled away from its borders, quickened again at the news of invasion and of the outrages committed by the Indians employed among the English troops. Its militia hurried from town and homestead to a camp with which General Gates had barred the road to Albany; and after a fruitless attack on the American lines, Burgoyne saw himself surrounded on the heights of Saratoga. On the 17th of October his whole force was compelled to surrender.

France and America.

The news of this calamity gave force to the words with which Chatham at the very time of the surrender was pressing for peace. "You cannot conquer America," he cried when men were glorying in Howe's successes over Washington. "If I were an American as I am an Englishman, while a foreign troop was landed in my country, I never would lay down my arms—never, never, never!" Then, in a burst of indignant eloquence he thundered against an outrage which was at that moment nerving New England to its rally against Burgoyne, the use of the Indian with his scalping-knife as an ally of England against her children. The proposals which Chatham brought forward might perhaps in his hands even yet have drawn America and the mother country together. His plan was one of absolute conciliation. He looked forward to a federal union between the settlements and Great Britain which would have left the Colonies absolutely their own masters in all matters of internal government, and linked only by ties of affection and loyalty to the general body of the Empire. But the plan met with the same scornful rejection as his previous proposals. Its rejection was at once followed by the news of Saratoga, and by the yet more fatal news that this disaster had roused the Bourbon Courts to avenge the humiliation of the Seven Years' War. Crippled and impoverished as she was at its close, France could do nothing to break the world-power which was rising in front of her; but in the very moment of her defeat, the foresight of Choiseul had seen in a future straggle between England and her Colonies a chance of

ruining the great fabric which Pitt's triumphs had built up. Nor was Pitt blind to the steady resolve of France to renew the fight. In every attempt which he had made to construct a Ministry he had laid down as the corner-stone of his foreign policy a renewal of that alliance with the Protestant States of North Germany against the House of Bourbon which could alone save England from the dangers of the Family Compact. But his efforts had been foiled alike by the resistance of the king, the timid peacefulness of the Whigs, and at last by the distrust of England which had been rooted in the mind of Frederick the Great through the treachery of Lord Bute.

Death of Chatham.

The wisdom of his policy was now brought home by the coming of the danger he had foreseen when the foresight of Choiseul was justified by the outbreak of strife between England and America. Even then for a while France looked idly on. Her king, Lewis the Sixteenth, was averse from war; her treasury was empty; her government, scared by the growth of new movements towards freedom about it, and fearful of endangering the monarchy by the encouragement these would receive from a union with the revolted Colonies, still doubted whether America had any real power of resisting Britain. It was to no purpose that from the moment when they declared themselves independent, the United States called on France for aid; or that Franklin pressed their appeal on its government. A year in fact passed without any decisive resolution to give aid to the colonists. But the steady drift of French policy and the passion of the French people pressed heavier every day on the hesitation of their government; and the news of Saratoga forced its hand. The American envoys at last succeeded in forming an alliance; and in February 1778 a treaty offensive and defensive was concluded between France and America. Lord North strove to meet the blow by fresh offers of conciliation, and by a pledge to renounce for ever the right of direct taxation over the Colonies; but he felt that such offers were fruitless, that the time for conciliation was past, while all hope of reducing America by force of arms had disappeared. In utter despair he pressed his resignation on the king. But George was as obstinate for war as ever; and the country, stung to the quick by the attack of France, backed passionately the obstinacy of the king. But unlike George the Third, it instinctively felt that if a hope still remained of retaining the friendship of the

Colonies and of baffling the efforts of the Bourbons, it lay in Lord Chatham; and in spite of the king's resistance the voice of the whole country called him back to power. The danger indeed which had scared Lord North into resignation, and before which a large party of the Whigs now advocated the acknowledgement of American independence, only woke Chatham to his old daring and fire. He had revolted from a war against Englishmen. But all his pride in English greatness, all his confidence in English power, woke afresh at the challenge of France. His genius saw indeed in the new danger a means of escape from the old. He would have withdrawn every soldier from America, and flung the whole force of Britain into the conflict with France. He believed that in the splendour of triumphs over her older enemy England might be brought to terms of amity which would win back the Colonies, and that the English blood of the colonists themselves would be quickened to a fresh union with the mother country by her struggle against a power from which she had so lately rescued them. Till such a trial had been made, with all the advantages that the magic of his name could give it in England and America alike, he would not bow to a need that must wreck the great Empire his hand had built up. Even at this hour there was a chance of success for such a policy; but on the eve of Chatham's return to office this chance was shattered by the hand of death. Broken with age and disease, the Earl was borne to the House of Lords on the seventh of April to utter in a few broken words his protest against the proposal to surrender America. "I rejoice," he murmured, "that I am still alive to lift up my voice against the dismemberment of this ancient and noble monarchy. His Majesty succeeded to an Empire as great in extent as its reputation was unsullied. Seventeen years ago this people was the terror of the world." He listened impatiently to the reply of the Duke of Richmond, and again rose to his feet. But he had hardly risen when he pressed his hand upon his heart, and falling back in a swoon was borne home to die.

England against Europe.

How well founded was Chatham's faith in the power of Britain was seen in the strife that now opened. From the hour of his death England entered on a conflict with enemies whose circle gradually widened till she stood single-handed against the world. At the close of 1778 the Family Compact bore its full fruit; Spain joined the league of France and

America against her; and in the next year the joint fleets of the two powers rode the masters of the Channel. They even threatened a descent on the English coast. But dead as Chatham was, his cry woke a new life in England. "Shall we fall prostrate," he exclaimed with his last breath, "before the House of Bourbon?" and the divisions which had broken the nation in its struggle with American liberty were hushed in the presence of this danger to its own existence. The weakness of the Ministry was compensated by the energy of England itself. For three years, from 1779 to 1782, General Elliott held against famine and bombardment from a French and Spanish army the rock fortress of Gibraltar. Although a quarrel over the right of search banded Holland and the Courts of the North in an armed neutrality against her, and added the Dutch fleet to the number of her assailants, England held her own at sea. In her Eastern dependency, where France sought a counterpoise to the power of Britain in that of the Mahrattas, freebooters of Hindoo blood whose tribes had for a century past carried their raids over India from the hills of the Western coast, and founded sovereignties in Guzerat, Malwa, and Tanjore, the tenacity and resource of Warren Hastings, the first Governor-General of British India, wrested victory from failure and defeat. Though the wide schemes of conquest which he formed were for the moment frustrated, the annexation of Benares, the extension of British rule along the Ganges, the reduction of Oudh to virtual dependence, the appearance of English armies in Central India, and the defeat of the Sultan of Mysore, laid the foundation of an Indian Empire which his genius was bold enough to foresee. Even in America the fortune of the war seemed for a while to turn. After Burgoyne's surrender the English generals had withdrawn from Pennsylvania, and bent all their efforts on the Southern States, where a strong Royalist party still existed. The capture of Charlestown and the successes of Lord Cornwallis in 1780 were rendered fruitless by the obstinate resistance of General Greene; but the United States remained weakened by bankruptcy and unnerved by hopes of aid from France.

America and Ireland.

Hardly a year however had passed when the face of the war in America was changed by a terrible disaster. Foiled in an attempt on North Carolina by the refusal of his fellow-general, Sir Henry Clinton, to assist him, Cornwallis fell back in 1781 on Virginia, and entrenched

himself in the lines of York Town. A sudden march of Washington brought him to the front of the English troops at a moment when the French fleet held the sea, and the British army was driven by famine in October to a surrender as humiliating as that of Saratoga. The news fell like a thunderbolt on the wretched Minister, who had till now suppressed at his master's order his own conviction of the uselessness of further bloodshed. Opening his arms and pacing wildly about the room, Lord North exclaimed, "It is all over," and resigned. At this moment indeed the country seemed on the brink of ruin. Humiliating as it was, England could have borne fifty such calamities as the surrender at York Town. But in the very crisis of the struggle with America she found herself confronted with a danger nearer home. The revolt of one great dependency brought with it a threatened revolt from another. In Ireland, as in the Colonies, England had shrunk from carrying out either a national or an imperial policy. She might have recognised Ireland as a free nationality, and bound it to herself by federal bonds; or she might have absorbed it, as she had absorbed Scotland, into the general mass of her own national life. With a perverse ingenuity she had not only refrained from taking either of these courses, but she had deliberately adopted the worst features of both. Ireland was absolutely subject to Britain, but she formed no part of it, she shared neither in its liberty nor its wealth. But on the other hand she was allowed no national existence of her own. While all the outer seeming of national life was left, while Ireland possessed in name an army, a Parliament, a magistracy, the mass of the Irish people was as strange to all this life as the savages of Polynesia. Every Catholic Irishman, and there were five Irish Catholics to every Irish Protestant, was treated as a stranger and a foreigner in his own country. The House of Lords, the House of Commons, the magistracy, all corporate offices in towns, all ranks in the army, the bench, the bar, the whole administration of government or justice, were closed against Catholics. The very right of voting for their representatives in Parliament was denied them. Few Catholic landowners had been left by the sweeping confiscations which had followed the successive revolts of the island, and oppressive laws forced even these few with scant exceptions to profess Protestantism. Necessity indeed had brought about a practical toleration of their religion and their worship; but in all social and political matters the native Catholics, in other words the immense majority of the people of Ireland, were simply hewers of

wood and drawers of water for Protestant masters, for masters who still looked on themselves as mere settlers, who boasted of their Scotch or English extraction, and who regarded the name of “Irishman” as an insult.

Irish Government.

But small as was this Protestant body, one-half of it fared little better as far as power was concerned than the Catholics. The Presbyterians, who formed the bulk of the Ulster settlers, were shut out by law from all civil, military, and municipal offices. The administration and justice of the country were thus kept rigidly in the hands of members of the Established Church, a body which comprised about a twelfth of the population of the island, while its government was practically monopolised by a few great Protestant landowners. The rotten boroughs, which had originally been created to make the Irish Parliament dependent on the Crown, had by this time fallen under the influence of the adjacent landlords, whose command of these made them masters of the House of Commons while they themselves formed in person the House of Peers. To such a length had this system been carried that at the time of the Union the great majority of the boroughs lay in the hands of a very few families. Two-thirds of the House of Commons, in fact, was returned by a small group of nobles, who were recognised as “parliamentary undertakers,” and who undertook to “manage” Parliament on their own terms. Irish politics was for these men a mere means of public plunder; they were glutted with pensions, preferments, and bribes in hard cash, in return for their services; they were the advisers of every Lord-Lieutenant and the practical governors of the country. The results were what might have been expected. For more than a century Ireland was the worst governed country in Europe. That its government was not even worse than it was, was due to its connection with England and the subordination of its Parliament to the English Privy Council. The Irish Parliament had no power of originating legislative or financial measures, and could only say “yes” or “no” to Acts laid before it by the Privy Council in England. The English Parliament too claimed the right of binding Ireland as well as England by its enactments, and one of its statutes transferred the appellate jurisdiction of the Irish Peerage to the English House of Lords. Galling as these restrictions were to the plundering aristocracy of Ireland, they formed a useful check on its

tyranny. But as if to compensate for the benefits of this protection, England did her best from the time of William the Third to annihilate Irish commerce and to ruin Irish agriculture. Statutes passed by the jealousy of English landowners forbade the export of Irish cattle or sheep to English ports. The export of wool was forbidden lest it might interfere with the profits of English wool-growers. Poverty was thus added to the curse of misgovernment; and poverty deepened with the rapid growth of the native population, a growth due in great part to the physical misery and moral degradation of their lives, till famine turned the country into a hell.

The Volunteers.

The bitter lesson of the last conquest however long sufficed to check all dreams of revolt among the native Irish; and the outbreaks which sprang from time to time out of the general misery and discontent were purely social in their character, and were roughly repressed by the ruling class. When political revolt at last threatened English supremacy over Ireland, the threat came from the ruling class itself. Some timid efforts made by the English Government at the accession of George the Third to control its tyranny were resented by a refusal of money bills, and by a cry for the removal of the checks imposed on the independence of the Irish Parliament. But it was not till the American war that this cry became a political danger. The threat of a French invasion and the want of any regular force to oppose it compelled the Government to call on Ireland to provide for its own defence, and in answer to its call forty thousand volunteers appeared in arms in 1779. The force was wholly a Protestant one, commanded by Protestant officers, and it was turned to account by the Protestant oligarchy. Threats of an armed revolt backed the eloquence of two Parliamentary leaders, Grattan and Flood, in their demand for the repeal of Poynings' Act, which took all power of initiative legislation from the Irish Parliament, and for the recognition of the Irish House of Lords as an ultimate Court of Appeal. But the Volunteers were forced to bid for the support of the native Catholics, who looked with indifference on these quarrels of their masters, by claiming for them a relaxation of the penal laws against the exercise of their religion and of some of their most oppressive disabilities. So real was the danger that England was forced to give way. The first demands were in effect a claim for national independence. But there were no

means of resisting them, for England was without a soldier to oppose the Volunteers, while she was pressed hard by the league of Europe and America against her. In the face of such a rising close at home, it became plain even to the most dogged of Tories that it was impossible to continue a strife across three thousand miles of sea; and to deal with the attitude of Ireland became even a more pressing need of the Ministry which followed that of Lord North than the need of dealing with America.

End of the war.

The blow which had shattered the attempt of England to wield an autocratic power over her Colonies had shattered the attempt of its king to establish an autocratic power over England itself. The Ministry which bore the name of Lord North had been a mere screen for the administration of George the Third, and its ruin was the ruin of the system he had striven to build up. Never again was the Crown to possess such a power as he had wielded during the past ten years. For the moment however there was nothing to mark so decisive a change; and both to the king and his opponents it must have seemed only a new turn in the political game which they were playing when in March 1782 the Whigs returned to office. Rockingham was still at the head of the party; and on Rockingham fell the double task of satisfying Ireland and of putting an end, at any cost, to the war with the United States. The task involved in both quarters a humiliating surrender; for neither Ireland nor America would be satisfied save by a full concession of their claims. It needed the bitter stress of necessity to induce the English Parliament to follow Rockingham's counsels, but the need was too urgent to suffer their rejection. The Houses therefore abandoned by a formal statute the judicial and legislative supremacy they had till then asserted over the Parliament of Ireland; and from this moment England and Ireland were simply held together by the fact that the sovereign of the one island was also the sovereign of the other. The grant of independence to the one great dependency made it easier to recognise the freedom of the other. Rockingham in fact took office with the purpose of winning peace by a full acknowledgement of the independence of the United States, and negotiations were soon entered into for that purpose.

The Peace.

But America was bound by its league with the Bourbon Courts to make no peace save one common to its allies, and from its allies peace was hard to win without concessions which would have stripped from England all that remained of her older greatness. With the revolt of Ireland and the surrender of Cornwallis the hopes of her enemies rose high. Spain refused to suspend hostilities at any other price than the surrender of Gibraltar; while France proposed that England should give up all her Indian conquests save Bengal. The triumph of the Bourbons indeed seemed secure. If terms like these were accepted the world-empire of Britain was at an end. Stripped of her Colonies in America, stripped of her rule in India, matched on the very ocean by rival fleets, England sank back into a European State, into the England of the first Georges. And yet there seemed little chance of her holding out against the demands of such a league as fronted her at a moment when her military power was paralysed by the attitude of Ireland. But the true basis of her world-power lay on the sea. It was by her command of the sea that such an empire could alone be possible; nor was it possible so long as she commanded the sea for all the armies of the Bourbon powers to rob her of it. And at this moment the command of the seas again became her own. On the 16th of January 1780 Admiral Rodney, the greatest of English seamen save Nelson and Blake, encountered the Spanish fleet off Cape St. Vincent, and only four of its vessels escaped to Cadiz. At the opening of 1782 the triumphs of the French admiral De Grasse called him to the West Indies; and on the 12th of April a manœuvre which he was the first to introduce broke his opponent's line, and drove the French fleet shattered from the Atlantic. With Rodney's last victory the struggle of the Bourbons was really over, for no means remained of attacking their enemy save at Gibraltar, and here a last attack of the joint force gathered against it was repulsed by the heroism of Elliott. Nor would America wait any longer for the satisfaction of her allies. In November her commissioners signed the preliminaries of a peace in which Britain reserved to herself on the American continent only Canada and the island of Newfoundland; and acknowledged without reserve the independence of the United States.

England and the United States.

The action of America ended the war; and the treaty of peace with the United States was a prelude to treaties of peace with the Bourbon

powers. Their actual gains were insignificant. France indeed won nothing in the treaties with which the war ended; Spain gained only Florida and Minorca. Nor could they feel even in this hour of their triumph that the end at which they aimed had been fully reached. In half their great effort against the world-power of Britain they had utterly failed. She had even won ground in India. In America itself she still retained the northern dominion of Canada. Her West Indian islands remained intact. Above all, she had asserted more nobly than ever her command of the sea, and with it the possibility of building up a fresh power in such lands as Cook had called her to. But at the close of the war there was less thought of what she had retained than of what she had lost. She was parted from her American Colonies; and at the moment such a parting seemed to be the knell of her greatness. In wealth, in population, the American Colonies far surpassed all that remained of her Empire; and the American Colonies were irrecoverably gone. It is no wonder that in the first shock of such a loss England looked on herself as on the verge of ruin, or that the Bourbon Courts believed her position as a world-power to be practically at an end. How utterly groundless such a conception was the coming years were to show. The energies of England were in fact spurred to new efforts by the crisis in her fortunes. The industrial development which followed the war gave her a material supremacy such as she had never known before, and the rapid growth of wealth which this industry brought with it raised her again into a mother of nations as her settlers built up in the waters of the Pacific Colonies as great as those which she had lost on the coast of America. But if the Bourbons overrated their triumph in one way, they immensely underrated it in another. Whatever might be the importance of American independence in the history of England, it was of unequalled moment in the history of the world. If it crippled for a while the supremacy of the English nation, it founded the supremacy of the English race. From the hour of American Independence the life of the English People has flowed not in one current, but in two; and while the older has shown little signs of lessening, the younger has fast risen to a greatness which has changed the face of the world. In 1783 America was a nation of three millions of inhabitants, scattered thinly along the coast of the Atlantic Ocean. It is now a nation of forty millions, stretching over the whole continent from the Atlantic to the Pacific. In wealth and material energy, as in numbers, it far surpasses the mother country from which it sprang. It is already the main branch of the

English People; and in the days that are at hand the main current of that people's history must run along the channel not of the Thames or the Mersey, but of the Hudson and the Mississippi. But distinct as these currents are, every year proves more clearly that in spirit the English People is one. The distance that parted England from America lessens every day. The ties that unite them grow every day stronger. The social and political differences that threatened a hundred years ago to form an impassable barrier between them grow every day less. Against this silent and inevitable drift of things the spirit of narrow isolation on either side the Atlantic struggles in vain. It is possible that the two branches of the English People will remain for ever separate political existences. It is likely enough that the older of them may again break in twain, and that the English People in the Pacific may assert as distinct a national life as the two English Peoples on either side the Atlantic. But the spirit, the influence, of all these branches will remain one. And in thus remaining one, before half-a-century is over it will change the face of the world. As two hundred millions of Englishmen fill the valley of the Mississippi, as fifty millions of Englishmen assert their lordship over Australasia, this vast power will tell through Britain on the old world of Europe, whose nations will have shrunk into insignificance before it. What the issues of such a world-wide change may be, not even the wildest dreamer would dare to dream. But one issue is inevitable. In the centuries that lie before us, the primacy of the world will lie with the English People. English institutions, English speech, English thought, will become the main features of the political, the social, and the intellectual life of mankind.

CHAPTER III

INDUSTRIAL ENGLAND

1782-1792

England in the American War.

That in the creation of the United States the world had reached one of the turning-points in its history seems at the time to have entered into the thought of not a single European statesman. What startled men most at the moment was the discovery that England herself was far from being ruined by the greatness of her defeat. She rose from it indeed stronger and more vigorous than ever. Never had she shown a mightier energy than in the struggle against France which followed only ten years after her loss of America, nor did she ever stand higher among the nations than on the day of Waterloo. Her internal developement was as imposing as her outer grandeur. Weary and disgraceful indeed as was the strife with the Colonies, the years of its progress were years of as mighty a revolution for the mother country as for its child. The England that is about us dates from the American War. It was then that the moral, the philanthropic, the religious ideas which have moulded English society into its present shape first broke the spiritual torpor of the eighteenth century. It was then that with the wider diffusion of intelligence our literature woke to a nobler and larger life which fitted it to become the mouthpiece of every national emotion. It was then that by a change unparalleled in history the country laid aside her older agricultural character to develop industrial forces which made her at a single bound the workshop of the world. Amidst the turmoil of the early years of George the Third Brindley was silently covering England with canals, and Watt as silently perfecting his invention of the steam-engine. It was amidst the strife with America that Adam Smith regenerated our economical, Gibbon our historical, and Burke our political literature; and peace was hardly declared when the appearance of Crabbe, Cowper, and Burns heralded a new birth of our poetry.

The religious movement.

No names so illustrious as these marked the more silent but even deeper change in the religious temper of the country. It dates, as we have

seen, from the work of the Wesleys, but the Methodists themselves were the least result of the Methodist revival. Its action upon the Church broke the lethargy of the clergy; and the “Evangelical” movement, which found representatives like Newton and Cecil within the pale of the Establishment, made the fox-hunting parson and the absentee rector at last impossible. In Walpole’s day the English clergy were the idlest and the most lifeless in the world. In our own time no body of religious ministers surpasses them in piety, in philanthropic energy, or in popular regard. But the movement was far from being limited to the Methodists or the clergy. In the nation at large appeared a new moral enthusiasm which, rigid and pedantic as it often seemed, was still healthy in its social tone, and whose power showed itself in a gradual disappearance of the profligacy which had disgraced the upper classes, and the foulness which had infested literature ever since the Restoration. A yet nobler result of the religious revival was the steady attempt, which has never ceased from that day to this, to remedy the guilt, the ignorance, the physical suffering, the social degradation of the profligate and the poor. It was not till the Wesleyan impulse had done its work that this philanthropic impulse began. The Sunday Schools established by Mr. Raikes of Gloucester at the close of the century were the beginnings of popular education. By writings and by her own personal example Hannah More drew the sympathy of England to the poverty and crime of the agricultural labourer. A passionate impulse of human sympathy with the wronged and afflicted raised hospitals, endowed charities, built churches, sent missionaries to the heathen, supported Burke in his plea for the Hindoo, and Clarkson and Wilberforce in their crusade against the iniquity of the slave trade.

Howard.

It is only the moral chivalry of his labours that amongst a crowd of philanthropists draws us most to the work and character of John Howard. The sympathy which all were feeling for the sufferings of mankind Howard felt for the sufferings of the worst and most hapless of men. With wonderful ardour and perseverance he devoted himself to the cause of the debtor, the felon, and the murderer. An appointment to the office of High Sheriff of Bedfordshire in 1774 drew his attention to the state of the prisons which were placed under his care; and from that time the quiet country gentleman, whose only occupation had been reading his Bible

and studying his thermometer, became the most energetic and zealous of reformers. Before a year was over he had personally visited almost every English gaol, and in nearly all of them he found frightful abuses which had been noticed half-a-century before, but which had been left unredressed by Parliament. Gaolers who bought their places were paid by fees, and suffered to extort what they could. Even when acquitted, men were dragged back to their cells for want of funds to discharge the sums they owed to their keepers. Debtors and felons were huddled together in the prisons which Howard found crowded by the legislation of the day. No separation was preserved between different sexes, no criminal discipline was enforced. Every gaol was a chaos of cruelty and the foulest immorality, from which the prisoner could only escape by sheer starvation or through the gaol-fever that festered without ceasing in these haunts of misery. Howard saw everything with his own eyes, he tested every suffering by his own experience. In one prison he found a cell so narrow and noisome that the poor wretch who inhabited it begged as a mercy for hanging. Howard shut himself up in the cell and bore its darkness and foulness till nature could bear no more. It was by work of this sort and by the faithful pictures of such scenes which it enabled him to give that he brought about their reform. The book in which he recorded his terrible experience and the plans which he submitted for the reformation of criminals made him the father, so far as England is concerned, of prison discipline. But his labours were far from being confined to England. In journey after journey he visited the gaols of Holland and Germany, till his longing to discover some means of checking the fatal progress of the Plague led him to examine the lazarettos of Europe and the East. He was still engaged in this work of charity when he was seized by a malignant fever at Cherson in Southern Russia, and "laid quietly in the earth," as he desired.

Trial of Hastings.

In Howard's later labours the new sentiment of humanity had carried him far beyond the bounds of national sympathy; and forces at once of pity and religion told more and more in begetting a consciousness of the common brotherhood of man. Even at the close of the American war this feeling had become strong enough to colour our political life. It told on the attitude of England towards its great dependency of India. Discussions over rival plans of Indian administration diffused a sense of

national responsibility for its good government, and there was a general resolve that the security against injustice and misrule which was enjoyed by the poorest Englishman should be enjoyed by the poorest Hindoo. It was this resolve which expressed itself in 1786 in the trial of Warren Hastings. Hastings returned from India at the close of the war with the hope of rewards as great as those of Clive. He had saved all that Clive had won. He had laid the foundation of a vast empire in the East. He had shown rare powers of administration, and the foresight, courage, and temperance which mark the born ruler of men. But with him came rumours of tyranny and wrong. Even those who admitted the wisdom and glory of his rule shrank from its terrible ruthlessness. He was charged with having sold for a vast sum the services of British troops to crush the free tribes of the Rohillas, with having wrung half-a-million by extortion from the Rajah of Benares, with having extorted by torture and starvation more than a million from the Princesses of Oudh. He was accused of having kept his hold upon power by measures as unscrupulous, and with having murdered a native who opposed him by an abuse of the forms of English law. On almost all these charges the cooler judgement of later inquirers has acquitted Warren Hastings of guilt. Personally there can be little doubt that he had done much to secure to the new subjects of Britain a just and peaceable government. What was hardest and most pitiless in his rule had been simply a carrying out of the system of administration which was native to India and which he found existing there. But such a system was alien from the new humanity of Englishmen; and few dared to vindicate Hastings when Burke in words of passionate earnestness moved for his impeachment.

The Slave-Trade.

The great trial lingered on for years; and in the long run Hastings secured an acquittal. But the end at which the impeachment aimed had really been won. The attention, the sympathy of Englishmen had been drawn across distant seas to a race utterly strange to them; and the peasant of Cornwall or Cumberland had learned how to thrill at the suffering of a peasant of Bengal. And even while the trial was going on a yet wider extension of English sympathy made itself felt. The hero-seamen of Elizabeth had not blushed to make gain out of kidnapping negroes and selling them into slavery. One of the profits which England bought by the triumphs of Marlborough was a right to a monopoly of the

slave-trade between Africa and the Spanish dominions; and it was England that had planted slavery in her American colonies and her West Indian islands. Half the wealth of Liverpool, in fact, was drawn from the traffic of its merchants in human flesh. The horrors and iniquity of the trade, the ruin and degradation of Africa which it brought about, the oppression of the negro himself, had till now moved no pity among Englishmen. But as the spirit of humanity told on the people this apathy suddenly disappeared. Philanthropy allied itself with the new religious movement in an attack on the slave-trade. At the close of the American war its evils began to be felt so widely and deeply that the question forced itself into politics. "After a conversation in the open air at the root of an old tree, just above the steep descent into the Vale of Keston," with the younger Pitt, his friend, William Wilberforce, whose position as a representative of the evangelical party gave weight to his advocacy of such a cause, resolved to bring in a bill for the abolition of the slave-trade. The bill which he brought forward in 1788 fell before the opposition of the Liverpool slave merchants and the general indifference of the House of Commons. But the movement gathered fresh strength in the country with every year; in spite of the absorption of England in the struggle with the French Revolution, it succeeded at last in forcing on Parliament the abolition of the traffic in slaves; and this abolition was followed a few years later by the abolition of slavery itself.

English manufactures.

Time was to show how wide were the issues to which this religious developement and the sentiment of humanity which it generated were to tend. But at the moment they told less directly and immediately on the political and social life of England than an industrial revolution which accompanied them. Though England already stood in the first rank of commercial states at the accession of George the Third, her industrial life at home was mainly agricultural. The growth of her manufactures was steady, but it continued to be slow; they gave employment as yet to but a small part of the population, and added in no great degree to the national wealth. The wool-trade remained the largest, as it was the oldest of them; it had gradually established itself in Norfolk, the West Riding of Yorkshire, and the counties of the south-west; while the manufacture of cotton was still almost limited to Manchester and Bolton, and though winning on its rival remained so unimportant that in the middle of the

eighteenth century the export of cotton goods hardly reached the value of fifty thousand a year. There was the same slow and steady progress in the linen trade of Belfast and Dundee, and the silks of Spitalfields. But as yet textile manufactures contributed little to the national resources; nor did these resources owe much to the working of our minerals. The coal trade was small, and limited by the cost of carriage as well as by ignorance of any mode of employing coal in iron-smelting. On the other hand the scarcity of wood, which was used for that purpose, limited the production of iron. In 1750 only eighteen thousand tons were produced in England; and four-fifths of its iron goods were imported from Sweden. Nor did there seem any likelihood of a rapid change. Skilled labour was scarce; and the processes of manufacture were too rude to allow any large increase of production. It was only where a stream gave force to turn a mill-wheel that the wool-worker could establish his factory; and cotton was as yet spun by hand in the cottages, the “spinsters” of the family sitting with their distaffs round the weaver’s hand-loom.

Canals.

But even had the processes of production become more efficient, they would have been rendered useless by the inefficiency of the means of distribution. The older main roads, which had lasted fairly through the Middle Ages, had broken down in later times before the growth of traffic and the increase of wagons and carriages. The new lines of trade lay often along mere country lanes which had never been more than horse-tracks, and to drive heavy wains through lanes like these was all but impossible. Much of the woollen trade therefore had to be carried on by means of long trains of pack-horses; and in most cases the cost of carriage added heavily to the price of production. In the case of yet heavier goods, such as coal, distribution was almost impracticable, save along the greater rivers or in districts accessible from the sea. But at the moment when England was just plunging into the Seven Years’ War the enterprise of a duke and a millwright solved this problem of carriage, and started the country on a mighty course of industry which was to change both its social and its political character. Francis, Duke of Bridgewater, was a shy, dreamy man, whom a disappointment in love drove to a life of isolation on his estates in the north. He was the possessor of collieries at Worsley whose value depended on their finding a market at the neighbouring town of Manchester; and it was to bring his coal to this

market that he resolved to drive a canal from the mine to the river Irwell. With singular good luck he found the means of carrying out his design in a self-taught mechanic, James Brindley. But in Brindley's mind the scheme widened far beyond the plans of the duke. Canals, as he conceived them, were no longer to serve as mere adjuncts to rivers; on the contrary, "rivers were only meant," he said, "to feed canals"; and instead of ending in the Irwell, he carried the duke's canal by an aqueduct across that river to Manchester itself. What Brindley had discovered was in fact the water-road, a means of carrying heavy goods with the least resistance, and therefore the least cost, from the point of production to the point of sale; and England at once seized on his discovery to free itself from the bondage in which it had been held. From the year 1767, when Brindley completed his enterprise, a network of such water-roads was flung over the country; and before the movement had spent its force Great Britain alone was traversed in every direction by three thousand miles of navigable canals.

Mineral developement.

To English trade the canal opened up the richest of all markets, the market of England itself. Every part of the country was practically thrown open to the manufacturer: and the impulse which was given by this facility of carriage was at once felt in a vast developement of production. But such a developement would have been impossible had not the discovery of this new mode of distribution been accompanied by the discovery of a new productive force. In the coal which lay beneath her soil England possessed a store of force which had hitherto remained almost useless. But its effects were now to make themselves felt. The first instance of the power of coal was shown in utilizing the stores of iron which had lain side by side with it in the northern counties, but which had lain there unworked through the scarcity of wood, which was looked upon as the only fuel by which it could be smelted. In the middle of the eighteenth century a process for smelting iron with coal turned out to be effective; and the whole aspect of the iron-trade was at once revolutionized. In fifty years the annual production of iron in Great Britain rose from under twenty thousand to more than one hundred and seventy thousand tons. During the fifty years that followed it rose to six millions of tons. Iron was to become the working material of the modern world; and it is its production of iron which more than all else has placed

England at the head of industrial Europe. But iron was not the only metal which coal drew from the soil to swell the national wealth. The increase in its production was rivalled by that of lead, copper, and tin; and the “mining districts” soon gathered a population which raised them into social as well as economical importance.

The Steam Engine.

But it was not in its direct application to metallurgy that coal was destined to produce its most amazing effects. What was needed to turn England into a manufacturing country was some means of transforming the force stored up in coal into a labour force; and it was this transformation which was now brought about through the agency of steam. Engines in which steam was used as a means of draining mines had long been in use; but the power relied on was mainly that of the weight of the air pressing on a piston beneath which a vacuum had been created by the condensation of steam; and the economical use of such engines was checked by the waste of fuel which resulted from the cooling of the cylinder at each condensation, and from the expenditure of heat in again raising it to its old temperature before a fresh stroke of the piston was possible. Both these obstacles were removed by the ingenuity of James Watt. Watt was a working engineer at Glasgow, whose mind had for some time been bent on the improvement of the steam-engine; but it was not till the spring of 1765, amidst the political turmoil which characterized the early reign of George the Third, that as he strolled on a Sunday afternoon across the Green of Glasgow the means of effecting it burst on him. “I had gone,” he says, “to take a walk on a fine Sabbath afternoon. I had entered the Green by the gate at the foot of Charlotte Street, and had passed the old washing-house. I was thinking upon the engine at the time, and had got as far as the herd’s house, when the idea came into my mind that as steam was an elastic body it would rush into a vacuum, and if a communication were made between the cylinder and an exhausted vessel it would rush into it, and might there be condensed without cooling the cylinder. I had not walked farther than the Golf-House when the whole thing was arranged in my mind.” The employment of a separate condenser, with the entire discarding of any other force in its action save that of steam itself, changed the whole conditions of the steam-engine. On the eve of the American war, in 1776,

its use passed beyond the mere draining of mines; and it was rapidly adopted as a motive-force for all kinds of manufacturing industry.

The Cotton manufactures.

The almost unlimited supply of labour-power in the steam-engine came at a time when the existing supply of manual labour was proving utterly inadequate to cope with the demands of the manufacturer. This was especially the case in textile fabrics. In its earlier stages the manufacture of cotton had been retarded by the difficulty with which the weavers obtained a sufficient supply of cotton yarn from the spinsters; and this difficulty became yet greater when the invention of the fly-shuttle enabled one weaver to do in a single day what had hitherto been the work of two. The difficulty was solved by a Blackburn weaver, John Hargreaves, who noticed that his wife's spindle, which had been accidentally upset, continued to revolve in an upright position on the floor, while the thread was still spinning in her hand. The hint led him to connect a number of spindles with a single wheel, and thus to enable one spinster to do the work of eight. Hargreaves's invention only spurred the wits of a barber's assistant, Richard Arkwright, to yet greater improvement in the construction of a machine for spinning by rollers revolving at different rates of speed; and this in its turn was improved and developed in the "mule" of a Bolton weaver, Samuel Crompton. The result of these inventions was to reverse the difficulty which hampered the trade, for the supply of yarn became so rapid and unlimited as to outrun the power of the hand-loom weaver to consume it; but a few years after the close of the American war this difficulty was met by the discovery of the power-loom, which replaced the weaver by machinery. Ingenious however as these inventions were, they would have remained comparatively useless had it not been for the revelation of a new and inexhaustible labour-force in the steam-engine. It was the combination of such a force with such means of applying it that enabled Britain during the terrible years of her struggle with France and Napoleon to all but monopolise the woollen and cotton trades, and raised her into the greatest manufacturing country that the world had seen.

How mighty a force this industrial revolution was to exert on English politics and English society time was to show. By the transfer of wealth and population from southern to northern England, and from the country to the town, it was in the next fifty years to set on foot a revolution in

both, the results of which have still to be disclosed. Of such a revolution no English statesman as yet had a glimpse; but already the growth of industrial energy and industrial wealth was telling on the conditions of English statesmanship. The manufacturer and the merchant were coming fast to the front; and their temper was more menacing to the monopoly of political power by the Whigs and the landed aristocracy whom the Whigs represented than the temper of the king himself. Already public opinion was finding in them a new concentration and weight; and it was certain that as the representatives of public opinion they would at last demand a share in the work of government. Such a demand might have been delayed for a while had they been content with the way in which England was governed. But they were far from being content with it. To no class indeed could the selfishness, the corruption, the factiousness, and the administrative inefficiency of the ruling order be more utterly odious. Their tone was moral, and they were influenced more and more by the religious and philanthropic movement about them. As men of business, they revolted against the waste and mismanagement which seemed to have become normal in every department of government. Their patriotism, their pride in England's greatness, alienated them from men who looked upon political eminence as a means of personal gain. Above all their personal energy, their consciousness of wealth and power, and to some extent the natural jealousy of the trader against the country gentleman, urged them to press for an overthrow of the existing monopoly, and for a fairer distribution of political influence. But such a pressure could only bring them into conflict with the Whigs whom the fall of Lord North had recalled to office. Though the Tories had now grown to a compact body of a hundred and fifty members, the Whigs still remained superior to their rivals in numbers and ability as well as in distinctness of political aim; for the return of the Bedford section to the general body of the party, as well as its steady opposition to the American war, had restored much of their early cohesion. But this reunion only strengthened their aristocratic and exclusive tendencies, and widened the breach which was steadily opening on questions such as Parliamentary Reform between the bulk of the Whigs and the small fragment of their party which remained true to the more popular sympathies of Chatham.

William Pitt.

Lord Shelburne stood at the head of the Chatham party, and it was reinforced at this moment by the entry into Parliament of the second and youngest son of Chatham himself. William Pitt had hardly reached his twenty-second year; but he left college with the learning of a ripe scholar, and his ready and sonorous eloquence had been matured by his father's teaching. "He will be one of the first men in Parliament," said a member to Charles Fox, the Whig leader in the Commons, after Pitt's earliest speech in that house. "He is so already," replied Fox. Young as he was, the haughty self-esteem of the new statesman breathed in every movement of his tall, spare figure, in the hard lines of a countenance which none but his closer friends saw lighted by a smile, in his cold and repulsive address, his invariable gravity of demeanour, and his habitual air of command. But none knew how great the qualities were which lay beneath this haughty exterior; nor had any one guessed how soon this "boy," as his rivals mockingly styled him, was to crush every opponent and to hold England at his will. There was only a smile of wonder when he refused any of the minor posts which were offered him in the Rockingham administration, and the wonder passed into angry sarcasms as soon as it was known that he claimed, if he took office at all, to be at once admitted to the Cabinet. But Pitt had no desire to take office under Rockingham. He was the inheritor of that side of his father's policy which was most distasteful to the Whigs. To him as to Chatham the main lesson of the war was the need of putting an end to those abuses in the composition of Parliament by which George the Third had been enabled to plunge the country into it. A thorough reform of the House of Commons was the only effectual means of doing this, and Pitt brought forward a bill founded on his father's plans for that purpose. But though a more liberal section of the Whigs, with Charles Fox at their head, were wavering round to a wish for reform, the great bulk of the party could not nerve themselves to the sacrifice of property and influence which such a reform would involve. Rockingham remained hostile to reform, and Burke, whose influence still told much upon Rockingham, was yet more hostile than his chief. Pitt's bill therefore was thrown out. In its stead the Ministry endeavoured to weaken the means of corrupt influence which the king had unscrupulously used by disqualifying persons holding government contracts from sitting in Parliament, by depriving revenue officers of the elective franchise (a measure which diminished the weight of the Crown in seventy boroughs), and above all by a bill for the

reduction of the civil establishment, of the pension list, and of the secret service fund, which was brought in by Burke. These measures were to a great extent effectual in diminishing the influence of the Crown over Parliament, and they are memorable as marking the date when the direct bribery of members absolutely ceased. But they were utterly inoperative in rendering the House of Commons really representative of or responsible to the people of England.

The Coalition.

The jealousy which the mass of the Whigs entertained of the followers of Chatham and their plans was more plainly shown however on the death of Lord Rockingham in July. Shelburne, who had hitherto served as Secretary of State, was called by the king to the head of the Ministry, a post to which his eminent talents and the ability which he was showing in the negotiations for the Peace clearly gave him a title. But Shelburne had been hampered in these negotiations by the jealousy of Charles Fox, who as joint Secretary of State with him claimed in spite of usage a share in conducting them, and who persisted without a show of reason in believing himself to have been unfairly treated. It was on personal grounds therefore that Fox refused to serve under Shelburne; but the refusal of Burke and the bulk of Rockingham's followers was based on more than personal grounds. It sprang from a rooted distrust of the more popular tendencies of which Shelburne was justly regarded as the representative. To Pitt, on the other hand, these tendencies were the chief ground of confidence in the new Ministry; and, young as he was, he at once entered office as Chancellor of the Exchequer. But his tenure of this post was a brief one. The Shelburne Ministry in fact only lasted long enough to conclude the final peace with the United States on the base of their independence; for in the opening of 1783 it was overthrown by the most unscrupulous coalition known in our history, a union of the Whig followers of Fox with the Tories who still clung to Lord North. In Parliament such a coalition was irresistible, and the resignation of Shelburne at once made way for an administration in which both the triumphant parties were represented. But the effect on England at large was very different. Whatever new credit the Whigs had gained with the country during their long exclusion from office had been due to their steady denunciation of the policy and temper of Lord North's administration. That they should take office hand in hand with men

whom they had for years denounced as the worst of Ministers shocked even their most loyal adherents; and the shock was the greater that a new seriousness in politics, a longing for a deeper and more earnest treatment of political questions, was making mere faction intolerable to Englishmen. But behind all this was the sense that something more than mere faction had really brought the two parties together. It was their common dread of the popular tendencies which Shelburne's Ministry represented, their common hatred of parliamentary reform, which hushed for the moment the bitter hostility between the followers of Rockingham and the followers of North. Yet never had the need of representative reform been more clearly shown than by a coalition which proved how powerless was the force of public opinion to check even the most shameless faction in Parliament, how completely the lessening of royal influence by the measures of Burke and Rockingham had tended to the profit not of the people but of the borough-mongers who usurped its representation. The turn of public opinion was quick in disclosing itself. Fox was the most popular of the Whigs, but he was hooted from the platform when he addressed his constituents at Westminster. Pitt, on the other hand, whose attacks on the new union rose to a lofty and indignant eloquence, was lifted by it into an almost solitary greatness.

Fall of the Coalition.

But in Parliament Pitt was as powerless as he was influential in the country. His renewed proposal of Parliamentary Reform, though he set aside the disfranchisement of rotten boroughs as a violation of private property, and limited himself to the disfranchisement of boroughs convicted of corruption, and to the addition of one hundred members to the county representation, was rejected by a majority of two to one. Secure in their parliamentary majority, and heedless of the power of public opinion outside the walls of the House of Commons, the new Ministers entered boldly on a greater task than had as yet taxed the constructive genius of English statesmen. To leave such a dominion as Warren Hastings had built up in India to the control of a mere Company of traders was clearly impossible; and Fox proposed to transfer its political government from the Directors of the Company to a board of seven Commissioners. The appointment of the seven was vested in the first instance in Parliament, and afterwards in the Crown; their office was to be held for five years, but they were removable on address from either

House of Parliament. The proposal was at once met with a storm of opposition. The scheme indeed was an injudicious one; for the new Commissioners would have been destitute of that practical knowledge of India which belonged to the Company, while the want of any immediate link between them and the actual Ministry of the Crown would have prevented Parliament from exercising an effective control over their acts. But the real faults of this India Bill were hardly noticed in the popular outcry against it. It had challenged the hostility of powerful influences. The merchant-class was galled by the blow levelled at the greatest merchant-body in the realm: corporations trembled at the cancelling of a charter; the king viewed the measure as a mere means of transferring the patronage of India to the Whigs. But it might have defied the opposition of corporations and the king had it not had to meet the bitter hostility of the nation at large. With the nation the faults of the bill lay not in this detail or that, but in the character of the Ministry which proposed it. To give the rule and patronage of India over to the existing House of Commons was to give a new and immense power to a body which misused in the grossest way the power it possessed. It was the sense of this popular feeling which encouraged the king to exert his personal influence to defeat the measure in the Lords, and on its defeat to order his Ministers to deliver up the seals. The unpopularity of Shelburne stood in the way of his resumption of office, and in December 1783 Pitt accepted the post of First Lord of the Treasury. His position would at once have been untenable had the country gone with its nominal representatives. He was defeated again and again by large majorities in the Commons; but the majorities dwindled as a shower of addresses from every quarter, from the Tory University of Oxford as from the Whig Corporation of London, proved that public opinion went with the Minister and not with the House. It was the general sense of this that justified Pitt in the firmness with which, in the teeth of addresses for his removal from office, he delayed the dissolution of Parliament for five months, and gained time for that ripening of the national sentiment on which he counted for success. When the election of 1784 came the struggle was at once at an end. The public feeling took a strength which broke through the corrupt influences that commonly governed its representation. Every great constituency, the counties and the large towns, returned supporters of Pitt. Of the majority which had defeated him in the Commons, a hundred and sixty members were unseated. Fox

hardly retained his seat for Westminster, Burke lost his seat for Bristol, and only a fragment of the Whig party was saved by its command of nomination boroughs.

Pitt's temper.

When Parliament came together after the overthrow of the Coalition, the Minister of twenty-five was master of England as no Minister had been before. Even George the Third yielded to his sway, partly through gratitude for the triumph he had won for him, partly from a sense of the madness which was soon to strike him down, but still more from a gradual discovery that the triumph which he had won over his political rivals had been won, not to the profit of the crown, but of the nation at large. The Whigs, it was true, were broken, unpopular, and without a policy; while the Tories, whom the Coalition had disgusted with Lord North, as it had estranged Fox from their opponents, clung to the Minister who had "saved the king." But it was the support of a new political power that really gave his strength to the young Minister. The sudden rise of English industry was pushing the manufacturer to the front; and the manufacturer pinned his faith from the first in William Pitt. All that the trading classes loved in Chatham, his nobleness of temper, his consciousness of power, his patriotism, his sympathy with a wider world than the world within the Parliament-house, they saw in his son. He had little indeed of the poetic and imaginative side of Chatham's genius, of his quick perception of what was just and what was possible, his far-reaching conceptions of national policy, his outlook into the future of the world. Pitt's flowing and sonorous commonplaces rang hollow beside the broken phrases which still make his father's eloquence a living thing to Englishmen. On the other hand he possessed some qualities in which Chatham was utterly wanting. His temper, though naturally ardent and sensitive, had been schooled in a proud self-command. His simplicity and good taste freed him from his father's ostentation and extravagance. Diffuse and commonplace as his speeches seem to the reader, they were adapted as much by their very qualities of diffuseness and commonplace as by their lucidity and good sense to the intelligence of the classes whom Pitt felt to be his real audience. In his love of peace, his immense industry, his despatch of business, his skill in debate, his knowledge of finance, he recalled Sir Robert Walpole; but he had virtues which Walpole never possessed, and he was free from

Walpole's worst defects. He was careless of personal gain. He was too proud to rule by corruption. His lofty self-esteem left no room for any jealousy of subordinates. He was generous in his appreciation of youthful merits; and the "boys" he gathered round him, such as Canning and Lord Wellesley, rewarded his generosity by a devotion which death left untouched. With Walpole's cynical inaction Pitt had no sympathy whatever. His policy from the first was a policy of active reform, and he faced every one of the problems, financial, constitutional, religious, from which Walpole had shrunk. Above all, he had none of Walpole's scorn of his fellowmen. The noblest feature in his mind was its wide humanity. His love for England was as deep and personal as his father's love, but of the sympathy with English passion and English prejudice which had been at once his father's weakness and strength he had not a trace. When Fox taunted him with forgetting Chatham's jealousy of France and his faith that she was the natural foe of England, Pitt answered nobly that "to suppose any nation can be unalterably the enemy of another is weak and childish."

His statesmanship.

The temper of the time, and the larger sympathy of man with man which especially marks the eighteenth century as a turning-point in the history of the human race, was everywhere bringing to the front a new order of statesmen, such as Turgot and Joseph the Second, whose characteristics were a love of mankind, and a belief that as the happiness of the individual can only be secured by the general happiness of the community to which he belongs, so the welfare of individual nations can only be secured by the general welfare of the world. Of these Pitt was one. But he rose high above the rest in the consummate knowledge and the practical force which he brought to the realization of his aims. His strength lay in finance; and he came forward at a time when the growth of English wealth made a knowledge of finance essential to a great Minister. The progress of the nation was wonderful. Population more than doubled during the eighteenth century, and the advance of wealth was even greater than that of population. Though the war had added a hundred millions to the national debt, the burden was hardly felt. The loss of America only increased the commerce with that country, and industry, as we have seen, had begun that great career which was to make England the workshop of the world. To deal wisely with such a growth

required a knowledge of the laws of wealth which would have been impossible at an earlier time. But it had become possible in the days of Pitt. If books are to be measured by the effect which they have produced on the fortunes of mankind, the “Wealth of Nations” must rank among the greatest of books. Its author was Adam Smith, an Oxford scholar and a professor at Glasgow. Labour, he contended, was the one source of wealth, and it was by freedom of labour, by suffering the worker to pursue his own interest in his own way, that the public wealth would best be promoted. Any attempt to force labour into artificial channels, to shape by laws the course of commerce, to promote special branches of industry in particular countries, or to fix the character of the intercourse between one country and another, is not only a wrong to the worker or the merchant, but actually hurtful to the wealth of a state. The book was published in 1776, at the opening of the American war, and studied by Pitt during his career as an undergraduate at Cambridge. From that time he owned Adam Smith for his master; and he had hardly become Minister before he took the principles of the “Wealth of Nations” as the groundwork of his policy.

Pitt and Parliamentary reform.

It was thus that the ten earlier years of Pitt’s rule marked a new point of departure in English statesmanship. He was the first English Minister who really grasped the part which industry was to play in promoting the welfare of the world. He was not only a peace Minister and a financier, as Walpole had been, but a statesman who saw that the best security for peace lay in the freedom and widening of commercial intercourse between nations; that public economy not only lessened the general burdens but left additional capital in the hands of industry; and that finance might be turned from a mere means of raising revenue into a powerful engine of political and social improvement. That little was done by Pitt himself to carry these principles into effect was partly owing to the mass of ignorance and prejudice with which he had to contend, and still more to the sudden break of his plans through the French Revolution. His power rested above all on the trading classes, and these were still persuaded that wealth meant gold and silver, and that commerce was best furthered by jealous monopolies. It was only by patience and dexterity that the mob of merchants and country squires who backed him in the House of Commons could be brought to

acquiesce in the changes he proposed. How small his power was when it struggled with the prejudices around him was seen in the failure of the first great measure he brought forward. The question of parliamentary reform which had been mooted during the American war had been coming steadily to the front. Chatham had advocated an increase of county members, who were then the most independent part of the Lower House. The Duke of Richmond talked of universal suffrage, equal electoral districts, and annual Parliaments. Wilkes anticipated the Reform Bill of a later time by proposing to disfranchise the rotten boroughs, and to give members in their stead to the counties and to the more populous and wealthy towns. William Pitt had made the question his own by bringing forward a motion for reform on his first entry into the House, and one of his earliest measures as Minister was to bring in a bill in 1785 which, while providing for the gradual extinction of all decayed boroughs, disfranchised thirty-six at once, and transferred their members to counties. He brought the king to abstain from opposition, and strove to buy off the borough-mongers, as the holders of rotten boroughs were called, by offering to compensate them for the seats they lost at their market-value. But the bulk of his own party joined the bulk of the Whigs in a steady resistance to the bill, while it received no effective support from the general opinion of the people without. The more glaring abuses, indeed, within Parliament itself, the abuses which stirred Chatham and Wilkes to action, had in great part disappeared. The bribery of members had ceased. Burke's Bill of Economical Reform had just dealt a fatal blow at the influence which the king exercised by suppressing a host of useless offices, household appointments, judicial and diplomatic charges, which were maintained for the purpose of corruption. But what was probably the most fatal obstacle to any pressure for reform was the triumph of public opinion to which Pitt owed his power. The utter overthrow of the Coalition, the complete victory of public opinion, had done much to diminish the sense of any real danger from the opposition which Parliament had shown till now to the voice of the nation. England, then as now, was indifferent to all but practical grievances; and the nation cared little for anomalies in the form of representation so long as it felt itself represented. "Terribly disappointed and beat," as Wilberforce tells us Pitt was by the rejection of his measure, the temper of the House and of the people was too plain to be mistaken, and though his opinion remained unaltered, he never brought it forward again.

Pitt's finance.

The failure of his constitutional reform was more than compensated by the triumphs of his finance. When he entered office public credit was at its lowest ebb. The debt had been doubled by the American war, yet large sums still remained unfunded, while the revenue was reduced by a vast system of smuggling which turned every coast-town into a nest of robbers. The deficiency in the revenue was met for the moment by new taxes, but the time which was thus gained served to change the whole face of public affairs. The first of Pitt's financial measures—his plan for gradually paying off the debt by a sinking fund—was undoubtedly an error; but it had a happy effect in restoring public confidence. He met the smuggler by a reduction of Custom-duties which made his trade unprofitable. He revived Walpole's plan of an Excise. Meanwhile the public expenses were reduced, and commission after commission was appointed to introduce economy into every department of the public service. The rapid developement of the national industry which we have already noted no doubt aided the success of these measures. Credit was restored. The smuggling trade was greatly reduced. In two years there was a surplus of a million, and though duty after duty was removed the revenue rose steadily with every remission of taxation. Meanwhile Pitt was showing the political value of the new finance in a wider field. Ireland, then as now, was England's difficulty. The tyrannous misgovernment under which she had groaned ever since the battle of the Boyne was producing its natural fruit; the miserable land was torn with political faction, religious feuds, and peasant conspiracies; and so threatening had the attitude of the Protestant party which ruled it become during the American war that they had forced the English Parliament to relinquish its control over their Parliament in Dublin. Pitt saw that much at least of the misery and disloyalty of Ireland sprang from its poverty. The population had grown rapidly, while culture remained stationary and commerce perished. And of this poverty much was the direct result of unjust law. Ireland was a grazing country, but to protect the interest of English graziers the import of its cattle into England was forbidden. To protect the interests of English clothiers and weavers, its manufactures were loaded with duties. To redress this wrong was the first financial effort of Pitt, and the bill which he introduced in 1785 did away with every obstacle to freedom of trade between England and Ireland. It was a measure which, as he held, would "draw what remained of the shattered

empire together,” and repair in part the loss of America by creating a loyal and prosperous Ireland; and, struggling almost alone in face of a fierce opposition from the Whigs and the Manchester merchants, he dragged it through the English Parliament, though only to see it flung aside by the Protestant faction under Grattan which then ruled the Parliament of Ireland. But the defeat only spurred him to a greater effort elsewhere. If Ireland was England’s difficulty, France had been looked upon as England’s natural enemy. We have seen how nobly Pitt rebuked prejudices such as this; but he knew that nothing could so effectively dispel it as increased intercourse between nation and nation. In 1787 therefore he concluded a Treaty of Commerce with France which enabled subjects of both countries to reside and travel in either without licence or passport, did away with all prohibition of trade on either side, and reduced every import duty.

England and Europe.

The immediate result of this treaty was a great increase of trade between France and England; and brief as its course was fated to be, it at once set Pitt on a higher level than any rival statesman of his time. But the spirit of humanity which breathed through his policy had to wrestle with difficulties both at home and abroad. No measure secured a warmer support from the young Minister than the bill for the suppression of the slave-trade; but in 1788 it was defeated by the vigorous opposition of the trading classes and the prejudice of the people at large. His efforts to sap the enmity of nation against nation by a freer intercourse encountered a foe even more fatal than English prejudice, in the very movement of which his measures formed a part. Across the Channel this movement was growing into a revolution which was to change the face of the world. That such a revolution must one day come, every observer who had compared the state of Europe with that of England had long seen to be inevitable. So far as England was concerned, the Puritan resistance of the seventeenth century had in the end succeeded in checking the general tendency of the time to religious and political despotism. Since the Revolution of 1688 freedom of conscience and the people’s right to govern itself through its representatives in Parliament had been practically established. Social equality had begun long before. Every man from the highest to the lowest was subject to, and protected by, the same law. The English aristocracy, though exercising a powerful

influence on government, were possessed of few social privileges, and hindered from forming a separate class in the nation by the legal and social tradition which counted all save the eldest son of a noble house as commoners. No impassable line parted the gentry from the commercial classes, and these again possessed no privileges which could part them from the lower classes of the community. Public opinion, the general sense of educated Englishmen, had established itself after a short struggle as the dominant element in English government. But in all the other great states of Europe the wars of religion had left only the name of freedom. Government tended to a pure despotism. Privilege was supreme in religion, in politics, in society. Society itself rested on a rigid division of classes from one another, which refused to the people at large any equal rights of justice or of industry.

France.

We have already seen how alien such a conception of national life was from the ideas which the wide diffusion of intelligence during the eighteenth century was spreading throughout Europe; and in almost every country some enlightened rulers were striving by administrative reforms to satisfy in some sort the sense of wrong which was felt around them. The attempts of sovereigns like Frederick the Great in Prussia and Joseph the Second in Austria and the Netherlands were rivalled by the efforts of statesmen such as Turgot in France. It was in France indeed that the contrast between the actual state of society and the new ideas of public right was felt most keenly. Nowhere had the victory of the Crown been more complete. The aristocracy had been robbed of all share in public affairs; it enjoyed social privileges and exemption from any contribution to the public burdens without that sense of public duty which a governing class to some degree always possesses. Guilds and monopolies fettered the industry of the trader and the merchant, and cut them off from the working classes, as the value attached to noble blood cut off both from the aristocracy. If its political position indeed were compared with that of most of the countries round it, France stood high. Its government was less oppressive, its general wealth was larger and more evenly diffused, there was a better administration of justice, and greater security for public order. Poor as its peasantry seemed to English eyes, they were far above the peasants of Germany or Spain. Its middle class was the quickest and most intelligent in Europe. Under Lewis the

Fifteenth opinion was practically free, and a literary class had sprung up which devoted itself with wonderful brilliancy and activity to popularizing the ideas of social and political justice which it learned from English writers, and in the case of Montesquieu and Voltaire from personal contact with English life. The moral conceptions of the time, its love of mankind, its sense of human brotherhood, its hatred of oppression, its pity for the guilty and the poor, its longing after a higher and nobler standard of life and action, were expressed by a crowd of writers, and above all by Rousseau, with a fire and eloquence which carried them to the heart of the people. But this new force of intelligence only jostled roughly with the social forms with which it found itself in contact. The philosopher denounced the tyranny of the priesthood. The peasant grumbled at the lord's right to judge him in his courts and to exact feudal services from him. The merchant was galled by the trading restrictions and the heavy taxation. The country gentry rebelled against their exclusion from public life and from the government of the country. Its powerlessness to bring about any change at home turned all this new energy into sympathy with a struggle against tyranny abroad. Public opinion forced France to ally itself with America in its contest for liberty, and French volunteers under the Marquis de Lafayette joined Washington's army. But while the American war spread more widely throughout the nation the craving for freedom, it brought on the Government financial embarrassments from which it could only free itself by an appeal to the country at large. Lewis the Sixteenth resolved to summon the States-General, which had not met since the time of Richelieu, and to appeal to the nobles to waive their immunity from taxation. His resolve at once stirred into vigorous life every impulse and desire which had been seething in the minds of the people; and the States-General no sooner met at Versailles in May 1789 than the fabric of despotism and privilege began to crumble. A rising in Paris destroyed the Bastille, and the capture of this fortress was taken for the dawn of a new era of constitutional freedom in France and through Europe. Even in England men thrilled with a strange joy at the tidings of its fall. "How much is this the greatest event that ever happened in the world," Fox cried with a burst of enthusiasm, "and how much the best!"

Pitt and Russia.

Pitt regarded the approach of France to sentiments of liberty which had long been familiar to England with greater coolness, but with no distrust. For the moment indeed his attention was distracted by an attack of madness which visited George the Third in 1788, and by the claim of a right to the Regency which was at once advanced by the Prince of Wales. The Prince belonged to the Whig party; and Fox, who was travelling in Italy, hurried home to support his claim in full belief that the Prince's Regency would be followed by his own return to power. Pitt successfully resisted the claim on the constitutional ground that in such a case the right to choose a temporary Regent, under what limitations it would, lay with Parliament; and a bill which conferred the Regency on the Prince, in accordance with this view, was already passing the Houses when the recovery of the king put an end to the long dispute. Foreign difficulties, too, absorbed Pitt's attention. Russia had risen into greatness under Catharine the Second; and Catharine had resolved from the first on the annexation of Poland, the expulsion of the Turks from Europe, and the setting up of a Russian throne at Constantinople. In her first aim she was baffled for the moment by Frederick the Great. She had already made herself virtually mistress of the whole of Poland, her armies occupied the kingdom, and she had seated a nominee of her own on its throne, when Frederick in union with the Emperor Joseph the Second forced her to admit Germany to a share of the spoil. If the Polish partition of 1773 brought the Russian frontier westward to the upper waters of the Dwina and the Dnieper, it gave Galicia to Maria Theresa, and West Prussia to Frederick himself. Foiled in her first aim, she waited for the realization of her second till the alliance between the two German powers was at an end through the resistance of Prussia to Joseph's schemes for the annexation of Bavaria, and till the death of Frederick removed her most watchful foe. Then in 1788 Joseph and the Empress joined hands for a partition of the Turkish Empire. But Prussia was still watchful, and England was no longer fettered as in 1773 by troubles with America. The friendship established by Chatham between the two countries, which had been suspended by Bute's treachery and all but destroyed during the Northern League of Neutral Powers, had been restored by Pitt through his co-operation with the successor of Frederick the Great in the restoration of the Dutch Stadtholderate. Its political weight was now seen in an alliance of England, Prussia, and Holland, in 1789, for the preservation of the Turkish Empire. A great European struggle seemed at

hand. In such a struggle the sympathy and aid of France were of the highest importance; and it was only as weakening her in face of such a crisis that Pitt looked on the Revolution with any fear. But with the treaty the danger passed away. In the spring of 1790 Joseph died broken-hearted at the failure of his plans and the revolt of the Netherlands against his innovations; Austria practically withdrew from the war with the Turks; and the young Minister could give free expression to the sympathy with which the French movement inspired him.

The French Revolution.

In France indeed things were moving fast. By breaking down the division between its separate orders the States-General became a National Assembly, which abolished the privileges of the provincial parliaments, of the nobles, and the Church. In October 1789 the mob of Paris marched on Versailles and forced both King and Assembly to return with them to the capital; and a Constitution hastily put together was accepted by Lewis the Sixteenth in the stead of his old despotic power. To Pitt the tumult and disorder with which these great changes were wrought seemed transient matters. In January 1790 he still believed that "the present convulsions in France must sooner or later culminate in general harmony and regular order," and that when her own freedom was established, "France would stand forth as one of the most brilliant powers of Europe." But the coolness and goodwill with which Pitt looked on the Revolution were far from being universal in the nation at large. The cautious good sense of the bulk of Englishmen, their love of order and law, their distaste for violent changes and for abstract theories, as well as their reverence for the past, were rousing throughout the country a dislike of the revolutionary changes which were hurrying on across the Channel; and both the political sense and the political prejudice of the nation were being fired by the warnings of Edmund Burke. The fall of the Bastille, though it kindled enthusiasm in Fox, roused in Burke only distrust. "Whenever a separation is made between liberty and justice," he wrote a few weeks later, "neither is safe." The night of the fourth of August, when the privileges of every class were abolished, filled him with horror. He saw, and rightly saw, in it the critical moment which revealed the character of the Revolution, and his part was taken at once. "The French," he cried in January, while Pitt was foretelling a glorious future for the new Constitution, "the French have

shown themselves the ablest architects of ruin who have hitherto existed in the world. In a short space of time they have pulled to the ground their army, their navy, their commerce, their arts and their manufactures.”

Pitt and France.

But in Parliament Burke stood alone. The Whigs, though distrustfully, followed Fox in his applause of the Revolution. The Tories, yet more distrustfully, followed Pitt; and Pitt warmly expressed his sympathy with the constitutional government which was ruling France. At this moment indeed the more revolutionary party in that country gave a signal proof of its friendship for England. Irritated by an English settlement at Nootka Sound in California, Spain appealed to France for aid in accordance with the Family Compact; and the French Ministry, with a party at its back which believed things had gone far enough, resolved on a war as the best means of checking the progress of the Revolution and restoring the power of the Crown. The revolutionary party naturally opposed this design; and after a bitter struggle the right of declaring war, save with the sanction of the Assembly, was taken from the king. With this vote all danger of hostilities passed away. “The French Government,” Pitt asserted, “was bent on cultivating the most unbounded friendship for Great Britain,” and he saw no reason in its revolutionary changes why Britain should not return the friendship of France. What told even more on his temper towards that country was a conviction that nothing but the joint action of France and England would in the end arrest the troubles of Eastern Europe. His intervention foiled for the moment a fresh effort of Prussia to rob Poland of Dantzic and Thorn. But though Russia was still pressing Turkey hard, a Russian war was so unpopular in England that a hostile vote in Parliament forced Pitt to discontinue his armaments; and a fresh union of Austria and Prussia, which promised at this juncture to bring about a close of the Turkish struggle, promised also a fresh attack on the independence of Poland. To prevent a new partition without the co-operation of France was impossible; and in the existing state of things Pitt saw nothing to hinder the continuance of a friendship which would make such a co-operation inevitable.

Burke and the Revolution.

But while Pitt was pleading for friendship between the two countries, Burke was resolved to make friendship impossible. In Parliament, as we have seen, he stood alone. He had long ceased, in fact, to have any hold over the House of Commons. The eloquence which had vied with that of Chatham during the discussions on the Stamp Act had become distasteful to the bulk of its members. The length of his speeches, the profound and philosophical character of his argument, the splendour and often the extravagance of his illustrations, his passionate earnestness, his want of temper and discretion, wearied and perplexed the squires and merchants about him. He was known nowadays as “the dinner-bell of the House,” so rapidly did its benches thin at his rising. For a time his energies found scope in the impeachment of Hastings; and the grandeur of his appeals to the justice of England hushed detraction. But with the close of the impeachment his repute had again fallen; and the approach of old age, for he was now past sixty, seemed to counsel retirement from an assembly where he stood unpopular and alone. But age and disappointment and loneliness were forgotten as Burke saw rising across the Channel the embodiment of all that he hated—a Revolution founded on scorn of the past, and threatening with ruin the whole social fabric which the past had reared; the ordered structure of classes and ranks crumbling before a doctrine of social equality; a State rudely demolished and reconstituted; a Church and a Nobility swept away in a night. Against the enthusiasm of what he rightly saw to be a new political religion he resolved to rouse the enthusiasm of the old. He was at once a great orator and a great writer; and now that the House was deaf to his voice, he appealed to the country by his pen. The “Reflections on the French Revolution” which he published in October 1790 not only denounced the acts of rashness and violence which sullied the great change that France had wrought, but the very principles from which the change had sprung. Burke’s deep sense of the need of social order, of the value of that continuity in human affairs “without which men would become like flies in a summer,” blinded him to all but the faith in mere rebellion and the yet sillier faith in mere novelty which disguised a real nobleness of aim and temper even in the most ardent of the revolutionists. He would see no abuses in the past, now that it had fallen, or anything but the ruin of society in the future. He preached a crusade against men whom he regarded as the foes of religion and civilization,

and called on the armies of Europe to put down a Revolution whose principles threatened every state with destruction.

His failure in Parliament.

The great obstacle to such a crusade was Pitt: and one of the grandest outbursts of the "Reflections" closed with a bitter taunt at the Minister. "The age of chivalry," Burke cried, "is gone; that of sophisters, economists, and calculators has succeeded, and the glory of Europe is extinguished for ever." But neither taunt nor invective moved Pitt from his course. At the moment when the "Reflections" appeared he gave a fresh assurance to France of his resolve to have nothing to do with any crusade against the Revolution. "This country," he wrote, "means to persevere in the neutrality hitherto scrupulously observed with respect to the internal dissensions of France; and from which it will never depart unless the conduct held there makes it indispensable as an act of self-defence." So far indeed was he from sharing the reactionary panic which was spreading around him that he chose this time for supporting Fox in his Libel Act, a measure which, by transferring the decision on what was libellous in any publication from the judge to the jury, completed the freedom of the press; and himself passed in 1791 a bill which, though little noticed among the storms of the time, was one of the noblest of his achievements. He boldly put aside the dread which had been roused by the American war, that the gift of self-government to our colonies would serve only as a step towards their secession from the mother country, and established a House of Assembly and a Council in the two Canadas. "I am convinced," said Fox, who gave the measure his hearty support, "that the only method of retaining distant colonies with advantage is to enable them to govern themselves"; and the policy of the one statesman as well as the foresight of the other has been justified by the later history of our dependencies. Nor had Burke better success with his own party. Fox remained an ardent lover of the Revolution, and answered a fresh attack of Burke upon it with more than usual warmth. Till now a close affection had bound the two men together; but no sooner had this defence been uttered than the fanaticism of Burke declared their union to be over. "There is no loss of friendship," Fox exclaimed, with a sudden burst of tears. "There is!" Burke repeated. "I know the price of my conduct. Our friendship is at an end."

His success with the country.

Within the walls of Parliament however Burke as yet stood utterly alone. His "Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs," in June 1791, failed to detach a follower from Fox; while Pitt coldly counselled him rather to praise the English Constitution than to rail at the French. "I have made many enemies and few friends," Burke wrote sadly to the French princes who had fled from their country and were gathering in arms at Coblenz, "by the part I have taken." But the opinion of the people was slowly drifting to his side; and a sale of thirty thousand copies showed that the "Reflections" echoed the general sentiment of Englishmen. At this moment indeed the mood of England was singularly unfavourable to any fair appreciation of the Revolution across the Channel. Her temper was above all industrial. Men who were working hard and fast growing rich, who had the narrow and practical turn of men of business, looked angrily at this sudden disturbance of order, this restless and vague activity, these rhetorical appeals to human feeling, these abstract and often empty theories. In England it was a time of political content and social well-being, of steady economic progress, as well as of a powerful religious revival; and an insular lack of imaginative interest in other races hindered men from seeing that every element of this content, of this order, of this peaceful and harmonious progress, of this reconciliation of society and religion, was wanting abroad. The sympathy which the first outbreak of the Revolution had roused among Englishmen grew cooler in fact with every step which the Revolution took. While the Declaration of the Rights of Man roused France to a frenzy of enthusiasm, it was set aside as a dream by the practical islanders who based their rights on precedent and not on theory. The abolition of all social privileges on the 12th of August, the most characteristic step in the French Revolution, was met with grave disapproval by a people more alien from social equality than any people in Europe. Every incident in the struggle between the French people and their king widened the breach of feeling. The anarchy of the country, the want of political sense in its Assembly, the paltry declamation of its clubs, the exaggerated sentiment, the universal suspicion, the suspension of every security for personal freedom, the arrests, the murders, the overthrow of the Church, the ruin of the Crown, were watched with an ever-growing severity by a nation whose chief instinct was one of order, whose bent was to practical politics, whose temper was sober and trustful, whose passionate love of personal liberty was only equalled by its passionate abhorrence of

bloodshed in civil strife, and whose ecclesiastical and political institutions were newly endeared to it by a fresh revival of religious feeling, and by the constitutional attitude of its Government for a hundred years.

The coalition against France.

Sympathy in fact was soon limited to a few groups of reformers who gathered in "Constitutional Clubs," and whose reckless language quickened the national reaction. But in spite of Burke's appeals and the cries of the nobles who had fled from France and longed only to march against their country, Europe held back from any attack on the Revolution, and Pitt preserved his attitude of neutrality, though with a greater appearance of reserve. So anxious, in fact, did the aspect of affairs in the East make him for the restoration of tranquillity in France, that he foiled a plan which its emigrant nobles had formed for a descent on the French coast, and declared formally at Vienna that England would remain absolutely neutral should hostilities arise between France and the Emperor. But the Emperor was as anxious to avoid a French war as Pitt himself. Though Catharine, now her strife with Turkey was over, wished to plunge the two German powers into a struggle with the Revolution which would leave her free to annex Poland single-handed, neither Leopold nor Prussia would tie their hands by such a contest. The flight of Louis the Sixteenth from Paris in June 1791 brought Europe for a moment to the verge of war; but he was intercepted and brought back: and for a while the danger seemed to incline the revolutionists in France to greater moderation. Louis too not only accepted the Constitution, but pleaded earnestly with the Emperor against any armed intervention as certain to bring ruin to his throne. In their conference at Pillnitz therefore, in August, Leopold and the king of Prussia contented themselves with a vague declaration inviting the European powers to cooperate in restoring a sound form of government in France, availed themselves of England's neutrality to refuse all military aid to the French princes, and dealt simply with the affairs of Poland. But the peace they desired soon became impossible. The Constitutional Royalists in France availed themselves of the irritation caused by the Declaration of Pillnitz to revive the cry for a war which, as they hoped, would give strength to the throne. The more violent revolutionists, or Jacobins, on the other hand, abandoned their advocacy of peace. Under the influence of the

“Girondists,” the deputies from the south of France, whose aim was a republic, and who saw in a great national struggle a means of overthrowing the monarchy, they decided, in spite of the opposition of their leader, Robespierre, on a contest with the Emperor. Both parties united to demand the breaking up of an army which the emigrant princes had formed on the Rhine; and though Leopold before his death assented to this demand, France declared war against his successor, Francis, in April 1792.

CHAPTER IV

ENGLAND AND REVOLUTIONARY FRANCE

1792-1801

England and the Revolutionists.

That the war with Germany would widen into a vast European struggle, a struggle in which the peoples would rise against their oppressors, and the freedom which France had won diffuse itself over the world, no French revolutionist doubted for an hour. Nor did they doubt that in this struggle England would join them. It was from England that they had drawn those principles of political and social liberty which they believed themselves to be putting into practice. It was to England that they looked above all for approbation and sympathy, and on the aid of England that they confidently counted in their struggle with a despotic and priest-ridden Europe. Absorbed in the mighty events about them, and utterly ignorant of the real set of English feeling or the real meaning of Pitt's policy, they were astonished and indignant at his firm refusal of their alliance and his resolve to stand apart from the struggle. It was in vain that Pitt strove to allay this irritation by demanding only that Holland should remain untouched, and promising neutrality even though Belgium should be occupied by a French army, or that he strengthened these pledges by a reduction of military forces, and by bringing forward in 1792 a peace-budget which rested on a large remission of taxation. To the revolutionists at Paris the attitude of England remained unintelligible and irritating. Instead of the aid they had counted on, they found but a cold neutrality. In place of the sympathy on which they reckoned, they saw, now that they looked coolly across the Channel, a reserve passing into disapproval. The pen of Burke was denouncing the Revolution as the very negation of those principles on which English liberty rested. The priests and nobles who had fled from the new France were finding pity and welcome on English shores. And now that France flung herself on an armed Europe to win freedom for its peoples from their kings, England stood coldly apart. To men frenzied with a passionate enthusiasm, and frenzied yet more with a sudden terror at the dangers they were

encountering, such an attitude of neutrality in such a quarter seemed like a stab in the back.

Their efforts in England.

But that this attitude was that of the English people as a whole was incredible to the French enthusiasts. Conscious as no Englishman could be conscious of the great evils they had overthrown, of the great benefits they had won for their country, they saw in the attitude of England only the sympathy of an aristocracy with the aristocracy they had struck down. The cries for a parliamentary reform which reached them across the Channel became in their ears cries of a people as powerless and oppressed as the people of France had been. They still clung to the hope of England's aid in the emancipation of Europe from despotism and superstition, but they came now to believe that England must itself be emancipated before such an aid could be given. Their first work therefore they held to be the bringing about a revolution in England which might free the people from the aristocracy and the aristocratic government which held it down. But this was far from being all the work they looked to accomplishing. The aristocracy which oppressed the people at home oppressed, as they believed, great peoples beyond the bounds of England itself. It was subjecting to its sway nation after nation in India. Its rule over Ireland was a masterpiece of tyranny. To rouse India, to rouse Ireland to a struggle which should shake off the English yoke, became necessary steps to the establishment of freedom in England itself. From the moment therefore that the opposition between the two countries declared itself, French agents were busy "sowing the revolution" in each quarter. In Ireland they entered into communication with the United Irishmen. In India they appeared at the courts of the native princes, and above all at the court of Mysore. Meanwhile in England itself they strove through a number of associations, which had formed themselves under the name of Constitutional Clubs, to rouse the same spirit which they had roused in France; and the French envoy, Chauvelin, protested warmly against a proclamation which denounced this correspondence as seditious.

The Coalition attacks France.

Such a course could only knit men of all parties together in a common resentment; and the effect of these revolutionary efforts on the

friends of the Revolution was seen in a declaration which they wrested from Fox, that at such a moment even the discussion of parliamentary reform was inexpedient. A far worse result was the new strength they gave to its foes. Burke was still working hard in writings whose extravagance of style was forgotten in their intensity of feeling to spread alarm throughout Europe. He had from the first encouraged the emigrant princes to take arms, and sent his son to join them at Coblenz. "Be alarmists," he wrote to them; "diffuse terror!" But the royalist terror which he sowed would have been of little moment had it not roused a revolutionary terror in France itself. At the threat of war against the Emperor the two German Courts had drawn together, and reluctantly abandoning all hope of peace with France, gathered eighty thousand men under the Duke of Brunswick, and advanced slowly in August 1792 on the Meuse. France, though she had forced on the struggle, was really almost defenceless; her forces in Belgium broke at the first shock of arms into shameful rout; and the panic, as it spread from the soldiery to the nation at large, took violent and horrible forms. At the first news of Brunswick's advance the mob of Paris broke into the Tuileries on the 10th of August; and at its demand Lewis, who had taken refuge in the Assembly, was suspended from his office and imprisoned in the Temple. In the following September, while General Dumouriez by boldness and adroit negotiations was arresting the progress of the Allies in the defiles of the Argonne, bodies of paid murderers butchered the royalist prisoners who crowded the gaols of Paris, with a view of influencing the elections to a new Convention which met to proclaim the abolition of royalty. The retreat of the Prussian army, whose numbers had been reduced by disease till an advance on Paris became impossible, and a brilliant victory won by Dumouriez at Jemappes which laid the Netherlands at his feet, turned the panic of the French into a wild self-confidence. In November the Convention decreed that France offered the aid of her soldiers to all nations who would strive for freedom. "All governments are our enemies," cried its President; "all peoples are our allies." In the teeth of treaties signed only two years before, and of the stipulation made by England when it pledged itself to neutrality, the French Government resolved to attack Holland, and ordered its generals to enforce by arms the opening of the Scheldt.

France declares war with England.

To do this was to force England into war. Public opinion was already pressing every day harder upon Pitt. The horror of the massacres of September, the hideous despotism of the Parisian mob, did more to estrange England from the Revolution than all the eloquence of Burke. But even while withdrawing our Minister from Paris on the imprisonment of the king, to whose Court he had been commissioned, Pitt clung stubbornly to a policy of peace. His hope was to bring the war to an end through English mediation, and to “leave France, which I believe is the best way, to arrange its own internal affairs as it can.” No hour of Pitt’s life is so great as the hour when he stood lonely and passionless before the growth of national passion, and refused to bow to the gathering cry for war. Even the news of the September massacres could only force from him a hope that France might abstain from any war of conquest and might escape from its social anarchy. In October the French agent in England reported that Pitt was about to recognize the Republic. At the opening of November he still pressed on Holland a steady neutrality. It was France, and not England, which at last wrenched peace from his grasp. The decree of the Convention and the attack on the Dutch left him no choice but war, for it was impossible for England to endure a French fleet at Antwerp, or to desert allies like the United Provinces. But even in December the news of the approaching partition of Poland nerved him to a last struggle for peace; he offered to aid Austria in acquiring Bavaria if she would make terms with France, and pledged himself to France to abstain from war if that power would cease from violating the independence of her neighbour states. But desperately as Pitt struggled for peace, his struggle was in vain. Across the Channel his moderation was only taken for fear, while in England the general mourning which followed on the news of the French king’s execution showed the growing ardour for the contest. The rejection of his last offers indeed made a contest inevitable. Both sides ceased from diplomatic communications, and in February 1793 France issued her Declaration of War.

The Panic.

From that moment Pitt’s power was at an end. His pride, his immoveable firmness, and the general confidence of the nation, still kept him at the head of affairs; but he could do little save drift along with a tide of popular feeling which he never fully understood. Around him the

country broke out in a fit of passion and panic which rivalled the passion and panic over sea. The confidence of France in its illusions as to opinion in England deluded for the moment even Englishmen themselves. The partisans of Republicanism were in reality but a few handfuls of men who played at gathering Conventions, and at calling themselves citizens and patriots, in childish imitation of what was going on across the Channel. But in the mass of Englishmen the dread of these revolutionists passed for the hour into sheer panic. Even the bulk of the Whig party believed property and the constitution to be in peril, and forsook Fox when he still proclaimed his faith in France and the Revolution. The "Old Whigs," as they called themselves, with the Duke of Portland, Earls Spencer and Fitzwilliam, and Mr. Windham at their head, followed Burke in giving their adhesion to the Government. Pitt himself, though little touched by the political reaction which was to constitute the creed of those who represented themselves as "Pittites," was shaken by the dream of social danger, which was turning the wisest heads about him. For a moment at least his cool good sense bent to believe in the existence of "thousands of bandits" who were ready to rise against the throne, to plunder every landlord, and to sack London. "Paine is no fool," he said to his niece, who quoted to him a passage from the *Rights of Man*, in which that author had vindicated the principles of the Revolution. "He is perhaps right; but if I did what he wants I should have thousands of bandits on my hands to-morrow and London burnt." It was this sense of social danger which alone reconciled him to the war. It would have been impossible indeed for Pitt, or for any other English statesman, to have stood idly by while France annexed the Netherlands and marched to annex Holland. He must in any case have fought even had France not forced him to fight by her declaration of war. But bitter as the need of such a struggle was to him, he accepted it with the less reluctance that war, as he trusted, would check the progress of "French principles" in England itself.

The worst issue of this panic was the series of legislative measures in which it found expression. The Habeas Corpus Act was suspended, a bill against seditious assemblies restricted the liberty of public meeting, and a wider scope was given to the Statute of Treasons. Prosecution after prosecution was directed against the Press; the sermons of some dissenting ministers were indicted as seditious; and the conventions of sympathizers with France were roughly broken up. The worst excesses of

this panic were witnessed in Scotland, where young Whigs, whose only offence was an advocacy of parliamentary reform, were sentenced to transportation, and where a brutal Judge openly expressed his regret that the practice of torture in seditious cases should have fallen into disuse. But the panic soon passed away for sheer want of material to feed on. The bloodshed and anarchy of the Jacobin rule disgusted the last sympathizers with France. To staunch Whigs like Romilly, the French, after the massacres of October, seemed a mere “nation of tigers.” The good sense of the nation discovered the unreality of the dangers which had driven it to its short-lived frenzy; and when the leaders of the Corresponding Society, a body which expressed sympathy with France, were brought to trial in 1794 on a charge of high treason, their acquittal told that all active terror was over. So far indeed was the nation from any danger of social overthrow that, save for occasional riots to which the poor were goaded by sheer want of bread, no social disturbance troubled England during the twenty years of struggle which lay before it. But though the public terror passed, it left a terrible legacy behind. The blind reaction against all reform which had sprung from the panic lasted on when the panic was forgotten. For nearly a quarter of a century it was hard to get a hearing for any measure which threatened change to an existing institution, beneficial though the change might be. Even the philanthropic movement which so nobly characterized the time found itself checked and hampered by the dread of revolution.

Easy however as Pitt found it to deal with “French principles” at home, he found it less easy to deal with French armies abroad. The very excellences of his character indeed unfitted him for the conduct of a war. He was at heart a Peace Minister; he was forced into war by a panic and enthusiasm which he shared in a very small degree; and he was utterly destitute of his father’s gift of entering instinctively into the sympathies and passions around him, and of rousing passions and sympathies in return. At first indeed all seemed to go ill for France. When the campaign of 1793 opened she was girt in along her whole frontier by a ring of foes. The forces of the House of Austria, of the Empire, and of the King of Prussia, pressed her to the north and the east; those of Spain and Sardinia attacked her in the south; and the accession of England to this league threatened to close the sea against her. The efforts of these foreign foes were seconded too by civil war. The peasants of Poitou and Brittany, estranged from the revolution by its attack on the clergy, rose in revolt

against the government at Paris; while Marseilles and Lyons were driven into insurrection by the violent leaders who now seized on power in the capital. The campaign opened therefore with a series of terrible reverses. In spite of the efforts of General Dumouriez the French were foiled in their attack on Holland and driven, after a disastrous defeat at Neerwinden, from the Netherlands. At the moment when the Duke of York with ten thousand English troops joined the Austrian army on the northern border of France, a march upon Paris would have crushed the revolution. But the chance was lost. At this moment indeed the two German powers were far from wishing honestly for the suppression of the Republic and the re-establishment of a strong monarchy in France. Such a restoration would have foiled their projects of aggrandizement in Eastern Europe. The strife on the Rhine had set Russia free, as Pitt had foreseen, to carry out her schemes of aggression; and Austria and Prussia saw themselves forced, in the interest of a balance of power, to share in her annexations at the cost of Poland. But this new division of Poland would have become impossible had France been enabled by a restoration of its monarchy to take up again its natural position in Europe, and to accept the alliance which Pitt would in such a case have offered her. The policy of the German courts therefore was to prolong an anarchy which left them free for the moment to crush Poland, and which they counted on crushing in its turn at a more convenient time; and the allied armies which might have marched upon Paris were purposely frittered away in sieges in the Netherlands and the Rhine.

The revival of France.

Such a policy gave France all that she needed to recover from the shock of her past disasters: it gave her time. Whatever were the crimes and tyranny of her leaders, the country felt in spite of them the value of the Revolution, and rallied enthusiastically to its support. The strength of the revolt in La Vendée was broken. The insurrection in the south was drowned in blood. The Spanish invaders were held at bay at the foot of the Pyrenees, and the Piedmontese were driven from Nice and Savoy. At the close of the year a fresh blow fell upon the struggling country in the revolt of Toulon, the naval station of its Mediterranean fleet. The town called for foreign aid against the government at Paris; and Lord Hood entered the port with an English squadron, while a force of 11,000 men, gathered hastily from every quarter, was despatched under General

O'Hara as a garrison. But the successes against Spain and Savoy freed the hands of France at this critical moment: the town was at once invested, and the seizure of a promontory which commanded the harbour, a step counselled by a young artillery officer, Napoleon Buonaparte, brought about the withdrawal of the garrison and the surrender of Toulon. The success was a prelude of what was to come. At the opening of 1794 a victory at Fleurus, which again made the French masters of the Netherlands, showed that the tide had turned. France was united within by the cessation of the Terror and of the tyranny of the Jacobins, while on every border victory followed the gigantic efforts with which she met the coalition against her. The coalition indeed was fast breaking up. Spain sued for peace. Prussia, more intent on her gains in the east than on any battle with the revolution on the west, prepared to follow Spain's example by the withdrawal of her armies from the Rhine. It was only by English subsidies that Austria and Sardinia were still kept in the field; and the Rhine provinces were wrested from the first, while the forces of Sardinia were driven back from the Riviera and the Maritime Alps into the plain of Piedmont. Before the year ended Holland was lost. Pichegru crossed the Waal in midwinter with an overwhelming force, and the wretched remnant of ten thousand men who had followed the Duke of York to the Netherlands, thinned by disease and by the hardships of retreat, re-embarked for England.

Howe's victory.

In one quarter only had the fortune of war gone against the French republic. The victories of Rodney at the close of the strife with America had concentrated English interest on the fleet. Even during the peace, while the army was sacrificed to financial distress, great efforts were made to preserve the efficiency of the navy; and the recent alarms of war with Russia and Spain had ended in raising it to a strength which it had never reached before. But France was as eager as England herself to dispute the sovereignty of the seas, and almost equal attention had been bestowed on the navy which crowded the great harbours of Toulon and Brest. In force as in number of ships it was equal in effective strength to that of England; and both nations looked with hope to the issue of a contest at sea. No battle marked the first year of the war; but, as it ended, the revolt of Toulon gave a fatal wound to the naval strength of France in the almost total destruction of her Mediterranean fleet. That of the

Channel however remained unhurt; and it was this which Lord Howe at last encountered, off Brest in 1794, in the battle which is known by the name of the day on which it was fought—The “First of June.” The number of ships on either side was nearly the same, and the battle was one of sheer hard fighting, unmarked by any display of naval skill. But the result was a decisive victory for England, and the French admiral, weakened by a loss of seven vessels and three thousand men, again took refuge in Brest.

Break-up of the Coalition.

The success of Lord Howe did somewhat to counteract the discouragement which sprang from the general aspect of the war. At the opening of 1795 the coalition finally gave way. Holland had been detached from it by Pichegru’s conquest, and the Batavian republic which he set up there was now an ally of France. In the spring Prussia bought peace at Basle by the cession of her possessions west of the Rhine. Peace with Spain followed in the summer, while Sweden and the Protestant cantons of Switzerland recognized the republic. These terrible blows were hardly met by the success of the Austrian army in relieving Mainz, or by the colonial acquisitions of England. The latter indeed were far from being inconsiderable. Most of the West-Indian Islands which had been held by France now fell into British hands; and the alliance of Holland with the French threw open to English attack the far more valuable settlements of the Dutch. The surrender of Cape Town in September gave England the colony of the Cape of Good Hope, the nucleus of what has since grown into a vast southern settlement which is destined to play a great part in the history of Africa. At the close of the year the Island of Ceylon was added to our Indian dependencies. Both of these acquisitions were destined to remain permanently attached to England, though at the moment their value was eclipsed by the conquest of the Dutch colonies in the Pacific, the more famous Spice Islands of the Malaccas and Java. But, important as these gains were in their after issues, they had no immediate influence on the war. The French armies prepared for the invasion of Italy; while in France itself discord came well-nigh to an end. A descent by a force of French emigrants on the coast of Brittany ended in their massacre at Quiberon and in the final cessation of the war in La Vendée; while the royalist party in Paris was

crushed as soon as it rose against the Convention by the genius of Napoleon Buonaparte.

Pitt's effort for peace.

But the fresh severities against the ultra-republicans which followed on the establishment of a Directory after this success indicated the moderate character of the new government, and Pitt seized on this change in the temper of the French Government as giving an opening for peace. The dread of a Jacobin propagandism was now all but at an end. In spite of an outbreak of the London mob, whose cries meant chiefly impatience of dear bread, but which brought about a fresh suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act and the introduction of a Bill "for the prosecution of seditious meetings," the fear of any social disturbance or of the spread of "French principles" in England was fast passing away from men's minds. The new constitution which France accepted in 1795 showed that the tendencies of the French themselves were now rather to order than to freedom. The old grounds for the struggle therefore had ceased to exist; while the pressure of it grew hourly more intolerable. Pitt himself was sick of the strife. The war indeed had hardly begun when he found himself without the means of carrying it on. The English navy was in a high state of efficiency; but the financial distress which followed the American war had brought with it a neglect of the army. The army was not only small, but without proper equipment; and the want of military experience among its soldiers was only equalled by the incapacity of their leaders. "We have no general," Lord Grenville wrote bitterly, "but some old woman in a red riband." Wretched, too, as had been the conduct of the war, its cost was already terrible; for if England was without soldiers she had wealth, and in default of nobler means of combating the revolution Pitt had been forced to use wealth as an engine of war. He became the paymaster of the coalition, and his subsidies kept the allied armies in the field. But the immense loans which these called for, and the quick growth of expenditure, undid all the financial reforms on which the young minister prided himself. Taxation, which had reached its lowest point at the outbreak of the contest, mounted ere a few years were past to a height undreamed of before. The debt rose by leaps and bounds. In three years nearly eighty millions had been added to it, a sum greater than that piled up by the whole war with America, and in the

opening of 1796 votes were taken for loans which amounted to twenty-five millions more.

The dogged temper of England.

Nor was this wreck of his financial hopes Pitt's only ground for desiring a close of the war. From the first, as we have seen, he had been keenly sensitive to the European dangers which the contest involved; nor had he shown, even in his moment of social panic, the fanatical blindness of men like Burke to the evils which had produced the revolution, or to the good which it had wrought. But he could only listen in silence while the Marquis of Lansdowne, the Lord Shelburne of earlier days and the successor of Chatham as the advocate of a more liberal policy, met the rhetoric of Burke by a cool demonstration of the benefit which the recent change had brought to the mass of the French people, and by pointing to the profit which Russia was drawing from the struggle in the west. In their wide-reaching view of European affairs, in their justice to the revolution, Shelburne and Pitt stood alone. Around them men were hardened and blinded by passion. The old hatred between nation and nation, which Pitt had branded as irrational, woke up fiercer than ever at the clash of arms, for with it was blended a resentment that had smouldered in English breasts ever since the war with America at the blow which France had dealt England in that hour of her weakness, and a disgust which only slowly grew fainter at her overthrow of every social and political institution that Englishmen held dear. On the dogged temper of the nation at large the failure of the coalition produced little effect. It had no fear of fighting France single-handed, nor could it understand Pitt's suggestion that a time had come for opening negotiations with a view to peace. Public opinion indeed went hotly with Burke in his denunciation of all purpose of relaxing England's hostility against the revolution, a denunciation which was embodied in his "Letters on a Regicide Peace," the last outcry of that fanaticism which had done so much to plunge the world in blood.

The Irish danger.

But though Pitt stood all but alone, he was firm in his purpose to bring the war, if he could, to a close. What specially moved him was not the danger on the Continent, whether that danger sprang from French victories or from aggression in the east. It was a danger in the west. Vain

as the expectations of the French revolutionists had proved in the case of England, they had better ground for their hopes elsewhere. Even before the outbreak of the war Pitt had shown how keen was his sense of a possible danger from Ireland. In that wretched country the terrible fruits of a century of oppression and wrong were still to reap. From the close of the American war, when her armed Volunteers had wrung legislative independence from the Rockingham ministry, Ireland had continued to be England's difficulty. She was now "independent"; but her independence was a mere name for the uncontrolled rule of a few noble families. The victory of the Volunteers had been won simply to the profit of "undertakers," who returned a majority of members in the Irish House of Commons, while they themselves formed the Irish House of Lords. The suspension of any effective control or interference from England left Ireland at these men's mercy, and they soon showed that they meant to keep it for themselves. When the Catholics claimed admission to the franchise or to equal civil rights as a reward for their aid in the late struggle, their claim was rejected. A similar demand of the Presbyterians, who had formed a good half of the Volunteers, for the removal of their disabilities was equally set aside. Even Grattan, when he pleaded for a reform which would make the Parliament at least a fair representative of the Protestant Englishry, utterly failed. The ruling class found government too profitable to share it with other possessors. It was only by hard bribery that the English viceroys could secure their co-operation in the simplest measures of administration. "If ever there was a country unfit to govern itself," said Lord Hutchinson, "it is Ireland. A corrupt aristocracy, a ferocious commonalty, a distracted Government, a divided people!"

Irish Emancipation.

The real character of this Parliamentary rule was seen in the rejection of Pitt's offer of free trade. In Pitt's eyes the danger of Ireland lay above all in the misery of its people. Although the Irish Catholics were held down by the brute force of their Protestant rulers, he saw that their discontent was growing fast into rebellion, and that one secret at any rate of their discontent lay in Irish poverty, a poverty increased if not originally brought about by the jealous exclusion of Irish products from their natural markets in England itself. One of his first commercial measures therefore, as we have seen, aimed at putting an end to this

exclusion by a bill which established freedom of trade between the two islands. But though he met successfully the fears and jealousies of the English farmers and manufacturers he was foiled by the factious ignorance of the Irish landowners, and his bill was rejected by the Irish Parliament. So utterly was he discouraged that for the moment he ceased from all further attempts to improve the condition of Ireland. But the efforts which the French revolutionists made to excite rebellion amongst the Irish roused him to fresh measures of conciliation and good government. The hopes of some reform of the Irish Parliament had been fanned by the eloquence of Grattan and by the pressure of the United Irishmen, an association which had sprung up in Ulster, where Protestant dissenters, who were equally excluded with Catholics from any share in political power, formed the strongest part of the population. These hopes however were growing every day fainter. To the Irish aristocracy parliamentary reform meant the close of a corrupt rule which had gone on unchecked since the American war. But to the Irish Catholic it meant far more; it meant his admission, not only to the electoral franchise, but in the end to all the common privileges of citizenship from which he was excluded, his “emancipation,” to use the word which now became common, from the yoke of slavery which had pressed on him ever since the Battle of the Boyne.

The United Irishmen.

To such an emancipation Pitt was already looking forward. In 1792, a year before the outbreak of war with France, he forced on the Irish Parliament measures for the admission of Catholics to the electoral franchise and to civil and military office within the island, which promised a new era of religious liberty. But the promise came too late. The hope of conciliation was lost in the fast rising tide of religious and social passion. As the dream of obtaining Parliamentary reform died away the United Irishmen of the North drifted into projects of insurrection and a correspondence with France. The news of the French Revolution fell with a yet more terrible effect on the Catholic peasantry, brooding over their misery and their wrongs. Their discontent broke out in social disorder, in the outrages of secret societies of “Defenders” and “Peep o’ Day Boys,” which spread panic among the ruling classes. It was only by sheer terror and bloodshed that the Protestant landowners, who banded together in “Orange” societies to meet the secret societies about

them, could hold the country down. Outrages on the one side, tyranny on the other, deepened the disorder and panic every day, and the hopes of the reformers grew fainter as the terror rose fast around them. The maddened Protestants scouted all notions of further concessions to men whom they looked upon as on the verge of revolt; and Grattan's motions for reform were defeated by increasing majorities. On the other hand the entry of the anti-revolutionary Whigs into Pitt's ministry revived Grattan's hopes, for Burke and his followers were pledged to a liberal policy towards Ireland, and Lord Fitzwilliam, who came over as viceroy in 1794, encouraged Grattan to bring in a bill for the entire emancipation of the Catholics at the opening of the next year. Such a step can hardly have been taken without Pitt's assent; but the minister was now swept along by a tide of feeling which he could not control. The Orangemen threatened revolt, the Tories in Pitt's own Cabinet recoiled from the notion of reform, and Lord Fitzwilliam was not only recalled, but replaced by Lord Camden, an avowed enemy of all change or concession to the Catholics. From that moment the United Irishmen became a revolutionary society; and one of their leaders, Wolfe Tone, made his way to France, in the spring of 1796, to seek aid in a national rising.

France and Ireland.

It is probable that Tone's errand was known to Pitt; it is certain that Lord Edward Fitzgerald, another of the patriot leaders, who had been summoned to carry on more definite negotiations in Basle, revealed inadvertently as he returned the secret of his hopes to an agent of the English Cabinet. Vague as were the offers of the United Irishmen, they had been warmly welcomed by the French Government. Masters at home, the Directory were anxious to draw off the revolutionary enthusiasm which the French party of order dreaded as much as Burke himself to the channels of foreign conquest. They were already planning that descent of their army in the Alps upon Lombardy which was to give a fatal blow to one of their enemies, Austria; and they welcomed the notion of a French descent upon Ireland and an Irish revolt, which would give as fatal a blow to their other enemy, England. An army of 25,000 men under General Hoche was promised, a fleet was manned, and preparations were being made for the expedition during the summer. But the secret was ill kept, and the news of such an attempt was, we can hardly doubt, the ground of the obstinacy with which Pitt persisted in the

teeth of the national feeling and of Burke's invectives in clinging to his purpose of concluding a peace. In October 1796 Lord Malmesbury was despatched to Paris and negotiations were finally opened for that purpose. The terms which Pitt offered were terms of mutual restitution. France was to evacuate Holland and to restore Belgium to the Emperor. England on the other hand was to restore the colonies she had won to France, Holland, and Spain. As the English Minister had no power of dealing with the territories already ceded by Prussia and other states, such a treaty would have left France, as her eastern border, the line of the Rhine. But even had they desired peace at all, the Directors would have scorned it on terms such as these. While Malmesbury was negotiating indeed France was roused to new dreams of conquest by the victories of Napoleon Buonaparte. The genius of Carnot, the French Minister of War, had planned a joint advance upon Vienna by the French armies of Italy and the Rhine, the one under Buonaparte, the other under Moreau. The plan was only partly successful. Moreau, though he pushed forward through every obstacle to Bavaria, was compelled to fall back by the defeat of a lieutenant; and was only enabled by a masterly retreat through the Black Forest to reach the Rhine. But the disaster of Moreau was more than redeemed by the victories of Buonaparte. With the army which occupied the Riviera and the Maritime Alps the young general marched on Piedmont at the opening of the summer, separated its army from the Austrian troops, and forced the king of Sardinia to conclude a humiliating peace. A brilliant victory at the bridge of Lodi brought him to Milan, and drove the Austrians into the Tyrol. Lombardy was in the hands of the French, the Duchies south of the Po pillaged, and the Pope driven to purchase an armistice at enormous cost, before the Austrian armies, raised to a force of 50,000 men, again descended from the Tyrol for the relief of Mantua. But a fatal division of their forces by the Lake of Garda enabled Buonaparte to hurl them back broken upon Trent, and to shut up their general, Wurmser, in Mantua with the remnant of his men; while fresh victories at the bridge of Arcola and at Bassano drove back two new Austrian armies who advanced to Wurmser's rescue.

The Terror of Ireland.

It was the success of Buonaparte which told on the resolve of the Directory to reject all terms of peace. After months of dilatory negotiations the offers of Lord Malmesbury were definitely declined, and

the English envoy returned home at the end of the year. Every hour of his stay in Paris had raised higher hopes of success against England in the minds of the Directory. At the moment of his arrival Spain had been driven to declare war as their ally against Britain; and the Spanish and Dutch fleets were now at the French service for a struggle at sea. The merciless exactions of Buonaparte poured gold into the exhausted treasury; and the energy of Hoche rapidly availed itself of this supply to equip a force for operations in Ireland. At the opening of December he was ready to put to sea with a fleet of more than forty sail and 25,000 men; and the return of Lord Malmesbury was the signal for the despatch of his expedition from Brest. The fleet at Toulon, which was intended to co-operate with that at Brest, and which had sailed through the Straits of Gibraltar for that purpose, was driven into Port l'Orient by an English squadron: but contrary winds baffled the fleet which was watching Hoche, and his armament slipped away with little hindrance towards the Irish coast. Had it reached Ireland unbroken and under such a general, the island might well have been lost to the English Crown. But the winds fought against France, as they had fought against the Armada of Spain; and the ships were parted from one another by a gale which burst on them as they put to sea. Seventeen reached Bantry Bay, but hearing nothing of their leader or of the rest, they sailed back again to Brest, in spite of the entreaties of the soldiers to be suffered to land. Another division reached the Shannon to be scattered and driven home again by a second storm. Twelve vessels were wrecked or captured, and the frigate in which Hoche had embarked returned to port without having seen any of its companions. The invasion had failed, but the panic which it roused woke passions of cruelty and tyranny which turned Ireland into a hell. Soldiers and yeomanry marched over the country torturing and scourging the "croppies," as the Irish peasantry were termed from their short-cut hair; robbing, ravishing, and murdering at their will. The lightest suspicion, the most unfounded charges, were taken as warrants for bloodshed. So hideous were these outrages that the news of them as it reached England woke a thrill of horror in the minds of even the blindest Tories; but by the landowners who formed the Irish Parliament they were sanctioned in a Bill of Indemnity and protected for the future by an Insurrection Act. The terror however only woke a universal spirit of revolt. Ireland drank in greedily that hatred of England and of English rule which all the justice and moderation of later government has failed

to destroy; and the United Irishmen looked with more passionate longing than ever to France.

The struggle for the Sea.

Nor had France abandoned the design of invasion; while her victories made such a design every day more formidable. The war was going steadily in her favour. A fresh victory at Rivoli, the surrender of Mantua, and an advance through Styria on Vienna, enabled Buonaparte to wring a peace from England's one ally, Austria. The armistice was concluded in April 1797, and the final treaty which was signed at Campo Formio in October not only gave France the Ionian Islands, a part of the old territory of Venice (whose Italian possessions passed to the Emperor), as well as the Netherlands and the whole left bank of the Rhine, but united Lombardy with the Duchies south of the Po and the Papal States as far as the Rubicon into a "Cisalpine Republic," which was absolutely beneath her control. The withdrawal of Austria left France without an enemy on the Continent, and England without an ally. The stress of the war was pressing more heavily on her every day. A mutiny in the fleet was suppressed with difficulty. The news of Hoche's expedition brought about a run for gold which forced on the Bank a suspension of specie payments. It was in this darkest hour of the struggle that Burke passed away, protesting to the last against the peace which, in spite of his previous failure, Pitt was again striving to bring about by fresh negotiations at Lille. Peace seemed more needful than ever to him now that France was free to attack her enemy with the soldiers who had fought at Arcola and Rivoli. Their way, indeed, lay across the sea, and at sea Britain was supreme. But her supremacy was threatened by a coalition of naval forces such as had all but crushed her in the American war. Again the Dutch and Spanish fleets were allied with the fleets of France; and it was necessary to watch Cadiz and the Scheldt as well as Brest and Toulon. A single victory of the three confederates, or even such a command of the Channel as they had held for months during the war with America, would enable the Directory to throw overwhelming armies not only on the shores of England, but on the shores of Ireland, and whatever might be the fate of the one enterprise, there could be little doubt of the success of the other. The danger was real; but it had hardly threatened England when it was dispelled by two great victories. The Spanish fleet, which put out to sea with twenty-seven sail of the line, was

met on the fourteenth of February 1797 by Admiral Jervis off Cape St. Vincent with a force of but fifteen; and driven back to Cadiz with a loss of four of its finest vessels. Disheartened as they were, however, their numbers still exceeded that of the force which blockaded them; and France counted with confidence on the fleet of Holland, which was ordered to join its own fleet at Brest. The aim of this union was to protect a fresh force in its descent upon Ireland, where the United Irishmen now declared themselves ready for revolt. But a yet sterner fortune awaited the Dutch than that which had fallen on the Spaniards. Their admiral, De Winter, who had quitted the Texel during a storm with eleven sail of the line and four frigates, fell in on the eleventh of October with a far larger fleet under Admiral Duncan off Camperdown. The Hollanders fought with a stubborn courage worthy of their old renown, and it was only when their ships were riddled with shot into mere wrecks that they fell into the hands of the English.

The Irish Rising.

The French project for an expedition to Ireland hung on the junction of the Dutch fleet with that of Brest, and the command of the Channel which this junction would have given them. Such a command became impossible after the defeat of Camperdown. But the disappointment of their hopes of foreign aid only drove the adherents of revolt in Ireland to a rising of despair. The union of the national party, which had lasted to some extent from the American war, was now broken up. The Protestants of Ulster still looked for aid to France. The Catholics, on the other hand, were alienated from the French by their attack on religion and the priesthood; and the failure of the French expedition, while it damped the hopes of the Ulstermen, gave force to the demands of the Catholic party for a purely national rising. So fierce was this demand that the leaders of the United Irishmen were forced to fix on the spring of 1798 for the outbreak of an insurrection, in which Lord Edward Fitzgerald, who had some small military experience, was to take the command. But while yielding on this point to the Catholic section of their party they conciliated the Protestants by renewed appeals for aid to the Directory. In spite of its previous failures France again promised help; and a division was prepared during the winter for service in Ireland. But the passion of the nation was too intense to wait for its arrival. The government too acted with a prompt decision in face of the danger, and an arrest of Lord

Edward Fitzgerald with three of their chief leaders in February 1798 broke the plans of the insurgents. On the 23rd of May, however, the day fixed for the opening of the revolt, the Catholic peasantry of the south rose in arms. Elsewhere their disorderly gatherings were easily dispersed by the yeomanry; but Wexford surrendered to 14,000 insurgents who marched on it, headed by a village priest, and the town at once became the centre of a formidable revolt.

Its failure.

Fortunately for the English rule the old religious hatred which had so often wrecked the hopes of Ireland broke out in the instant of this triumph. The Protestant inhabitants of Wexford were driven into the river or flung into prison. Another body of insurgents, frenzied by the cruelties of the royal troops, massacred a hundred Protestants in cool blood. The atrocities of the soldiers and the yeomanry were avenged with a fiendish ruthlessness. Loyalists were lashed and tortured in their turn, and every soldier taken was butchered without mercy. The result of these outrages was fatal to the insurrection. The Ulster Protestants, who formed the strength of the United Irishmen, stood sullenly aloof from rebels who murdered Protestants. The Catholic gentry threw themselves on the side of the government against a rising which threatened the country with massacre and anarchy. Few in fact had joined the insurgents in Wexford when Lord Lake appeared before their camp upon Vinegar Hill with a strong force of English troops on the 21st of May. The camp was stormed, and with the dispersion of its defenders the revolt came suddenly to an end. But its suppression came only just in time to prevent greater disasters; for a few weeks after the close of the rebellion the long-expected aid arrived from France. The news of the outbreak had forced the armament which was being equipped in the French ports to put to sea with forces utterly inadequate to the task it had set itself, but fresh aid was promised to follow, and the nine hundred soldiers who landed in August under General Humbert on the coast of Mayo showed by their first successes how formidable a centre they would have given to the revolt had the revolt held its ground. But in the two months which had passed since Vinegar Hill all trace of resistance to the English rule had been trodden out in blood, and Humbert found himself alone in a country exhausted and panic-stricken. He marched however boldly on Castlebar, broke a force of yeomanry and volunteers three times his number, and

only surrendered when Lord Cornwallis, who had succeeded to the Lord-Lieutenancy, faced him with thirty thousand men.

French designs on India.

Of the threefold attack on which the Directory had relied for the ruin of England two parts had now broken down. Humbert's surrender and the failure of the native insurrection left little hope for future attack on the side of Ireland. The naval confederacy which was to rob England of the command of the seas had been foiled by the utter wreck of the Dutch fleet, and the imprisonment of the Spanish fleet in Cadiz. But the genius of Buonaparte had seized on the schemes for a rising against the English rule in Hindostan, and widened them into a project of all but world-wide conquest. At this time the strongest and most vigorous of the Indian powers was that of Mysore, at the southern extremity of the peninsula, where a Mussulman state had been built up by the genius of an adventurer, Hyder Ali. In the days when the English were winning their supremacy over the Carnatic, Hyder had been their chief difficulty; and his attack had once brought them to the verge of ruin. The hostility of his son Tippoo was even more bitter; but the victories of Lord Cornwallis had taught the Sultan of Mysore that he was no match for the British power single-handed; and his hopes, like those of the United Irishmen, were fixed upon France. He was striving to get aid from the Afghans and from the Nizam, but what he most counted on for the expulsion of the English from the Carnatic was a force of thirty thousand French soldiers. Letters requesting such a force were despatched by him to France in 1797. Buonaparte had already fixed on Mysore as a basis of operations against the British rule in Hindostan; and after dismissing as impracticable a project suggested to him on his return from Italy after the treaty of Campo Formio for a descent upon England itself, he laid before the Directory a plan for the conquest and occupation of Egypt as a preliminary to a campaign in Southern India. Utterly as this plan was foiled in the future, it was far from being the wild dream which it has often been considered. Both the Ministry and East Indian Directors were roused into anxiety by the first news of Buonaparte's expedition. The Earl of Mornington, Governor-General of British India, was warned of a possible attack from the Red Sea. Four thousand soldiers were hurried off to reinforce his army; while the English fleet watched anxiously in the Mediterranean. But so perfect was the secrecy with which the French

plans were combined that Buonaparte was able to put to sea in May 1798 with a force of 30,000 veterans drawn from the army of Italy, and making himself master of Malta as he passed to land near Alexandria at the close of June.

The battle of the Nile.

The conquest of Egypt proved as easy and complete as Buonaparte had hoped. The Mamelukes were routed in the battle of the Pyramids; Cairo was occupied; and the French troops pushed rapidly up the valley of the Nile. Their general meanwhile showed his genius for government by a masterly organization of the conquered country, by the conciliation of his new subjects, and by measures for the enrolment of native soldiers which would in a short time have placed him at the head of a formidable army. Of his ultimate aim there can be little doubt; for he had hardly landed at Alexandria when he despatched the news of his arrival and promises of support to Tippoo. All chance however of success in his projects hung on the maintenance of communications with France. With Italy, with the Ionian Islands, with Alexandria in French holding, it was all but impossible to prevent supplies of men and arms from being forwarded to Egypt, so long as the French fleet remained in the waters of the Mediterranean and kept the English force concentrated by the necessity of watching its movements. But the French were hardly masters of Egypt when their fleet ceased to exist. The thirteen men-of-war which had escorted the expedition were found by Admiral Nelson in Aboukir Bay, moored close to the coast in a line guarded at either end by gunboats and batteries. Nelson resolved to thrust his ships between the French and the shore. On the morning of the 1st of August his own flagship led the way in this attack; and after a terrible fight of twelve hours, nine of the French vessels were captured and destroyed, two were burned, and five thousand French seamen were killed or made prisoners. "Victory," cried Nelson, "is not a name strong enough for such a scene." Few victories indeed in history have produced more effective results than the battle of the Nile. The French flag was swept from the waters of the Mediterranean. All communication between France and Buonaparte's army was cut off; and his hopes of making Egypt a starting-point for the conquest of India fell at a blow. To hold Egypt itself soon became difficult, for a desperate revolt broke out at the news of Nelson's victory

in the streets of Cairo, and a Turkish army advanced from Syria to recover the valley of the Nile.

France and Europe.

Secure against invasion at home as against rebellion in Ireland, secure too against the dangers that threatened her rule in India, and mistress of the seas, England was free in her turn to attack the assailant who had so long threatened her very existence. And in such an attack she was aided at this moment by the temper of the European powers, and by the ceaseless aggressions of France. The treaties of Basle and Campo Formio were far from being accepted by the Directory as a final settlement of the relations of France with Europe. Some faint remnant of the older dreams of freeing oppressed peoples may have lingered in the aid which it gave to the rising of the subject districts of Basle and Vaud against their Bernese masters in the opening of 1798. But mere greed of gold was seen in the plunder of the treasury of Berne, a plunder which served to equip the army that sailed with Buonaparte to the shores of Egypt, and to recruit the exhausted treasury of the Directory; and an ambition, as reckless as this greed, broke out in an attack on the mountain cantons, states whose democratic institutions gave no such excuse for hostility as had been afforded by the aristocracy of Berne. A French decree abolished the Swiss Confederation, and the independence of its several states, and established in their place an Helvetic Republic modelled on a plan sent from Paris, and placed under the protection of France. The mountain cantons rose against this overthrow of a freedom compared with which the freedom of France was but of yesterday; but desperate as was their struggle they were overwhelmed by numbers, and the men of Uri, of Unterwalden and of Schwytz bowed for the first time to a foreign conqueror.

Russia and France.

The overthrow of this immemorial house of freedom opened the eyes of the blindest enthusiast to the real character of the French aggressions. Even in the group of young English poets, Coleridge, Wordsworth, and Southey, who had clung till now to the dream of the Revolution, of a Europe freed and regenerated by the arms of the new republic, all belief in such a dream passed finally away. But the France of the Directory would have cared little for this alienation of the peoples, had it not been

backed by the revived hostility of their kings. What England counted on in her efforts for a revival of the coalition was the resentment of Austria at the aggressions which the Directory had ever since the peace of Campo Formio been carrying on in Italy. In the opening of 1798 a French force entered Rome, set up a Roman republic, and carried off Pius VI. a prisoner to Siena; while the king of Sardinia was driven to admit French garrisons into his fortresses. Austria however was still too weak after her defeats to listen to Pitt's advances, had Pitt stood alone. But Russia was now about to take a new part in European affairs. Under Catharine the Second this power had availed itself of the war against France in the west to carry out its own projects of conquest in eastern Europe; and, as we have seen, Pitt had watched its advance at the opening of the Revolution with far greater dread than the movements in France. It was in fact the need which the two German states felt of balancing the Russian annexations in Poland by annexations of their own which had paralysed their armies on the Rhine and saved France at the moment of her greatest danger in 1793. It is probable that the Directory still counted on the persistence of Russia in a similar policy, and believed that Catharine would see in their attack on Egypt and the Turks only a fresh opportunity for conquests on the Danube. But the sudden greatness of France had warned Russia that its policy of selfishness had been carried too far. It had allowed the Republic to tower into supremacy over the Continent, and if once such a supremacy was firmly established it would prove a fatal obstacle to the Russian advance. France would again, as under the monarchy, aim at the restoration of Poland; she would again bar the way to Constantinople; and her action would be backed by the weight of all western Europe, which had been thrown into her scale by the policy of the very state she defied. To avert such a result it was necessary to restore that balance of the Continent by which France and the German powers held one another in check; and with a view to this restoration Russia suddenly declared itself an enemy of France. Catharine's successor, the Czar Paul, set aside the overtures of the Directory. A close alliance was formed with Austria, and while an Imperial army gathered on the Bavarian frontier Russian troops hurried to the west.

The Union with Ireland.

The appearance of this new element in the struggle changed its whole conditions; and it was with renewed hope that Pitt lavished subsidies on

the two allies at the close of 1798. But his preparations for the new strife were far from being limited to efforts abroad. In England he had found fresh resources in an Income-Tax, from which he anticipated an annual return of ten millions. Heavy as the tax was, and it amounted to ten per cent on all incomes above £200 a year, the dogged resolution of the people to fight on was seen in the absence of all opposition to this proposal. What was of even greater importance was to remove all chance of fresh danger from Ireland. Pitt's temper was of too statesmanlike a mould to rest content with the mere suppression of insurrection or with the system of terrorism which for the moment held the country down. His disgust at "the bigoted fury of Irish Protestants" had backed Lord Cornwallis in checking the reprisals of his troops and of the Orangemen; but the hideous cruelty which he was forced to witness brought about a firm resolve to put an end to the farce of "Independence" which left Ireland helpless in such hands. The political necessity for a union of the two islands had been brought home to every English statesman by the course of the Irish Parliament during the disputes over the Regency. While England repelled the claims of the Prince of Wales to the Regency as of right, the legislature of Ireland admitted them. As the only union left between the two peoples since the concession of legislative independence was their obedience to a common ruler, such an act might conceivably have ended in their entire severance; and the sense of this danger secured a welcome in England for the proposal which Pitt made at the opening of 1799 to unite the two Parliaments. The opposition of the Irish borough-mongers was naturally stubborn and determined, and when the plan was introduced into the Parliament at Dublin, it was only saved from rejection by a single vote. But with men like these it was a sheer question of gold; and their assent was bought with a million in money, and with a liberal distribution of pensions and peerages. Base and shameless as were such means, Pitt may fairly plead that they were the only means by which the bill for the Union could have been passed. As the matter was finally arranged in June 1800, one hundred Irish members became part of the House of Commons at Westminster, and twenty-eight temporal peers chosen by their fellows for life, with four spiritual peers succeeding in a fixed rotation, took their seats in the House of Lords. Commerce between the two countries was freed from all restrictions, and every trading privilege of the one thrown open to the other, while taxation was proportionately distributed between the two peoples.

France and the Coalition.

While the Union was being pushed slowly forward, the struggle abroad was passing through strange vicissitudes. At the opening of 1799 the efforts of the new coalition were crowned with success in every quarter. Though Naples had been turned into a Parthenopean Republic at the close of the previous year, and the French supremacy extended over the whole peninsula, the descent of an Austrian army from the Tyrol at the end of March, and a victory of the Russian and Austrian forces at Cassano, compelled the French army to evacuate Southern Italy and Lombardy, while a fresh defeat at Novi flung it back on the Maritime Alps. A campaign conducted with more varying success drove the armies which advanced into Germany back over the Rhine. In Switzerland however the stubborn energy of Massena enabled his soldiers to hold their ground against the combined attack of Russian and Austrian forces; and the attempt of a united force of Russians and English to wrest Holland from its French masters was successfully repulsed. Twelve of the thirty thousand men who formed this army consisted of English troops; and Sir Ralph Abercromby succeeded in landing at their head, in seizing what remained of the Dutch fleet at the Texel, and in holding General Brune at bay when he advanced with superior forces. But Abercromby was superseded in his command by the Duke of York; and in another month the new leader was glad to conclude a convention by which the safe withdrawal of his troops was secured.

Buonaparte in Syria.

In the East however England was more successful. Even had Buonaparte not been baffled in his plans of a descent on Southern India from the basis of Egypt by the battle of the Nile, they would have been frustrated by the energy of Lord Wellesley. Mysore was invaded, its capital stormed, and Tippoo slain, before a French soldier could have been despatched to its aid. But foiled as were his dreams of Indian conquest the daring genius of the French general plunged into wilder projects. He conceived the design of the conquest of Syria and of the creation of an army among its warlike mountaineers. "With a hundred thousand men on the banks of the Euphrates," he said years afterwards, "I might have gone to Constantinople or India, I might have changed the face of the world." Gaza was taken, Jaffa stormed, and ten thousand French soldiers advanced under their young general on Acre. Acre was

the key of Syria, and its reduction was the first step in these immense projects. "Once possessed of Acre," wrote Napoleon, "the army would have gone to Damascus and the Euphrates. The Christians of Syria, the Druses, the Armenians, would have joined us. The provinces of the Ottoman Empire were ready for a change, and were only waiting for a man." But Acre was stubbornly held by the Turks, the French battering train was captured at sea by an English captain, Sir Sidney Smith, whose seamen aided in the defence of the place, and after a loss of three thousand men by sword and plague, the besiegers were forced to fall back upon Egypt.

The Peace of Lunéville.

Egypt indeed was more than ever their own, for their army had now penetrated to the cataracts of the Nile, and a Turkish force which landed near Alexandria was cut to pieces by Buonaparte in the battle of Aboukir. But the news of defeat at home and the certainty that all wider hopes in the East were at an end, induced him only a month after his victory to leave his army. With a couple of frigates he set sail for France; and his arrival in Paris was soon followed by a change in the government. The Directors were divided among themselves, while the disasters of their administration made them hateful to the country; and a revolution brought about by the soldiery on the 10th of November put an end to their power. In the new system which followed three consuls took the place of the Directors; but the system only screened the government of a single man, for under the name of First Consul Buonaparte became in effect sole ruler of the country. His energy at once changed the whole face of European affairs. The offers of peace which he made to England and Austria were intended to do little more than to shake the coalition, and gain breathing time for the organization of a new force which was gathering in secrecy at Dijon, while Moreau with the army of the Rhine pushed again along the Danube. The First Consul crossed the Saint Bernard with this army in the spring of 1800, and on the 14th of June a victory at Marengo left the Austrian army, which had just succeeded in reducing Genoa, helpless in his hands. It was by the surrender of all Lombardy to the Oglia that the defeated general obtained an armistice for his troops; and a similar truce arrested the march of Moreau, who had captured Munich and was pushing on to Vienna. The armistice only added to the difficulties of Buonaparte's opponents, for Russia, as

anxious not to establish a German supremacy as she had been to weaken the supremacy of France, had withdrawn from the contest as soon as the coalition seemed to be successful; and Austria was only held back from peace by her acceptance of English subsidies. But though she fought on, the resumption of the war in the autumn failed to reverse the fortune of arms. The Austrians were driven back on Vienna; and on the second of December Moreau crushed their army on the Iser in the victory of Hohenlinden. But the aim of the First Consul was only to wrest peace from his enemies by these triumphs; while the expiration of her engagements with England left his opponent free to lay down her arms. In February 1801 therefore the Continental War was brought suddenly to an end by the Peace of Lunéville.

CHAPTER V ENGLAND AND NAPOLEON 1801-1815

The New Europe.

The treaty of Lunéville was of far greater import than the treaties which had ended the struggle of the first coalition. It was in effect the close of the attack which revolutionary France had directed against the Continental powers. With it expired the outer energy of the Revolution, as its inner energy expired with the elevation of Buonaparte to the First Consulate. The change that the French onset had wrought in the aspect of Europe had no doubt been great. In the nine years which had passed since the earlier league of the powers against her, France had won all and more than all that the ambition of her older statesmen had ever aimed at. She had absorbed the Netherlands. She was practically mistress of Holland, Switzerland, and Piedmont, whose dependent republics covered her frontier; while she had revived that union with Spain which had fallen for a time with the Family Compact of the House of Bourbon. But in spite of this growth the dread of French aggression was far less keenly felt by her neighbour states than in the early years of the war. What they had dreaded then was not so much the political reconstruction of Europe as the revolutionary enthusiasm which would have pushed this political reconstruction into a social revolution. But at the opening of the nineteenth century the enthusiasm of France had faded away. She was again Christian. She was again practically monarchical. What her neighbours saw in her after all these years of change was little more than the old France with a wider frontier; and now that they could look upon those years as a whole, it was clear that much of this widening of her borders was only a fair counterbalance for the widened borders of the states around her. If France had grown great, other powers had grown in greatness too. If France had pushed her frontier to the Rhine and established dependencies across the Rhone and the Alps, Russia during the same period had annexed the bulk of Poland, and the two great German powers had enlarged themselves both to the east and the west. The Empire had practically ceased to be; but its ruin had given fresh

extension and compactness to the states which had profited by it. The cessions of Prussia had been small beside her gains. The losses of Austria had been more than counterbalanced in Italy by her acquisition of Venice, and far more than counterbalanced by secularizations and annexations within Germany itself.



Europe after the Peace of Lunéville

Lunéville was in reality the recognition on both sides of a European settlement on the basis of such a balance. But in the mind of Buonaparte it was far more than this. It was the first step in an entire reversal of the policy which Revolutionary France had pursued in her dealings with the world. It was a return to the older policy of the French monarchy. Under the guidance of the revolutionists France had striven for supremacy among the states of Europe. But for such a supremacy the First Consul cared comparatively little. What he cared for was what Choiseul and the statesmen who followed him cared for, the supremacy of the world. And he saw that with every year of war on the Continent such a supremacy grew more distant than ever. The very victories of France indeed were playing into the hands of England. Amidst all the triumphs of the revolutionary war the growth of the British Empire had been steady and ceaseless. She was more than ever mistress of the sea. The mastery of Holland by the French had only ended in the removal of one of the obstacles to such a mastery by the ruin of the Dutch navy, and the transfer of the rich Dutch colonies to the British crown. The winning of Egypt had but spurred her to crush the only Mussulman power that could

France and Britain.

Although therefore the old Europe and its balance of power had passed away, the new Europe which had taken its place presented a balance of power which might be regarded as even more effective; and the peace of

avert her rule over southern India. But her growth was more than a merely territorial growth. She was turning her command of the seas to a practical account. Not only was she monopolizing the carrying trade of the European nations, but the sudden uprush of her industries was making her the workshop as well as the market of the world. From the first the mind of Buonaparte had been set on a struggle with this growing world-power. Even amidst his earliest victories he had dreamed of wresting from England her dominion in the East; and if his Egyptian expedition had done nothing for India, it had secured in Egypt itself a stepping-stone for further efforts. But now that France was wholly at his disposal, the First Consul resolved to free his hands from the strife with the Continent, and to enter on that struggle with Britain which was henceforth to be the task of his life.

Pitt's position.

The significance then of the Peace of Lunéville lay in this, not only that it was the close of the earlier revolutionary struggle for supremacy in Europe, the abandonment by France of her effort to "liberate the peoples," to force new institutions on the nations about her by sheer dint of arms; but that it marked the concentration of all her energies on a struggle with Britain for the supremacy of the world. For England herself the event which accompanied it, the sudden withdrawal of William Pitt from office which took place in the very month of the treaty, was hardly less significant. To men of our day the later position of William Pitt seems one of almost tragic irony. An economist heaping up millions of debt, a Peace Minister dragged into the costliest of wars, he is the very type of the baffled statesman; and the passionate loyalty with which England clung to him through the revolutionary struggle is one of the least intelligible passages of our history. But if England clung to Pitt through these years of gloom, it was because then more than ever she saw in him her own representative. His strength had lain throughout in his reflection of public opinion: and public opinion saw itself reflected in him still. At the outset of his career the set of opinion had been towards a larger and more popular policy than of old. New facilities of communication, new industrial energy, and a quick accumulation of wealth, as well as the social changes which followed hard on these economical changes, all pointed forward to political progress, to an adaptation of our institutions to the varied conditions of the time. The

nation was quivering with a new sense of life; and it faced eagerly questions of religion, of philanthropy, of education, of trade, as one after another they presented themselves before it. Above all it clung to the young minister whose ideas were its own, who, alien as his temper seemed from that of an innovator, came boldly to the front with projects for a new Parliament, a new finance, a new international policy, a new imperial policy, a new humanitarian policy. It was this oneness of Pitt's temper with the temper of the men he ruled that made him sympathize, in spite of the alarm of the court, with the first movements of the revolution in France, and deal fairly, if coldly, with its after-course. It was this that gave him strength to hold out so long against a struggle with it.

Pitt and the War.

But as the alarm deepened, as the nation saw its social, political, and religious traditions alike threatened, the bulk of Englishmen swung round into an attitude of fierce resistance. The craving for self-preservation hushed all other cravings. What men looked for in Pitt now was not the economist or the reformer, but the son of Chatham, the heir of his father's courage, of his father's faith in the greatness of England. And what they looked for they found. Pitt was no born War Minister; he had none of the genius that commands victory, or of the passionate enthusiasm that rouses a nation to great deeds of arms. But he had faith in England. Even when she stood alone against the world he never despaired. Reading him, as we read him now, we see the sickness and the gloom of his inner soul; but no sign betrayed it to the world. As the tempest gathered about them, men looked with trust that deepened into awe on the stately figure that embodied their faith in England's fortunes, and huddled in the darkness round "the pilot that weathered the storm." But there were deeper and less conscious grounds for their trust in him. Pitt reflected far more than the nation's resolve. He reflected the waverings and inconsistencies of its political temper in a way that no other man did. In the general swing round to an attitude of resistance, the impulse of progress had come utterly to an end. Men doubted of the truth of principles that seemed to have brought about the horrors of the Revolution. They listened to Burke as he built up his theory of political immobility on the basis of an absolute perfection in the constitution of things as they were. But even in this moment of reaction they still clung unconsciously to a belief in something better, to a trust that progress

would again be possible, and to the man who reflected their trust. Like them, Pitt could understand little of the scene about him, that seething ocean of European change where states vanished like dreams, and the very elements of social life seemed to melt in a mist; his mind, like theirs, was baffled with doubt and darkness, with the seeming suicide of freedom, the seeming triumph of violence and wrong. But, baffled and bewildered as he was, he never ceased to believe in liberty, or to hope that the work of reform which he had begun might yet be carried into effect.

It was as the representative of this temper of the people at large, of its mingled mood of terror at the new developments of freedom and yet of faith in freedom itself, of its dread of progress and yet its hope of a time when a larger national life should again become possible, that Pitt had gathered the nation round him from the opening of the war. Much indeed of the seeming weakness and uncertainty of his statesmanship throughout the struggle sprang from the fidelity with which he reflected this double aspect of national opinion. He has been blamed for fighting the French Revolution at all, as he has been blamed for not entering on an anti-revolutionary crusade. But his temper was that of the nation as a whole. He shrank from the fanaticism of Burke as he shrank from the fanaticism of Tom Paine: his aim was not to crush France or the Revolution, but to bring the struggle with them to such an end as might enable England to return in safety to the work of progress which the struggle had interrupted. And it was this that gave significance to his fall. It was a sign that the time had come when the national union which Pitt embodied must dissolve with the disappearance of the force that created it; when resistance had done its work, and the arrest of all national movement had come to an end with the attitude of mere resistance from which it sprang; when in face of a new France and a new French policy England could again return to her normal political life, and the impulses towards progress which had received so severe a check in 1792 could again flow in their older channels. In such a return Pitt himself took the lead; and his proposal of Catholic emancipation was as significant of a new era of English life as the Peace of Lunéville was significant of a new settlement of Europe.

Catholic Emancipation.

In Pitt's mind the Union which he brought about in 1800 was more than a mere measure for the security of the one island; it was a first step in the regeneration of the other. The legislative connexion of the two countries was only part of the plan which he had conceived for the conciliation of Ireland. With the conclusion of the Union indeed, his projects of free trade between the two countries, projects which had been defeated a few years back by the folly of the Irish Parliament, came quietly into play; and in spite of insufficient capital and social disturbance the growth of the trade, shipping, and manufactures of Ireland has gone on without a check from that time to this. The change which brought Ireland directly under the common Parliament was followed too by a gradual revision of its oppressive laws and an amendment in their administration; while taxation was lightened, and a faint beginning made of public instruction. But in Pitt's mind the great means of conciliation was the concession of religious equality. In proposing to the English Parliament the union of the two countries he pointed out that when thus joined to a Protestant country like England all danger of a Catholic supremacy in Ireland, even should Catholic disabilities be removed, would be practically at an end. In such a case, he suggested that "an effectual and adequate provision for the Catholic clergy" would be a security for their loyalty. His words gave strength to the hopes of "Catholic emancipation," as the removal of what remained of the civil disabilities of Catholics was called, which were held out by his agent, Lord Castlereagh, in Ireland itself as a means of hindering any opposition to the project of Union on the part of the Catholics. It was agreed on all sides that their opposition would have secured its defeat; and the absence of such a Catholic opposition showed the new trust in Pitt which was awakened by the hints of Lord Castlereagh. The trust had good grounds to go on. After the passing of the bill Pitt prepared to lay before his Cabinet a measure which would have raised not only the Irish Catholic but the Irish Dissenter to a perfect equality of civil rights. He proposed to remove all religious tests which limited the exercise of the franchise, or which were required for admission to Parliament, the magistracy, the bar, municipal offices, or posts in the army or the service of the State. An oath of allegiance and of fidelity to the Constitution was substituted for the Sacramental test; while the loyalty of the Catholic and Dissenting clergy was secured by a grant of some provision to both on the part of the State. To win over the Episcopal Church to such an

equality measures were added for strengthening its modes of discipline, as well as for increasing the stipends of its poorer ministers, while a commutation of tithes was planned as a means of removing a constant source of quarrel between the Protestant clergy and the Irish people.

Pitt's resignation.

But the scheme was too large and statesmanlike to secure the immediate assent of the Cabinet; and before that assent could be won or the plan laid with full ministerial sanction before the king, it was communicated through the treachery of the Chancellor, Lord Loughborough, to George the Third. "I count any man my personal enemy," George broke out angrily to Dundas, "who proposes any such measure." Pitt answered this outburst by submitting his whole plan to the king. "The political circumstances under which the exclusive laws originated," he wrote, "arising either from the conflicting power of hostile and nearly balanced sects, from the apprehension of a Popish queen as successor, a disputed succession and a foreign pretender, a division in Europe between Catholic and Protestant Powers, are no longer applicable to the present state of things." But argument was wasted upon George the Third. In spite of the decision of the lawyers whom he consulted, the king declared himself bound by his Coronation Oath to maintain the tests; and his obstinacy was only strengthened by a knowledge that such a refusal must drive Pitt from office. George was weary of his minister's supremacy. He was longing for servants who would leave him more than a show of power, and he chose his ground for a struggle with all the cunning of his earlier years. It was by his command of public opinion that Pitt had been able to force his measures on the king. But in the question of Catholic Emancipation George knew that opinion was not with his minister, but with himself. On this point his bigotry was at one with the bigotry of the bulk of his subjects, as well as with their political distrust of Catholics and Irishmen. He persisted therefore in his refusal; and it was followed by the event he foresaw. In February 1801, at the moment of the Peace of Lunéville, William Pitt resigned his office into the hands of the king.

The Addington Ministry.

It was with a sense of relief that George found himself freed from the great minister whose temper was so alien from his own. But it was with a

yet greater sense of relief that he saw him followed into retirement not only by Lord Grenville, but by nearly all the more liberal section of the ministry, by men like Windham and Lord Spencer, the representatives of the "Old Whigs" who had joined Pitt on the disruption of their party through the French Revolution. Such a union indeed could hardly have lasted much longer. The terror which had so long held these Whigs in their alliance with the Tories who formed the bulk of the administration was now at an end; and we have already seen their pressure for a more liberal policy in the action of Lord Fitzwilliam as Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. But the question of Emancipation finally brought about a restoration of the natural position of parties; and from this moment the old Whigs, who accepted Lord Grenville as their head, fell into alliance with the more revolutionary Whigs who had remained faithful to Fox. The Whig party thus became again a powerful element in English politics, while in face of the reunited Whigs stood the Tories, relieved like themselves from the burthen of an alliance which grew hourly more distasteful. The bulk of the old Ministry returned in a few days to office with Mr. Addington at their head, and his administration received the support of the whole Tory party in Parliament.

Without the walls of Parliament however the nation looked on such a change with dismay. Addington was regarded as a weak and narrow-minded man; and the favour with which the king welcomed him was clue to a consciousness of their common bigotry. Of Lord Hawkesbury, who succeeded Lord Grenville in the conduct of foreign affairs, nothing was known outside the House of Commons. It was with anxiety that England found itself guided by men like these at a time when every hour brought darker news. The scarcity of bread was mounting to a famine. Taxes were raised anew, and yet the loan for the year amounted to five-and-twenty millions. The country stood utterly alone; while the peace of Lunéville secured France from all hostility on the Continent. And it was soon plain that this peace was only the first step in a new policy on the part of the First Consul. What he had done was to free his hands for a decisive conflict with Britain itself, both as a world-power and as a centre of wealth. England was at once the carrier of European commerce and the workshop of European manufactures. While her mines, her looms, her steam-engines, were giving her almost a monopoly of industrial production, her merchant ships sufficed not only to spread her own products through the world, but to carry to every part of it the

products of other countries. Though the war had already told on both these sources of wealth, it was far from having told fatally. It had long closed France indeed to English exports, while the waste of wealth in so wide a strife had lessened the buying power of Europe at large. But in Europe the loss was to some extent made up for the moment by the artificial demand for supplies which war creates; the home market still sufficed to absorb a vast quantity of manufactures; and America, which was fast growing into the most important of English customers, remained unaffected by the struggle. Industry had thus suffered but little loss, while commerce believed itself to have greatly gained. All rivals save one had in fact been swept from the sea; the carrying trade of France and Holland alike had been transferred to the British flag, and the conquest of their wealthier settlements had thrown into British hands the whole colonial trade of the world.



Europe after the Peace of Tilsit

be annihilated if he closed every port against her ships. It was this gigantic project of a “Continental System” that revealed itself as soon as Buonaparte became finally master of France. From France itself and its dependencies in Holland and the Netherlands English trade was already excluded. But Italy also was shut against her after the Peace of Lunéville, and Spain not only closed her own ports but forced Portugal to break with her English ally. In the Baltic Buonaparte was more active than even in the Mediterranean. In a treaty with America, which was destined to bring this power also in the end into his great attack, he had formally

League of Neutrals.

To strike at England’s wealth had been among the projects of the Directory: it was now the dream of the First Consul. It was in vain for England to produce, if he shut her out of every market. Her carrying trade must

recognized the rights of neutral vessels which England was hourly disputing; and in her disregard of them he not only saw the means of bringing the northern powers into his system of exclusion, but of drawing on their resources for a yet more decisive blow. He was set upon challenging not only England's wealth but her world-empire; and his failure in Egypt had taught him that the first condition of success in such an enterprise was to wrest from her her command of the seas. The only means of doing this lay in a combination of naval powers; and the earlier efforts of France had left but one naval combination for Buonaparte to try. The Directory had been able to assail England at sea by the joint action of the French fleet with those of Holland and of Spain. But the Spanish navy had been crippled by the battle of Cape St. Vincent, and the Dutch fleet destroyed in the victory of Camperdown. The only powers which now possessed naval resources were the powers of the North. The fleets of Denmark, Sweden, and Russia numbered forty sail of the line, and they had been untouched by the strife. Both the Scandinavian states resented the severity with which Britain enforced that right of search which had brought about their armed neutrality at the close of the American war; while Denmark was besides an old ally of France, and her sympathies were still believed to be French. The First Consul therefore had little trouble in enlisting them in a league of neutrals, which was in effect a declaration of war against England, and which Prussia as before showed herself ready to join.

Russia's designs.

Russia indeed seemed harder to gain. Since Paul's accession she had been the moving spirit in the confederacy which had only been broken up by the victory of Marengo. But the spirit of revolutionary aggression which had nominally roused Paul to action, had, as the Czar believed, been again hushed by the First Consul. Buonaparte had yielded to his remonstrances in preserving the independence of Naples and Sardinia; and with Italian subtlety he now turned the faith in French moderation which these concessions created in the mind of Paul into a dread of the ambition of England and a jealousy of her sovereignty of the seas. But his efforts would have been in vain had they not fallen in with the general current of Russian policy. From the first outbreak of the Revolutionary struggle Russia, as we have seen, had taken advantage of the strife among the Western nations to push forward her own projects in

the East. Catharine had aimed at absorbing Poland, and at becoming the mistress of European Turkey. In the first she had been successful, but the second still remained unaccomplished when her empire passed to her son. For a time Paul had been diverted from the task by the turn of affairs in Western Europe, where the victories of the French Republic threatened an utter overthrow of the powers opposed to it, which would have foiled the plans of Russia by bringing about a European union that must have paralysed her advance. The Czar therefore acted strictly in the spirit of Catharine's policy when he stepped in again to feed the strife by raising the combatants to a new equality, and when he withdrew his armies at the very moment that this was done. But successful as his diversion had been, Paul saw that one obstacle remained in the way of his projects upon Turkey. Pitt had never hidden his opposition to the Russian plans. His whole policy at the outbreak of the Revolution had been guided by a desperate hope of binding the powers again together to prevent the ruin of Poland, or of hindering it by a league of England and France alone. Foiled as he had been in these efforts, he was even more resolute to check the advance of Russia on Constantinople. Already her growing empire in India was telling on the European policy of England; and the security of Egypt, of Syria, of Turkey at large, was getting deemed to be essential to the maintenance of her communication with her great dependency. The French descent on Egypt, the attack on Syria, had bound Britain and Turkey together; and Paul saw that an attack on the one would bring him a fresh opponent in the other.

The League broken up.

It was to check the action of Britain in the East that the Czar now turned to the French Consul, and seconded his efforts for the formation of a naval confederacy in the North, while his minister, Rostopchin, planned a division of the Turkish Empire in Europe between Russia and her allies. Austria was to be satisfied with the western provinces of the Balkan peninsula; Russia gained Moldavia, Bulgaria, and Roumelia as far as Constantinople; while Greece fell to the lot of France, whose troops were already on the Italian shores, at a day's sail from the Illyrian coast. A squabble over Malta, which had been blockaded since its capture by Buonaparte, and which surrendered at last to a British fleet, but whose possession the Czar claimed as his own on the ground of an alleged election as Grand Master of the Order of St. John, served as a pretext for

a quarrel with England; and at the close of 1800 Paul openly prepared for hostilities. In October he announced an armed neutrality; in December he seized three hundred English vessels in his ports, and sequestered all English goods found in his Empire. The Danes, who throughout the year had been struggling to evade the British right of search, at once joined this neutral league, and were followed by Sweden in their course. It was plain that, as soon as the spring of 1801 opened the Baltic, the fleets of the three Powers would act in practical union with those of France and Spain. But the command of the seas which such a union threatened was a matter for England of life and death, for at this very moment the Peace of Lunéville left Buonaparte without a foe on the Continent, and able to deal as he would with the whole military resources of France. Once master of the Channel he could throw a force on the southern coast of England which she had no means of meeting in the field. But dexterous as the combination was, it was shattered at a blow. On the first of April 1801 a British fleet of eighteen men-of-war forced the passage of the Belt, appeared before Copenhagen, and at once attacked the city and its fleet. In spite of a brave resistance from the Danish batteries and gunboats six Danish ships were taken, and the Crown Prince was forced to conclude an armistice which enabled the English ships to enter the Baltic, where the Russian fleet was still detained by the ice. But their work was really over. The seizure of English goods and the declaration of war had bitterly irritated the Russian nobles, whose sole outlet for the sale of the produce of their vast estates was thus closed to them; and on the twenty-fourth of March, nine days before the battle of Copenhagen, Paul fell in a midnight attack by conspirators in his own palace. With Paul fell the Confederacy of the North. The policy of his successor, the Czar Alexander, was far more in unison with the general feeling of his subjects; in June a Convention between England and Russia settled the vexed questions of the right of search and contraband of war, and this Convention was accepted by Sweden and Denmark.

French lose Egypt.

The First Consul's disappointment was keen; but he saw clearly that with this dissolution of the Northern alliance the war came virtually to an end. He no longer had any means of attacking Britain save by the efforts of France itself, and even with the aid of Holland and Spain France was at this moment helpless before the supremacy of England at sea. On the

other hand the continuance of the struggle would give triumph after triumph to his foes. One such blow had already fallen. Even in the midst of his immense schemes against Britain at home, Buonaparte had not abandoned the hope of attacking her in India. Egypt was needful to such a scheme; and from the first moment of his power he strained every nerve to retain Egypt in the hands of France. Menou, who commanded there, was ordered to hold the country; an expedition was fitted out in the Spanish ports for its relief; and light vessels were hurried from the Italian coast with arms and supplies. But at the very moment of the attack on Copenhagen, a stroke as effective wrecked his projects in the East. England had not forgotten the danger to her dependency; ever since Buonaparte's expedition her fleet had blockaded Malta, the island fortress whose possession gave France a first stepping-stone in any enterprise against it; and the surrender of Malta left her unquestioned mistress of the Mediterranean. From Malta she now turned to Egypt itself. Triumphant as England had been at sea since the opening of the war, her soldiers had proved no match for the French on land. Two expeditions had been sent against Holland, and each had ended in a disastrous retreat. But at this moment England reappeared as a military power. In March 1801 a force of 15,000 men under General Abercromby anchored in Aboukir Bay. Deserted as they were by Buonaparte, the French had firmly maintained their hold on Egypt. They had suppressed a revolt at Cairo, driven back Turkish invaders in a fresh victory, and by native levies and reinforcements raised the number of their troops to 30,000 men. But their army was foolishly scattered, and Abercromby was able to force a landing five days after his arrival on the coast. The French however rapidly concentrated; and on the 21st of March their general attacked the English army on the ground it had won with a force equal to its own. The battle was a stubborn one, and Abercromby fell mortally wounded ere its close; but after six hours' fighting the French drew off with heavy loss; and their retreat was followed by the investment of Alexandria and Cairo, into which Menou had withdrawn his army. All hope however was over. Five thousand Turks, with a fresh division from England and India, reinforced the besiegers; and at the close of June the capitulation of the 13,000 soldiers who remained closed the French rule over Egypt.

The Peace of Amiens.

Bitter as was the anger with which the First Consul received the news of this surrender, it only strengthened his resolve to suspend a war of which Britain only could now reap the fruits, and whose continuance might in the present temper of Russia and its Czar disturb that peace of the Continent on which all his plans against England rested. It was to give time for such an organization of France and its resources as might enable him to reopen the struggle with other chances of success that the First Consul opened negotiations for peace at the close of 1801. His offers were at once met by the English Government. In the actual settlement of the Continent indeed England saw only an imperfect balance to the power of France, but it had no means of disputing the settlement, as France had no means of disturbing its supremacy at sea. If Buonaparte wished to husband his resources for a new attack all but the wilder Tories were willing to husband the resources of England for the more favourable opportunity of renewing it which would come with a revival of European energy. With such a temper on both sides the conclusion of peace became easy; and the negotiations which went on through the winter between England and the three allied Powers of France, Spain, and the Dutch, brought about in March 1802 the Peace of Amiens. The terms of the Peace were necessarily simple; for as England had no claim to interfere with the settlement of the Continent, which had been brought about by the treaties of its powers with the French Republic, all that remained for her was to provide that the settlement should be a substantial one by a pledge on the part of France to withdraw its forces from Southern Italy, and to leave to themselves the republics it had set up along its border in Holland, Switzerland, and Piedmont. In exchange for this pledge England recognized the French government, restored all the colonies which they had lost, save Ceylon and Trinidad, to France and its allies, acknowledged the Ionian Islands as a free republic, and engaged to restore Malta within three months to its old masters, the Knights of St. John.

Buonaparte.

There was a general sense of relief at the close of so long a struggle; and for a moment the bitter hatred which England had cherished against France seemed to give place to more friendly feelings. The new French ambassador was drawn in triumph on his arrival through the streets of London; and thousands of Englishmen crossed the Channel to visit a

country which had conquered the world, and to gaze on the young general who after wonderful victories had given a yet more wonderful peace to Europe. But amidst all the glare of success, shrewd observers saw the dangers that lay in the temper of the First Consul. Whatever had been the errors of the French Revolutionists, even their worst attacks on the independence of the nations around them had been veiled by a vague notion of freeing the peoples whom they invaded from the yoke of their rulers. But the aim of Buonaparte was simply that of a vulgar conqueror. He was resolute to be master of the Western world, and no notions of popular freedom or sense of national right interfered with his resolve. The means at his command for carrying out such a design were immense. The political life of the Revolution had been cut short by his military despotism, but the new social vigour which the Revolution had given to France through the abolition of privileges and the creation of a new middle class on the ruins of the clergy and the nobles still lived on; and while the dissensions which tore the country asunder were hushed by the policy of the First Consul, by his restoration of the Church as a religious power, his recall of the exiles, and the economy and wise administration that distinguished his rule, the centralised system of government that had been bequeathed by the Monarchy to the Revolution and by the Revolution to Buonaparte enabled him easily to seize this national vigour for the profit of his own despotism. On the other hand, the exhaustion of the brilliant hopes raised by the Revolution, the craving for public order, the military enthusiasm and the impulse of a new glory given by the wonderful victories France had won, made a Tyranny possible; and in the hands of Buonaparte this tyranny was supported by a secret police, by the suppression of the press and of all freedom of opinion, and above all by the iron will and immense ability of the First Consul himself.

His designs.

Once chosen Consul for life, he felt himself secure at home, and turned restlessly to the work of outer aggression. The pledges given at Amiens were set aside. The republics established on the borders of France were brought into mere dependence on his will. Piedmont and Parma were actually annexed to France; and a French army occupied Switzerland. The temperate protests of the English Government were answered by demands for the expulsion of the French exiles who had been living in England ever since the Revolution, and for its surrender of

Malta, which was retained till some security could be devised against a fresh seizure of the island by the French fleet. Meanwhile huge armaments were preparing in the French ports; and a new activity was seen in those of Spain. Not for a moment indeed had Buonaparte relinquished his design of attacking Britain. He had made peace because peace would serve his purpose, both in strengthening the tranquillity of the Continent, which was essential to his success in any campaign across the Channel, and in giving him time to replace by a new combination the maritime schemes which had broken down. Beaten as it had been, the Spanish fleet was still powerful; and a union with the French fleet which the First Consul was forming might still enable it to dispute the command of the sea. All that he wished for was time; and time was what the Peace gave him. But delay was as dangerous to England, now that it discerned his plans, as it was profitable to France; and in May 1803 the British Government anticipated his attack by a declaration of war.

The Camp at Boulogne.

The breach only quickened Buonaparte's resolve to attack his enemy at home. The difficulties in his way he set contemptuously aside; "Fifteen millions of people," he said, in allusion to the disproportion between the population of England and France, "must give way to forty millions"; and the invasion was planned on a gigantic scale. A camp of one hundred thousand men was formed at Boulogne, and a host of flat-bottomed boats gathered for their conveyance across the Channel. The peril of the nation forced Addington from office and recalled Pitt to power. His health was broken, and as the days went by his appearance became so haggard and depressed that it was plain death was drawing near. But dying as he really was, the nation clung to him with all its old faith. He was still the representative of national union; and he proposed to include Fox and the leading Whigs in his new ministry, but he was foiled by the bigotry of the king; and the refusal of Lord Grenville and of Windham to take office without Fox, as well as the loss of his post at a later time by his ablest supporter, Dundas, left him almost alone. But lonely as he was, he faced difficulty and danger with the same courage as of old. The invasion seemed imminent when Buonaparte, who now assumed the title of the Emperor Napoleon, appeared in the camp at Boulogne. A slight experience however showed him the futility of his scheme for crossing the Channel in open boats in the teeth of English

men-of-war; and he turned to fresh plans of securing its passage. "Let us be masters of the Channel for six hours," he is reported to have said, "and we are masters of the world." A skilfully-combined plan, by which the British fleet would have been divided while the whole French navy was concentrated in the Channel, was delayed by the death of the admiral destined to execute it. But the alliance with Spain placed the Spanish fleet at Napoleon's disposal, and in 1805 he planned its union with that of France, the crushing of the squadron which blocked the ports of the Channel before the English ships which were watching the Spanish armament could come to its support, and a crossing of the vast armament thus protected to the English shore.

Trafalgar.

Though three hundred thousand volunteers mustered in England to meet the coming attack, such a force would have offered but small hindrance to the veterans of the Grand Army, had they once crossed the Channel. But Pitt had already found them work elsewhere. It was not merely the danger of Britain, and the sense that without this counterpoise they would be helpless before the new French Empire, that roused the alarm of the Continental powers. They had been scared by Napoleon's course of aggression since the settlement at Lunéville, and his annexation of Genoa brought their alarm to a head. Pitt's offer of subsidies removed the last obstacle in the way of a league; and Russia, Austria, and Sweden joined in an alliance to wrest Italy and the Low Countries from the grasp of the French Emperor. Napoleon meanwhile swept the sea in vain for a glimpse of the great armament whose assembly in the Channel he had so skilfully planned. Admiral Villeneuve, uniting the Spanish ships with his own squadron from Toulon, drew Nelson in pursuit to the West Indies, and then suddenly returning to Cadiz, hastened to form a junction with the French squadron at Brest and to crush the English fleet in the Channel. But a headlong pursuit brought Nelson up with him ere the manœuvre was complete, and the two fleets met on the 21st of October 1805 off Cape Trafalgar. "England" ran Nelson's famous signal, "expects every man to do his duty"; and though he fell himself in the hour of victory, twenty French sail had struck their flag ere the day was done. The French and Spanish navies were in fact annihilated. From this hour the supremacy of England at sea remained unquestioned; and the danger of any invasion of England rolled away like a dream.

The Peace of Tilsit.

Her allies were less fortunate. "England has saved herself by her courage," Pitt said in what were destined to be his last public words: "she will save Europe by her example!" But even before the victory of Trafalgar Napoleon had abandoned the dream of invading England to meet the coalition in his rear; and swinging round his forces on the Danube, he forced an Austrian army to capitulation in Ulm three days before his naval defeat. From Ulm he marched on Vienna, and at the close of November he crushed the combined armies of Austria and Russia in the battle of Austerlitz. "Austerlitz," Wilberforce wrote in his diary, "killed Pitt." Though he was still but forty-seven, the hollow voice and wasted frame of the great Minister had long told that death was near; and the blow to his hopes proved fatal. "Roll up that map," he said, pointing to a map of Europe which hung upon the wall; "it will not be wanted these ten years!" Once only he rallied from stupor; and those who bent over him caught a faint murmur of "My country! How I leave my country!" On the twenty-third of January 1806 he breathed his last; and was laid in Westminster Abbey in the grave of Chatham. "What grave," exclaimed Lord Wellesley, "contains such a father and such a son! What sepulchre embosoms the remains of so much human excellence and glory!" So great was felt to be the loss that nothing but the union of parties, which Pitt had in vain desired during his lifetime, could fill up the gap left by his death. In the new ministry Fox, with the small body of popular Whigs who were bent on peace and internal reform, united with the aristocratic Whigs under Lord Grenville and with the Tories under Lord Sidmouth. All home questions, in fact, were subordinated to the need of saving Europe from the ambition of France, and in the resolve to save Europe Fox was as resolute as Pitt himself. His hopes of peace indeed were stronger; but they were foiled by the evasive answer which Napoleon gave to his overtures, and by a new war which he undertook against Prussia, the one power which seemed able to resist his arms. On the 14th of October 1806 a decisive victory at Jena laid North Germany at the Emperor's feet. From Berlin Napoleon marched into the heart of Poland to bring to terms the last opponent now left him on the Continent; and though checked in the winter by the stubborn defence of the Russian forces on the field of Eylau, in the summer of 1807 a decisive victory at Friedland brought the Czar to consent to the Peace of Tilsit.

The Continental System.

The Peace of Tilsit marked an overthrow for the time of that European settlement and balance of power which had been established five years before by the Peace of Lunéville. The change in his policy had been to a great extent forced on Napoleon; for the league of 1805 had shown that his plan of such a Continental peace as would suffer him to concentrate his whole strength on an invasion of Britain was certain to be foiled by the fears of the Continental states; and that an unquestioned supremacy over Europe was a first condition in the struggle with his great rival. Even with such a supremacy, indeed, his plans for a descent on Britain itself, or for winning the command of the sea which was the necessary preliminary to such a descent, still remained impracticable. The battle of Trafalgar had settled the question of an invasion of England; and a thousand victories on land would not make him master, even for “six hours,” of the “silver streak” of sea that barred his path. But Napoleon was far from abandoning his struggle against Britain; on the contrary, he saw in his mastery of Europe the means of giving fresh force and effectiveness to his attack in a quarter where his foe was still vulnerable. It was her wealth that had raised up that European coalition against him which had forced him to break up his camp at Boulogne; and in his mastery of Europe he saw the means of striking at her wealth. His earlier attempt at the enforcement of a “Continental System” had broken down with the failure of the Northern League; but he now saw a yet more effective means of realising his dream. It was this gigantic project which revealed itself as soon as Jena had laid Prussia at his feet. Napoleon was able to find a pretext for his new attack in England’s own action. By a violent stretch of her rights as a combatant she had declared the whole coast occupied by France and its allies, from Dantzic to Trieste, to be in a state of blockade. It was impossible to enforce such an order as this, even with the immense force at her disposal; but it was ostensibly to meet this “paper blockade” that Napoleon issued from Berlin, on the twenty-first of November 1806, a decree which—without a single ship to carry it out—placed the British Islands in a state of blockade. All commerce or communication with them was prohibited; all English goods or manufactures found in the territory of France or its allies were declared liable to confiscation; and their harbours were closed, not only against vessels coming from Britain, but against all who had touched at

her ports. An army of inspectors spread along the coasts to carry out this decree.

Its results.

But it was almost impossible to enforce such a system. It was foiled by the rise of a widespread contraband trade, by the reluctance of Holland to aid in its own ruin, by the connivance of officials along the Prussian and Russian shores, and by the pressure of facts. It was impossible even for Napoleon himself to do without the goods he pretended to exclude; an immense system of licences soon neutralized his decree; and the French army which marched to Eylau was clad in greatcoats made at Leeds, and shod with shoes made at Northampton. Vexatious therefore as the system might be at once to England and to Europe, it told on British industry mainly by heightening the price of its products, and so far by restricting the market for them. But it told far more fatally on British commerce. Trade at once began to move from English vessels, which were subject to instant confiscation, and to shelter itself under neutral flags, where goods had at least to be proved to be British before they could be seized. America profited most by this transfer. She was now entering on that commercial career which was to make her England's chief trading rival; and she rapidly availed herself of the Berlin decree to widen her carrying trade. But the British Government at once felt the pressure of the merchant class. As yet this class had profited above all others by the war and by the monopoly which war placed in its hands; and now that not only its monopoly but its very existence was threatened, it called on the Government to protect it. It was to this appeal that the administration of Lord Grenville replied, in January 1807, by an Order in Council which declared all the ports of the coast of France and her allies under blockade, and any neutral vessels trading between them to be good prize.

Fall of the Grenville Ministry.

Such a step however, though it arbitrarily shut neutral vessels out from the coasting trade of most of Europe, was far from satisfying the British merchants, for it left the whole trade between Europe and other countries, which virtually included the colonial trade, untouched; and this passed as of old into American bottoms. But their appeal was no longer to Lord Grenville. The work which his ministry had set itself to do

was to continue the double work of Pitt, his resolute maintenance of English greatness, and his endeavour to carry on even amidst the stress of the fight that course of philanthropic and political progress which was struggling back into renewed vigour after its long arrest through the French Revolution. But the forces of ignorance and bigotry which had been too strong for Pitt were too strong for the Grenville ministry, weakened as it was by the death of Fox at the close of the previous year. Its greatest work, the abolition of the slave-trade, in February 1807, was done in the teeth of a vigorous opposition from the Tories and the merchants of Liverpool; and in March the first indication of its desire to open the question of religious equality by allowing Catholic officers to serve in the army was met on the part of the king by the demand of a pledge not to meddle with the question. On the refusal of this pledge the Ministry was dismissed. Its fall was the final close of that union of parties in face of the war with France which had brought about the junction of the bulk of the Whig party with the Tories, and which had been to some extent renewed after the temporary breach in Pitt's last ministry by the junction of Lord Sidmouth and a large body of the Tories with the Whigs. The union had been based on the actual peril to England's existence, and on the suspension of all home questions in face of the peril. But with the break-up of the camp at Boulogne and the victory of Trafalgar the peril of invasion had disappeared. England again broke into the party that called for progress and the party that resisted it.

The Portland Ministry.

The last was still the stronger: for in the mass of the nation progress was still confounded with the destruction of institutions, the passion for war absorbed public attention, and the Tories showed themselves most in earnest in the prosecution of the war. From this time therefore to the end of the war England was wholly governed by the Tories. The nominal head of the ministry which succeeded that of Lord Grenville was the Duke of Portland; its guiding spirit was the Foreign Secretary, George Canning, a young and devoted adherent of Pitt, whose brilliant rhetoric gave him power over the House of Commons, while the vigour and breadth of his mind gave a new energy and colour to the war. At no time had opposition to Napoleon seemed so hopeless as at the moment of his entry into power. From foes the two Emperors of Western and Eastern Europe had become friends, and the hope of French aid in the conquest

of Turkey drew Alexander to a close alliance with Napoleon. Russia not only enforced the Berlin decrees against British commerce, but forced Sweden, the one ally that England still retained on the Continent, to renounce her alliance. The Russian and Swedish fleets were thus placed at the service of France; and the two Emperors counted on securing in addition the fleet of Denmark, and again threatening by this union the maritime supremacy which formed England's real defence. The hope was foiled by the decision of the new ministers. In July 1807 an expedition was promptly and secretly equipped by Canning, with a demand for the surrender of the Danish fleet into the hands of England, on pledge of its return at the close of the war. On the refusal of the Danes the demand was enforced by a bombardment of Copenhagen; and the whole Danish fleet, with a vast mass of naval stores, was carried into British ports. It was in the same spirit of almost reckless decision that Canning turned to meet Napoleon's Continental System. The cry of the British merchant fell upon willing ears. Of trade or the laws of trade Canning was utterly ignorant; nor could he see that the interests of the country were not necessarily the interests of a class; but he was resolute at any cost to hinder the transfer of commerce to neutral flags; and he saw in the crisis a means of forcing the one great neutral power, America, to join Britain in her strife with France. In November 1807, therefore, he issued fresh Orders in Council. By these France, and every Continental state from which the British flag was excluded, were put in a state of blockade, and all vessels bound for their harbours were held subject to seizure unless they had touched at a British port. The orders were at once met by another decree of Napoleon issued at Milan in December, which declared every vessel, of whatever nation, coming from or bound to Britain or any British colony, to have forfeited its character as a neutral, and to be liable to seizure.

The American Embargo.

The policy of Napoleon was at any rate a consistent one in these measures; for his sole aim was to annihilate the industry as well as the commerce of Britain; and he had little to fear from the indignation of America. But the aim of Britain was to find outlets for her manufactures; and of these outlets America was now far the most important. She took in fact ten millions of our exports every year, not only for her own consumption, but for the illicit trade which she managed to carry on with

the Continent. To close such an outlet as this was to play into Napoleon's hands. And yet the first result of Canning's policy was to close it. In the long strife between France and England, America had already borne much from both combatants, but above all from Britain. Not only had the English Government exercised its right of search, but it asserted a right of seizing English seamen found in American vessels; and as there were few means of discriminating between English seamen and American, the sailor of Maine or Massachusetts was often impressed to serve in the British fleet. Galled however as was America by outrages such as these, she was hindered from resenting them by her strong disinclination to war, as well as by the profit which she drew from the maintenance of her neutral position; and she believed in the words of Jefferson, that "it will ever be in our power to keep so even a stand between France and England, as to inspire a wish in neither to throw us into the scale of his adversary." But the Orders in Council and the Milan Decree forced her into action, and she at once answered them by an embargo of trade with Europe.

Such a step was a menace of further action, for it was plain that America could not long remain in utter isolation, and that if she left it she must join one combatant or the other. But she had as yet shown no military power outside her own bounds, either by land or sea; and England looked with scorn on the threats of a state which possessed neither army nor fleet. "America," Lord Sidmouth wrote at this time, "is a bugbear: there is no terror in her threats!" Canning indeed saw in the embargo only a carrying out of his policy by the very machinery of the American Government. The commerce of America ceased to exist. Her seamen were driven to seek employment under the British flag; and Britain again absorbed the carrying-trade of the world. But what he really looked forward to was something far beyond this. He saw that the embargo was but a temporary expedient: and he believed that its failure would force the United States into union with England in her war with France. Nothing shows the world-wide nature of the struggle more than such a policy as this; but for a while it seemed justified by its results. After a year's trial America found it impossible to maintain the embargo: and at the opening of 1809 she exchanged it for an Act of Non-Intercourse with France and England alone. But this Act was as ineffective as the embargo. The American Government was utterly without means of enforcing it on its land frontier; and it had small means

of enforcing it at sea. Throughout 1809 indeed vessels sailed daily for British ports. The Act was thus effective against France alone, and part of Canning's end was gained. At last the very protest which it embodied was given up, and in May 1810 the Non-Intercourse Act was repealed altogether. All that America persisted in maintaining was an offer that if either Power would repeal its edicts, it would prohibit American commerce with the other.

Napoleon and Spain.

What the results of this offer were to be we shall see hereafter. But at the moment the attitude of America was one of utter submission; and the effect of the Continental system on Britain had thus been to drive it to a policy of aggression upon neutral states, which seemed to be as successful as it was aggressive. The effect of his system on Napoleon himself was precisely the same. It was to maintain this material union of Europe against Britain that he was driven to aggression after aggression in North Germany, and to demands upon Russia which threatened the league that had been formed at Tilsit. Above all, it was the hope of more effectually crushing the world-power of Britain that drove him, at the very moment when Canning was attacking America, to his worst aggression, the aggression upon Spain. Spain was already his subservient ally; but her alliance became every hour less useful. The country was ruined by misgovernment: its treasury was empty: its fleet rotted in its harbours. To seize the whole Spanish Peninsula, to develop its resources by an active administration, to have at his command not only a regenerated Spain and Portugal, but their mighty dominions in Southern and Central America, to renew with these fresh forces the struggle with Britain for her empire of the seas, these were the designs by which Napoleon was driven to the most ruthless of his enterprises. He acted with his usual subtlety. In October 1807 France and Spain agreed to divide Portugal between them; and on the advance of their forces the reigning House of Braganza fled helplessly from Lisbon to a refuge in Brazil. But the seizure of Portugal was only a prelude to the seizure of Spain. Charles the Fourth, whom a riot in his capital drove at this moment to abdication, and his son and successor, Ferdinand the Seventh, were alike drawn to Bayonne in May 1808, and forced to resign their claims to the Spanish crown; while a French army entered Madrid, and proclaimed Joseph Buonaparte as King of Spain.

The Rising of Spain.

High-handed as such an act was, it was in harmony with the general system which Napoleon was pursuing elsewhere, and which had as yet stirred no national resistance. Holland had been changed into a monarchy by a simple decree of the French Emperor, and its crown bestowed on his brother Louis. For another brother, Jerome, a kingdom of Westphalia had been built up out of the Electorates of Hesse Cassel and Hanover. Joseph himself had been set as king over Naples before his transfer to Spain. But the spell of submission was now suddenly broken, and the new king had hardly entered Madrid when Spain rose as one man against the stranger. Desperate as the effort of its people seemed, the news of the rising was welcomed throughout England with a burst of enthusiastic joy. "Hitherto," cried Sheridan, a leader of the Whig opposition, "Buonaparte has contended with princes without dignity, numbers without ardour, or peoples without patriotism. He has yet to learn what it is to combat a people who are animated by one spirit against him." Tory and Whig alike held that "never had so happy an opportunity existed for Britain to strike a bold stroke for the rescue of the world"; and Canning at once resolved to change the system of desultory descents on colonies and sugar islands for a vigorous warfare in the Peninsula. Supplies were sent to the Spanish insurgents with reckless profusion, and two small armies placed under the command of Sir John Moore and Sir Arthur Wellesley for service in the Peninsula. In July 1808 the surrender at Baylen of a French force which had invaded Andalusia gave the first shock to the power of Napoleon, and the blow was followed by one almost as severe. Landing at the Mondego with fifteen thousand men, Sir Arthur Wellesley drove the French army of Portugal from the field of Vimiera, and forced it to surrender in the Convention of Cintra on the 30th of August. But the tide of success was soon roughly turned. Napoleon appeared in Spain with an army of two hundred thousand men; and Moore, who had advanced from Lisbon to Salamanca to support the Spanish armies, found them crushed on the Ebro, and was driven to fall hastily back on the coast. His force saved its honour in a battle before Corunna on the 16th of January 1809, which enabled it to embark in safety; but elsewhere all seemed lost. The whole of northern and central Spain was held by the French armies; and even Zaragoza, which had once heroically repulsed them, submitted after a second equally desperate resistance.

Wellesley in Portugal.

The landing of the wreck of Moore's army and the news of the Spanish defeats turned the temper of England from the wildest hope to the deepest despair; but Canning remained unmoved. On the day of the evacuation of Corunna he signed a treaty of alliance with the Junta which governed Spain in the absence of its king; and the English force at Lisbon, which had already prepared to leave Portugal, was reinforced with thirteen thousand fresh troops and placed under the command of Sir Arthur Wellesley. "Portugal," Wellesley wrote coolly, "may be defended against any force which the French can bring against it." At this critical moment the best of the French troops with the Emperor himself were drawn from the Peninsula to the Danube; for the Spanish rising had roused Austria as well as England to a renewal of the struggle. When Marshal Soult therefore threatened Lisbon from the north, Wellesley marched boldly against him, drove him from Oporto in a disastrous retreat, and suddenly changing his line of operations, pushed with twenty thousand men by Abrantes on Madrid. He was joined on the march by a Spanish force of thirty thousand men; and a bloody action with a French army of equal force at Talavera in July 1809 restored the renown of English arms. The losses on both sides were enormous, and the French fell back at the close of the struggle; but the fruits of the victory were lost by a sudden appearance of Soult on the English line of advance. Wellesley was forced to retreat hastily on Badajoz, and his failure was embittered by heavier disasters elsewhere; for Austria was driven to sue for peace by a decisive victory of Napoleon at Wagram, while a force of forty thousand English soldiers which had been despatched against Antwerp in July returned home baffled after losing half its numbers in the marshes of Walcheren.

The Perceval Ministry.

The failure at Walcheren brought about the fall of the Portland ministry. Canning attributed this disaster to the incompetence of Lord Castlereagh, heir to an Irish peerage, who after taking the chief part in bringing about the union between England and Ireland had been raised by the Duke of Portland to the post of Secretary at War; and the quarrel between the two Ministers ended in a duel and in their resignation of their offices in September 1809. The Duke of Portland retired with Canning; and a new ministry was formed out of the more Tory members

of the late administration under the guidance of Spencer Perceval, an industrious mediocrity of the narrowest type; while the Marquis of Wellesley, a brother of the English general in Spain, succeeded Canning as Foreign Secretary. But if Perceval and his colleagues possessed few of the higher qualities of statesmanship, they had one characteristic which in the actual position of English affairs was beyond all price. They were resolute to continue the war. In the nation at large the fit of enthusiasm had been followed by a fit of despair; and the City of London even petitioned for a withdrawal of the English forces from the Peninsula, Napoleon seemed irresistible, and now that Austria was crushed and England stood alone in opposition to him, the Emperor determined to put an end to the strife by a vigorous prosecution of the war in Spain. Andalusia, the one province which remained independent, was invaded in the opening of 1810, and with the exception of Cadiz reduced to submission; while Marshal Massena with a fine army of eighty thousand men marched upon Lisbon. Even Perceval abandoned all hope of preserving a hold on the Peninsula in face of these new efforts, and threw on Wellesley, who had been raised to the peerage as Lord Wellington after Talavera, the responsibility of resolving to remain there.

Torres Vedras.

But the cool judgement and firm temper which distinguished Wellington enabled him to face a responsibility from which weaker men would have shrunk. "I conceive," he answered, "that the honour and interest of our country require that we should hold our ground here as long as possible; and, please God, I will maintain it as long as I can." By the addition of Portuguese troops who had been trained under British officers, his army was now raised to fifty thousand men; and though his inferiority in force compelled him to look on while Massena reduced the frontier fortresses of Ciudad Rodrigo and Almeida, he inflicted on him a heavy check at the heights of Busaco, and finally fell back in October 1810 on three lines of defence which he had secretly constructed at Torres Vedras, along a chain of mountain, heights crowned with redoubts and bristling with cannon. The position was impregnable: and able and stubborn as Massena was he found himself forced after a month's fruitless efforts to fall back in a masterly retreat; but so terrible were the privations of the French army in passing again through the wasted country that it was only with forty thousand men that he reached Ciudad

Rodrigo in the spring of 1811. Reinforced by fresh troops, Massena turned fiercely to the relief of Almeida, which Wellington had besieged. Two days' bloody and obstinate fighting however, in May 1811, failed to drive the English army from its position at Fuentes d'Onore, and the Marshal fell back on Salamanca and relinquished his effort to drive Wellington from Portugal. But great as was the effect of Torres Vedras in restoring the spirit of the English people, and in reviving throughout Europe the hope of resistance to the tyranny of Napoleon, its immediate result was little save the deliverance of Portugal. If Massena had failed, his colleagues had succeeded in their enterprises; the French were now masters of all Spain save Cadiz and the eastern provinces, and even the east coast was reduced in 1811 by the vigour of General Suchet.

The Quarrel with America.

While England thus failed to rescue Spain from the aggression of Napoleon, she was suddenly brought face to face with the result of her own aggression in America. The repeal of the Non-Intercourse Act in 1810 had in effect been a triumph for Britain: but the triumph forced Napoleon's hand. As yet all he had done by his attack on neutral rights had been to drive the United States practically to join England against him. To revenge himself by war with them would only play England's game yet more; and with characteristic rapidity Napoleon passed from hostility to friendship. He seized on the offer with which America had closed her efforts against the two combatants, and after promising to revoke his Berlin and Milan Decrees he called on America to redeem her pledge. In February 1811, therefore, the United States announced that all intercourse with Great Britain and her dependencies was at an end. The effect of this step was seen in a reduction of English exports during this year by a third of their whole amount. It was in vain that Britain pleaded that the Emperor's promises remained unfulfilled, that neither of the decrees was withdrawn, that Napoleon had failed to return the American merchandise seized under them, and that the enforcement of non-intercourse with England was thus an unjust act, and an act of hostility. The pressure of the American policy, as well as news of the warlike temper which had at last grown up in the United States, made submission inevitable; for the industrial state of England was now so critical that to expose it to fresh shocks was to court the very ruin which Napoleon had planned.

State of England.

During the earlier years of the war indeed the increase of wealth had been enormous. England was sole mistress of the seas. The war gave her possession of the colonies of Spain, of Holland, and of France; and if her trade was checked for a time by the Berlin Decree, the efforts of Napoleon were soon rendered fruitless by the smuggling system which sprang up along the southern coasts and the coast of North Germany. English exports indeed had nearly doubled since the opening of the century. Manufactures were profiting by the discoveries of Watt and Arkwright; and the consumption of raw cotton in the mills of Lancashire rose during the same period from fifty to a hundred million of pounds. The vast accumulation of capital, as well as the vast increase of the population at this time, told upon the land, and forced agriculture into a feverish and unhealthy prosperity. Wheat rose to famine prices, and the value of land rose in proportion with the price of wheat. Inclosures went on with prodigious rapidity; the income of every landowner was doubled, while the farmers were able to introduce improvements into the processes of agriculture which changed the whole face of the country. But if the increase of wealth was enormous, its distribution was partial. During the fifteen years which preceded Waterloo, the number of the population rose from ten to thirteen millions, and this rapid increase kept down the rate of wages, which would naturally have advanced in a corresponding degree with the increase in the national wealth. Even manufactures, though destined in the long run to benefit the labouring classes, seemed at first rather to depress them; for one of the earliest results of the introduction of machinery was the ruin of a number of small trades which were carried on at home and the pauperization of families who relied on them for support. In the winter of 1811 the terrible pressure of this transition from handicraft to machinery was seen in the Luddite, or machine-breaking, riots which broke out over the northern and midland counties; and which were only suppressed by military force. While labour was thus thrown out of its older grooves, and the rate of wages kept down at an artificially low figure by the rapid increase of population, the rise in the price of wheat, which brought wealth to the landowner and the farmer, brought famine and death to the poor, for England was cut off by the war from the vast corn-fields of the Continent or of America, which nowadays redress from their abundance the results of a bad harvest. Scarcity was followed by a terrible pauperization of the

labouring classes. The amount of the poor-rate rose fifty per cent; and with the increase of poverty followed its inevitable result, the increase of crime.

Political Progress.

The natural relation of trade and commerce to the general wealth of the people at large was thus disturbed by the peculiar circumstances of the time. The war enriched the landowner, the farmer, the merchant, the manufacturer; but it impoverished the poor. It is indeed from these fatal years that we must date that war of classes, that social severance between employers and employed, which still forms the main difficulty of English politics. But it is from these too that we must date the renewal of that progressive movement in politics which had been suspended since the opening of the war. The publication of the *Edinburgh Review* in 1802 by a knot of young lawyers at Edinburgh marked a revival of the policy of constitutional and administrative progress which had been reluctantly abandoned by William Pitt. Jeremy Bentham gave a new vigour to political speculation by his advocacy of the doctrine of Utility, and his definition of “the greatest happiness of the greatest number” as the aim of political action. In 1809 Sir Francis Burdett revived the question of Parliamentary Reform. Only fifteen members supported his motion; and a reference to the House of Commons in a pamphlet which he subsequently published, as “a part of our fellow-subjects collected together by means which it is not necessary to describe,” was met by his committal to the Tower, where he remained till the prorogation of the Parliament. A far greater effect was produced by the perseverance with which Canning pressed year by year the question of Catholic Emancipation. So long as Perceval lived both efforts at Reform were equally vain; but the advancing strength of a more liberal sentiment in the nation was felt by the policy of “moderate concession” which was adopted by his successors. Catholic Emancipation became an open question in the Cabinet itself, and was adopted in 1812 by a triumphant majority in the House of Commons, though it was still rejected by the Lords.

War with America.

With social and political troubles thus awaking anew to life about them, even Tory statesmen were not willing to face the terrible

consequences of a ruin of English industry such as might follow from the junction of America with Napoleon. They were in fact preparing to withdraw the Orders in Council, when their plans were arrested by the dissolution of the Perceval ministry. Its position had from the first been a weak one. A return of the king's madness made it necessary in the beginning of 1811 to confer the Regency on the Prince of Wales; and the Whig sympathies of the Prince threatened for a while the Cabinet with dismissal. Though this difficulty was surmounted their hold of power remained insecure, and the insecurity of the ministry told on the conduct of the war; for the apparent inactivity of Wellington during 1811 was really due to the hesitation and timidity of the Cabinet at home. But in May 1812 the assassination of Perceval by a madman named Bellingham brought about the dissolution of his ministry; and fresh efforts were made by the Regent to install the Whigs in office. Mutual distrust however again foiled his attempts; and the old ministry returned to office under the headship of Lord Liverpool, a man of no great abilities, but temperate, well informed, and endowed with a remarkable skill in holding discordant colleagues together. The most important of these colleagues was Lord Castlereagh, who became Secretary for Foreign Affairs. Time has long ago rendered justice to the political ability of Castlereagh, disguised as it was to men of his own day by a curious infelicity of expression; and the instinctive good sense of Englishmen never showed itself more remarkably than in their preference at this crisis of his cool judgement, his high courage, his discernment, and his will to the more showy brilliancy of Canning. His first work indeed as a minister was to meet the danger in which Canning had involved the country by his Orders in Council. On the 23rd of June, only twelve days after the ministry had been formed, these Orders were repealed. But, quick as was Castlereagh's action, events had moved even more quickly. At the opening of the year America, in despair of redress, had resolved on war; Congress had voted an increase of both army and navy; and laid in April an embargo on all vessels in American harbours. Actual hostilities might still have been averted by the repeal of the Orders, on which the English Cabinet was resolved; but in the confusion which followed the murder of Perceval, and the strife of parties for office through the month that followed, the opportunity was lost. When the news of the repeal reached America, it came six weeks too late. On the

18th of June an Act of Congress had declared America at war with Great Britain.

Napoleon and Russia.

Had Napoleon been able to reap the fruits of the strife which his policy had thus forced on the two English peoples, it is hard to say how Britain could have coped with him. Cut off from her markets alike in east and west, her industries checked and disorganized, a financial crisis added to her social embarrassment, it may be doubted whether she must not have bowed in the end before the pressure of the Continental System. But if that system had thrust her into aggression and ruin, it was as inevitably thrusting the same aggression and ruin on her rival. The moment when America entered into the great struggle was a critical moment in the history of mankind. Six days after President Madison issued his declaration of war, Napoleon crossed the Niemen on his march to Moscow. Successful as his policy had been in stirring up war between England and America, it had been no less successful in breaking the alliance which he had made with the Czar at Tilsit and in forcing on a contest with Russia. On the one hand, Napoleon was irritated by the refusal of Russia to enforce strictly the suspension of all trade with England, though such a suspension would have ruined the Russian landowners. On the other, Alexander saw with growing anxiety the advance of the French Empire which sprang from Napoleon's resolve to enforce his system by a seizure of the northern coasts. In 1811 Holland, the Hanseatic towns, part of Westphalia, and the Duchy of Oldenburg were successively annexed, and the Duchy of Mecklenburg threatened with seizure. A peremptory demand on the part of France for the entire cessation of intercourse with England brought the quarrel to a head; and preparations were made on both sides for a gigantic struggle.

Salamanca.

Even before it opened, this new enterprise gave fresh vigour to Napoleon's foes. The best of the French soldiers were drawn from Spain to the frontier of Poland; and Wellington, whose army had been raised to a force of forty thousand Englishmen and twenty thousand Portuguese, profited by the withdrawal to throw off his system of defence and to assume an attitude of attack. Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz were taken by storm during the spring of 1812; and at the close of June, three days

before Napoleon crossed the Niemen, in his march on Moscow, Wellington crossed the Agueda in a march on Salamanca. After a series of masterly movements on both sides, Marmont with the French army of the North attacked the English on the hills in the neighbourhood of that town on the twenty-second of July. While he was marching round the right of the English position his left wing remained isolated; and with a sudden exclamation of "Marmont is lost!" Wellington flung on it the bulk of his force, crushed it, and drove the whole army from the field. The loss on either side was nearly equal, but failure had demoralized the French army; and its retreat forced Joseph to leave Madrid, and Soult to evacuate Andalusia and to concentrate the southern army on the eastern coast. While Napoleon was still pushing slowly over the vast plains of Poland, Wellington made his entry into Madrid in August, and began the siege of Burgos. The town however held out gallantly for a month, till the advance of the two French armies, now concentrated in the north and south of Spain, forced Wellington, in October, to a hasty retreat on the Portuguese frontier.

Ruin of Napoleon.

If Wellington had shaken the rule of the French in Spain in this campaign, his ultimate failure showed how firm a military hold they still possessed there. But the disappointment was forgotten in the news which followed it. At the moment when the English troops fell back from Burgos began the retreat of the Grand Army from Moscow. Victorious in a battle at Borodino, Napoleon had entered the older capital of Russia in triumph, and waited impatiently to receive proposals of peace from the Czar. But a fire kindled by its own inhabitants reduced the city to ashes; Alexander still remained silent; and the gathering cold bent even the stubborn will of Napoleon to own the need of retreat. The French were forced to fall back amidst the horrors of a Russian winter; and of the four hundred thousand combatants who formed the Grand Army at its first outset, only a few thousands recrossed the Niemen in December. In spite of the gigantic efforts which Napoleon made to repair his losses, the spell which he had cast over Europe was broken. Prussia rose against him as the Russians crossed the Niemen in the spring of 1813; and the forces which held it were at once thrown back on the Elbe. In this emergency the military genius of the French Emperor rose to its height. With a fresh army of two hundred thousand men whom he had gathered at Mainz he

marched on the allied armies of Russia and Prussia in May, cleared Saxony by a victory over them at Lutzen, and threw them back on the Oder by a fresh victory at Bautzen. Disheartened by defeat, and by the neutral attitude which Austria still preserved, the two powers consented in June to an armistice, and negotiated for peace. But Austria, though unwilling to utterly ruin France to the profit of her great rival in the East, was as resolute as either of the allies to wrest from Napoleon his supremacy over Europe; and at the moment when it became clear that Napoleon was only bent on playing with her proposals, she was stirred to action by news that his army was at last driven from Spain. Wellington had left Portugal in May with an army which had now risen to ninety thousand men; and overtaking the French forces in retreat at Vitoria on the twenty-first of June he inflicted on them a defeat which drove them in utter rout across the Pyrenees. Madrid was at once evacuated; and Clausel fell back from Zaragoza into France. The victory not only freed Spain from its invaders; it restored the spirit of the Allies. The close of the armistice was followed by a union of Austria with the forces of Prussia and the Czar; and in October a final overthrow of Napoleon at Leipzig forced the French army to fall back in rout across the Rhine.

His Abdication.

The war now hurried to its close. Though held at bay for a while by the sieges of San Sebastian and Pampeluna, as well as by an obstinate defence of the Pyrenees, Wellington succeeded in the very month of the triumph at Leipzig in winning a victory on the Bidassoa, which enabled him to enter France. He was soon followed by the Allies. On the last day of 1813 their forces crossed the Rhine; and a third of France passed, without opposition, into their hands. For two months more Napoleon maintained a wonderful struggle with a handful of raw conscripts against their overwhelming numbers; while in the south, Soult, forced from his entrenched camp near Bayonne and defeated at Orthez, fell back before Wellington on Toulouse. Here their two armies met in April in a stubborn and indecisive engagement. But though neither leader knew it, the war was even then at an end. The struggle of Napoleon himself had ended at the close of March with the surrender of Paris; and the submission of the capital was at once followed by the abdication of the Emperor and the return of the Bourbons.

The American War.

England's triumph over its enemy was dashed by the more doubtful fortunes of the struggle across the Atlantic. The declaration of war by America seemed an act of sheer madness; for its navy consisted of a few frigates and sloops; its army was a mass of half-drilled and half-armed recruits; while the States themselves were divided on the question of the war, and Connecticut with Massachusetts refused to send either money or men. Three attempts to penetrate into Canada during the summer and autumn were repulsed with heavy loss. But these failures were more than redeemed by unexpected successes at sea, where in two successive engagements between English and American frigates, the former were forced to strike their flag. The effect of these victories was out of all proportion to their real importance; for they were the first heavy blows which had been dealt at England's supremacy over the seas. In 1813 America followed up its naval triumphs by more vigorous efforts on land. Its forces cleared Lake Ontario, captured Toronto, destroyed the British flotilla on Lake Erie, and made themselves masters of Upper Canada. An attack on Lower Canada, however, was successfully beaten back; and a fresh advance of the British and Canadian forces in the heart of the winter again recovered the Upper Province. The reverse gave fresh strength to the party in the United States which had throughout been opposed to the war, and whose opposition to it had been embittered by the terrible distress brought about by the blockade and the ruin of American commerce. Cries of secession began to be heard, and Massachusetts took the bold step of appointing delegates to confer with delegates from the other New England States "on the subject of their grievances and common concerns."

Peace in America.

In 1814, however, the war was renewed with more vigour than ever; and Upper Canada was again invaded. But the American army, after inflicting a severe defeat on the British forces in the battle of Chippewa in July, was itself defeated a few weeks after in an equally stubborn engagement, and thrown back on its own frontier; while the fall of Napoleon enabled the English Government to devote its whole strength to the struggle with an enemy which it had ceased to despise. General Ross, with a force of four thousand men, appeared in the Potomac, captured Washington, and before evacuating the city burnt its public buildings to the ground. Few more shameful acts are recorded in our

history; and it was the more shameful in that it was done under strict orders from the Government at home. But the raid upon Washington was intended simply to strike terror into the American people; and the real stress of the war was thrown on two expeditions whose business was to penetrate into the States from the north and from the south. Both proved utter failures. A force of nine thousand Peninsular veterans which marched in September to the attack of Plattsburg on Lake Champlain was forced to fall back by the defeat of the English flotilla which accompanied it. A second force under General Pakenham appeared in December at the mouth of the Mississippi and attacked New Orleans, but was repulsed by General Jackson with the loss of half its numbers. Peace, however, had already been concluded. The close of the French war, if it left untouched the grounds of the struggle, made the United States sensible of the danger of pushing it further; Britain herself was anxious for peace; and the warring claims, both of England and America, were set aside in silence in the treaty of 1814.

Return of Napoleon.

The close of the war with the United States freed England's hands at a moment when the reappearance of Napoleon at Paris called her to a new and final struggle with France. By treaty with the Allied Powers Napoleon had been suffered to retain a fragment of his former empire—the island of Elba off the coast of Tuscany; and from Elba he looked on at the quarrels which sprang up between his conquerors as soon as they gathered at Vienna to complete the settlement of Europe. The most formidable of these quarrels arose from a claim of Prussia to annex Saxony and that of Russia to annex Poland; but their union for this purpose was met by a counter-league of England and Austria with their old enemy, France, whose ambassador, Talleyrand, laboured vigorously to bring the question to an issue by force of arms. At the moment, however, when a war between the two leagues seemed close at hand, Napoleon landed on the coast near Cannes, and, followed only by a thousand of his guards, marched over the mountains of Dauphiné upon Grenoble and Lyons. He counted, and counted justly, on the indifference of the country to its new Bourbon rulers, on the longing of the army for a fresh struggle which should restore its glory, and above all on the spell of his name over soldiers whom he had so often led to victory. In twenty days from his landing he reached the Tuileries unopposed, while Lewis

the Eighteenth fled helplessly to Ghent. But whatever hopes he had drawn from the divisions of the Allied Powers were at once dispelled by their resolute action on the news of his descent upon France. Their strife was hushed and their old union restored by the consciousness of a common danger. An engagement to supply a million of men for the purposes of the war, and a recall of their armies to the Rhine, answered Napoleon's efforts to open negotiations with the Powers.

England furnished subsidies to the amount of eleven millions, and hastened to place an army on the frontier of the Netherlands. The best troops of the force which had been employed in the Peninsula however were still across the Atlantic; and of the eighty thousand men who gathered round Wellington only about half were Englishmen, the rest mainly raw levies from Belgium and Hanover. The Duke's plan was to unite with the one hundred and fifty thousand Prussians under Marshal Blücher who were advancing on the Lower Rhine, and to enter France by Mons and Namur while the forces of Austria and Russia closed in upon Paris by way of Belfort and Elsass. But Napoleon had thrown aside all thought of a merely defensive warfare. By amazing efforts he had raised an army of two hundred and fifty thousand men in the few months since his arrival in Paris; and in the opening of June 1815 one hundred and twenty thousand Frenchmen were concentrated on the Sambre at Charleroi, while Wellington's troops still lay in cantonments on the line of the Scheldt from Ath to Nivelles, and Blücher's on that of the Meuse from Nivelles to Liége. Both the allied armies hastened to unite at Quatre Bras; but their junction there was already impossible. Blücher with eighty thousand men was himself attacked by Napoleon at Ligny, and after a desperate contest driven back with terrible loss upon Wavre. On the same day Ney with twenty thousand men, and an equal force under D'Erlon in reserve, appeared before Quatre Bras, where as yet only ten thousand English and the same force of Belgian troops had been able to assemble. The Belgians broke before the charges of the French horse; and only the dogged resistance of the English infantry gave time for Wellington to bring up corps after corps, till at the close of the day Ney saw himself heavily outnumbered, and withdrew baffled from the field.

Waterloo.

About five thousand men had fallen on either side in this fierce engagement: but, heavy as was Wellington's loss, the firmness of the

English army had already done much to foil Napoleon's effort at breaking through the line of the Allies. Blücher's retreat however left the English flank uncovered; and on the following day, while the Prussians were falling back on Wavre, Wellington, with nearly seventy thousand men—for his army was now well in hand—withdrawed in good order, followed by the mass of the French forces under the Emperor himself. Napoleon had detached thirty thousand men under Grouchy to hang upon the rear of the beaten Prussians, while with a force of eighty thousand he resolved to bring Wellington to battle. On the morning of the 18th of June the two armies faced one another on the field of Waterloo in front of the Forest of Soignies, on the high road to Brussels. Napoleon's one fear had been that of a continued retreat. "I have them!" he cried, as he saw the English line drawn up on a low rise of ground which stretched across the high-road from the château of Hougomont on its right to the farm and straggling village of La Haye Sainte on its left. He had some grounds for his confidence of success. On either side the forces numbered between seventy and eighty thousand men: but the French were superior in guns and cavalry, and a large part of Wellington's force consisted of Belgian levies who broke and fled at the outset of the fight. A fierce attack upon Hougomont opened the battle at eleven; but it was not till midday that the corps of D'Erlon advanced upon the centre near La Haye Sainte, which from that time bore the main brunt of the struggle. Never has greater courage, whether of attack or endurance, been shown on any field than was shown by both combatants at Waterloo. The columns of D'Erlon, repulsed by the English foot, were hurled back in disorder by a charge of the Scots Greys; but the victorious horsemen were crushed in their turn by the French cuirassiers, and the mass of the French cavalry, twelve thousand strong, flung itself in charge after charge on the English front, carrying the English guns and sweeping with desperate bravery round the unbroken squares whose fire thinned their ranks. With almost equal bravery the French columns of the centre again advanced, wrested at last the farm of La Haye Sainte from their opponents, and pushed on vigorously though in vain under Ney against the troops in its rear.

But meanwhile every hour was telling against Napoleon. To win the battle he must crush the English army before Blücher joined it; and the English army was still uncrushed. Terrible as was his loss, and many of his regiments were reduced to a mere handful of men, Wellington stubbornly held his ground while the Prussians, advancing from Wavre

through deep and miry forest roads, were slowly gathering to his support, disregarding the attack on their rear by which Grouchy strove to hold them back from the field. At half-past four their advanced guard deployed at last from the woods; but the main body was far behind, and Napoleon was still able to hold his ground against them till their increasing masses forced him to stake all on a desperate effort against the English front. The Imperial Guard—his only reserve, and which had as yet taken no part in the battle—was drawn up at seven in two huge columns of attack. The first, with Ney himself at its head, swept all before it as it mounted the rise beside La Haye Sainte, on which the thin English line still held its ground, and all but touched the English front when its mass, torn by the terrible fire of musketry with which it was received, gave way before a charge. The second, three thousand strong, advanced with the same courage over the slope near Hougomont, only to be repulsed and shattered in its turn. At the moment when these masses fell slowly and doggedly back down the fatal rise, the Prussians pushed forward on Napoleon's right, their guns swept the road to Charleroi, and Wellington seized the moment for a general advance. From that hour all was lost. Only the Guard stood firm in the wreck of the French army; and though darkness and exhaustion checked the English in their pursuit of the broken troops as they hurried from the field, the Prussian horse continued the chase through the night. Only forty thousand Frenchmen with some thirty guns recrossed the Sambre while Napoleon himself fled hurriedly to Paris. His second abdication was followed by a triumphant entry of the English and Prussian armies into the French capital; and the long war ended with his exile to St. Helena, and the return of Lewis the Eighteenth to the throne of the Bourbons.

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HISTORY
OF
THE ENGLISH PEOPLE

BY
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HONORARY FELLOW OF JESUS COLLEGE, OXFORD

VOLUME VIII

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CHAPTER II

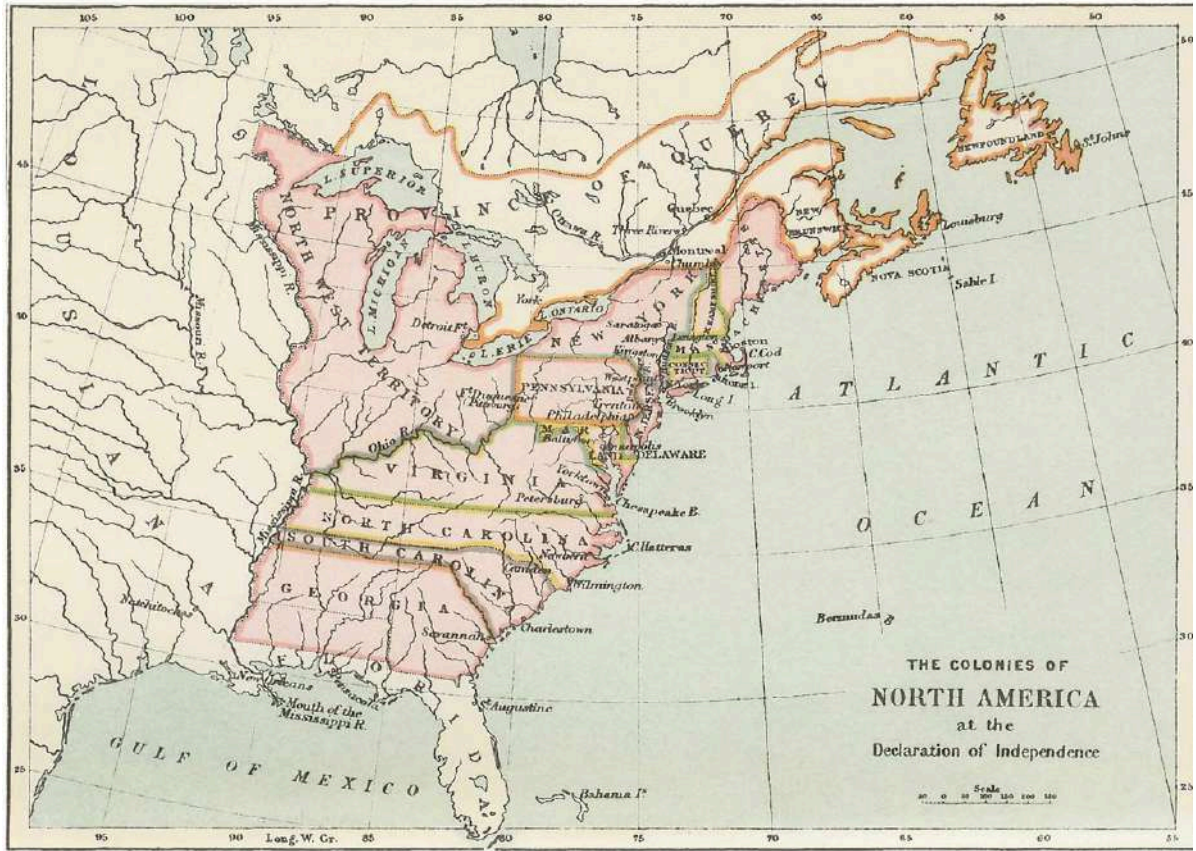
THE INDEPENDENCE OF AMERICA

1767—1782

THE Chatham ministry marked a new phase in the relation of public opinion to the government of the State. In 1766 as in 1756 Pitt had been called into office by "the voice of the people" at large. But in his former ministry the influence he drew from popularity could only make itself effective through an alliance with the influence which was drawn from political connexion; and when the two elements of the administration became opposed the support of the nation gave Pitt little strength of resistance against the Whigs. Nor had the young king had much better fortune as yet in his efforts to break their rule. He had severed them indeed from Pitt; and he had dexterously broken up the great party into jealous factions. But broken as it was, even its factions remained too strong for the king. His

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one effort at independence under Bute hardly lasted a year, and he was as helpless in the hands of Grenville as in the hands of Rockingham. His bribery, his patronage, his Parliamentary "friends," his perfidy and his lies, had done much to render good government impossible and to steep public life in deeper corruption, but they had done little to further the triumph of the Crown over the great houses. Of the one power indeed which could break the Whig rule, the power of public opinion, George was more bitterly jealous than even of the Whigs themselves. But in spite of his jealousy the tide of opinion steadily rose. In wise and in unwise ways the country at large showed its new interest in national policy, its new resolve to have a share in the direction of it. It showed no love for the king or the king's schemes. But it retained all its old disgust for the Whigs and for the Parliament. It clung to Pitt closer than ever, and in spite of his isolation from all party support raised him daily into a mightier power. It was the sense that a new England was thus growing up about him, that a new basis was forming itself for political action, which at last roused the Great Commoner to the bold enterprise of breaking through the bonds of "connexion" altogether. For the first time since the Revolution a minister told the peers in their own house that he defied their combinations.

Chatham's
 withdrawal.

The ministry of 1766 in fact was itself such a

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defiance ; for it was an attempt to found political power not on the support of the Whigs as a party, but on the support of national opinion. But as Parliament was then constituted, it was only through Chatham himself that opinion could tell even on the administration he formed ; and six months after he had taken office Chatham was no more than a name. The dread which had driven him from the stormy agitation of the Lower House to the quiet of the House of Peers now became a certainty. As winter died into the spring of 1767 his nervous disorganization grew into a painful and overwhelming illness which almost wholly withdrew him from public affairs ; and when Parliament met again he was unable either to come to town or to confer with his colleagues. It was in vain that they prayed him for a single word of counsel. Chatham remained utterly silent ; and the ministry which his guidance had alone held together at once fell into confusion. The Earl's plans were suffered to drop. His colleagues lost all cohesion, and each acted as he willed. Townshend, a brilliant but shallow rhetorician whom Pitt had been driven reluctantly to make his Chancellor of the Exchequer, after angering the House of Commons by proposals for an increase of the land-tax, strove to win back popularity among the squires by undertaking to raise a revenue from America. That a member of a ministry which bore Pitt's name should have proposed to reopen

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the question of colonial taxation within a year of the repeal of the Stamp Acts was strange enough to the colonists; and they were yet more astonished when, on its neglect to make provision for compensating those who had suffered from the recent outbreak in due conformity to an Act of the British Parliament, the Assembly of New York was suspended, and when Townshend redeemed his pledge by laying duties on various objects brought into American ports. But these measures were the result of levity and disorganization rather than of any purpose to reopen the quarrel. Pitt's colleagues had as yet no design to reverse his policy. The one aim of the ministry which bore his name, and which during his retirement looked to the Duke of Grafton as its actual head, was simply to exist. But in the face of Chatham's continued withdrawal, of Townshend's death in 1767, and of the increasing hostility of the Rockingham Whigs, even existence was difficult; and Grafton saw himself forced to a union with the faction which was gathered under the Duke of Bedford, and to the appointment of a Tory noble as Secretary of State.

His
resignation.

Such measures however only showed how far the ministry had drifted from the ground on which Pitt took his stand in its formation; and the very force on which he had relied turned at once against it. The elections for the new Parliament which met in 1768 were more corrupt than

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any that had as yet been witnessed ; and even the stoutest opponents of reform shrank aghast from the open bribery of constituencies and the prodigal barter of seats. How bitter the indignation of the country had grown was seen in its fresh backing of Wilkes. Wilkes had remained in France since his outlawry ; but he seized on the opening afforded by the elections to return and offer himself as a member for the new Parliament. To the surprise and dismay of the ministers he was returned for Middlesex, a county the large number of whose voters made its choice a real expression of public opinion. The choice of Wilkes at such a moment was in effect a public condemnation of the House of Commons and the ministerial system. The ministry however and the House alike shrank from a fresh struggle with the agitator. But the king was eager for the contest. After ten years of struggle and disappointment George had all but reached his aim. The two forces which had as yet worsted him were both of them paralysed. The Whigs were fatally divided, and discredited in the eyes of the country by their antagonism to Pitt. Pitt on the other hand was suddenly removed from the stage. The ministry was without support in the country ; and for Parliamentary support it was forced to lean more and more on the men who looked for direction to the king himself. At a moment when all hope of exerting any influence seemed crushed by the

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return of Chatham to power, George found his influence predominant as it had never been before. One force of opposition alone remained in the public discontent; and at this he struck more fiercely than ever. "I think it highly expedient to apprise you," he wrote to Lord North, "that the expulsion of Mr. Wilkes appears to be very essential, and must be effected." The ministers and the House of Commons bowed to his will. By his non-appearance in court when charged with libel, Wilkes had become an outlaw, and he was now thrown into prison on his outlawry. Dangerous riots broke out in London and over the whole country at the news of his arrest; and continued throughout the rest of the year. In the midst of these tumults the ministry itself was torn with internal discord. The adherents of Chatham found their position in it an intolerable one; and Lord Shelburne announced his purpose of resigning office. The announcement was followed in the autumn by the resignation of Chatham himself. Though still prostrated by disease, the Earl was sufficiently restored to grasp the actual position of the Cabinet which traded on his name, and in October 1768 he withdrew formally from the ministry.

The withdrawal of Chatham however, if it shook the ministry, only rendered it still more dependent on the king; and in spite of its reluctance George forced it to plunge into a decisive

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struggle with the public opinion which was declaring itself in tumult and riot against the system of government. The triumph of Wilkes had been driven home by the election of a nominee of the great agitator as his colleague on a fresh vacancy in the representation of Middlesex. The Government met the blow by a show of vigour, and by calling on the magistrates of Surrey to disperse the mobs; a summons which ended in conflicts between the crowd and the soldiers, in which some of the rioters were slain. Wilkes at once published the letter of the Secretary of State with comments on it as a cause of bloodshed; and the ministry accepted the step as a challenge to combat. If his comments were libellous, the libel was cognizable in the ordinary courts of law. But no sooner had Parliament assembled in 1769 than the House of Commons was called to take the matter into its own hands. Witnesses were examined at its bar: the forms of a trial were gone through; and as Wilkes persisted in his charge, he was expelled as a libeller. Unluckily the course which had been adopted put the House itself on trial before the constituencies. No sooner was the new writ issued than Wilkes again presented himself as a candidate, and was again elected by the shire of Middlesex. Violent and oppressive as the course of the House of Commons had been, it had as yet acted within its strict right, for no one questioned

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its possession of a right of expulsion. But the defiance of Middlesex led it now to go further. It resolved, "That Mr. Wilkes having been in this session of Parliament expelled the House, was and is incapable of being elected a member to serve in the present Parliament"; and it issued a writ for a fresh election. Middlesex answered this insolent claim to limit the free choice of a constituency by again returning Wilkes; and the House was driven by its anger to a fresh and more outrageous usurpation. It again expelled the member for Middlesex; and on his return for the third time by an immense majority it voted that the candidate whom he had defeated, Colonel Luttrell, ought to have been returned, and was the legal representative of Middlesex. The Commons had not only limited at their own arbitrary discretion the free election of the constituency, but they had transferred its rights to themselves by seating Luttrell as member in defiance of the deliberate choice of Wilkes by the freeholders of Middlesex. The country at once rose indignantly against this violation of constitutional law. Wilkes was elected an Alderman of London; and the Mayor, Aldermen, and Livery petitioned the king to dissolve the Parliament. A remonstrance from London and Westminster mooted a far larger question. It said boldly that "there is a time when it is clearly demonstrable that men cease to be representatives. That time

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is now arrived. The House of Commons do not represent the people." Meanwhile a writer who styled himself Junius attacked the Government in letters, which, rancorous and unscrupulous as was their tone, gave a new power to the literature of the Press by their clearness and terseness of statement, the finish of their style, and the terrible vigour of their invective.

The storm however beat idly on the obstinacy of the king. The printer of the bold letters was prosecuted, and the petitions and remonstrances of London were haughtily rejected. The issue of the struggle verified the forebodings of Burke. If, as Middlesex declared, and as the strife itself proved, the House of Commons had ceased to represent the English people, it was inevitable that men should look forward to measures that would make it representative. At the beginning of 1770 a cessation of the disease which had long held him prostrate enabled Chatham to reappear in the House of Lords. He at once denounced the usurpations of the Commons, and brought in a bill to declare them illegal. But his genius made him the first to see that remedies of this sort were inadequate to meet evils which really sprang from the fact that the House of Commons no longer represented the people of England; and he mooted a plan for its reform by an increase of the county members, who then formed the most independent portion of the House. Further

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he could not go, for even in the proposals he made he stood almost alone. The Tories and the king's friends were not likely to welcome proposals which would lessen the king's influence. On the other hand the Whigs under Lord Rockingham had no sympathy with Parliamentary reform. As early as 1769, in his first political publication, their one philosophic thinker, Edmund Burke, had met a proposal to enlarge the number of constituents by a counter-proposal to lessen them. "It would be more in the spirit of our constitution, and more agreeable to the fashion of our best laws," he said, "by lessening the number to add to the weight and independency of our voters." Nor did the Whigs shrink with less haughty disdain from the popular agitation in which public opinion was forced to express itself, and which Chatham, while censuring its extravagance, as deliberately encouraged. It is from the quarrel between Wilkes and the House of Commons that we may date the influence of public meetings on English politics. The gatherings of the Middlesex electors in his support were preludes to the great meetings of Yorkshire freeholders in which the question of Parliamentary reform rose into importance; and it was in the movement for reform, and the establishment of corresponding committees throughout the country for the purpose of promoting it, that the power of political agitation first made itself felt. Political societies and clubs took their

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part in this quickening and organization of public opinion: and the spread of discussion, as well as the influence which now began to be exercised by the appearance of vast numbers of men in support of any political movement, proved that Parliament, whether it would or no, must soon reckon with the sentiments of the people at large.

But an agent far more effective than popular agitation was preparing to bring the force of public opinion to bear directly on Parliament itself. We have seen how much of the corruption of the House of Commons sprang from the secrecy of Parliamentary proceedings, but this secrecy was the harder to preserve as the nation woke to a greater interest in its own affairs. From the accession of the Georges imperfect reports of the more important discussions began to be published under the title of "The Senate of Lilliput," and with feigned names or simple initials to denote the speakers. The best known reports of this kind were those contributed by Samuel Johnson to the *Gentleman's Magazine*. Obtained by stealth and often merely recalled by memory, such reports were naturally inaccurate; and their inaccuracy was eagerly seized on as a pretext for enforcing the rules which guarded the secrecy of proceedings in Parliament. In 1771 the Commons issued a proclamation forbidding the publication of debates; and six printers, who set it at defiance, were summoned to the bar of the House. One who

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refused to appear was arrested by its messenger ; but the arrest brought the House into conflict with the magistrates of London. The magistrates set aside its proclamation as without legal force, released the printers, and sent the messenger to prison for an unlawful arrest. The House sent the Lord Mayor to the Tower, but the cheers of the crowds which followed him on his way told that public opinion was again with the Press, and the attempt to hinder its publication of Parliamentary proceedings dropped silently on his release at the next prorogation. Few changes of equal importance have been so quietly brought about. Not only was the responsibility of members to their constituents made constant and effective by the publication of their proceedings, but the nation itself was called in to assist in the deliberations of its representatives. A new and wider interest in its own affairs was roused in the people at large, and a new political education was given to it through the discussion of every subject of national importance in the Houses and the Press. Stimulated and moulded into shape by free discussion, encouraged and made conscious of its strength by public meetings, and gathered up and represented on all its sides by the journals of the day, public opinion became a force in practical statesmanship, influenced the course of debates, and controlled, in a closer and more constant way than even Parliament itself had

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been able to do, the actions of the Government. The importance of its new position gave a weight to the Press which it had never had before. The first great English journals date from this time. With the *Morning Chronicle*, the *Morning Post*, the *Morning Herald*, and the *Times*, all of which appeared in the interval between the opening years of the American War and the beginning of the war with the French Revolution, journalism took a new tone of responsibility and intelligence. The hacks of Grub Street were superseded by publicists of a high moral temper and literary excellence; and philosophers like Coleridge or statesmen like Canning turned to influence public opinion through the columns of the Press.

But great as the influence of opinion was destined to become, it was feebly felt as yet; and George the Third was able to set Chatham's policy disdainfully aside and to plunge into a contest far more disastrous than his contest with the Press. In all the proceedings of the last few years, what had galled him most had been the act which averted a war between England and her colonies. To the king the Americans were already "rebels," and the great statesman whose eloquence had made their claims irresistible was a "trumpet of sedition." George deplored in his correspondence with his ministers the repeal of the Stamp Acts. "All men feel," he wrote, "that the fatal compliance in 1766 has increased the

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pretensions of the Americans to absolute independence." But in England generally the question was regarded as settled, while in America the news of the repeal had been received with universal joy, and taken as a close of the strife. On both sides however there remained a pride and irritability which only wise handling could have allayed; and in the present state of English politics wise handling was impossible. Only a few months indeed passed before the quarrel was again reopened; for no sooner had the illness of Lord Chatham removed him from any real share in public affairs than the wretched administration which bore his name suspended the Assembly of New York on its refusal to provide quarters for English troops, and resolved to assert British sovereignty by levying import duties of trivial amount at American ports. The Assembly of Massachusetts was dissolved on a trifling quarrel with its Governor, and Boston was occupied for a time by British soldiers. It was without a thought of any effective struggle however that the Cabinet had entered on this course of vexation; and when the remonstrances of the Legislatures of Massachusetts and Virginia, coupled with a fall in the funds, warned the ministers of its danger, they hastened to withdraw from it. In 1769 the troops were recalled, and all duties, save one, abandoned. But with a fatal obstinacy the king insisted on retaining the duty on tea as an

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assertion of the supremacy of the mother country. Its retention was enough to prevent any thorough restoration of good feeling. A series of petty quarrels went on in almost every colony between the popular assemblies and the Governors appointed by the Crown, and the colonists persisted in their agreement to import nothing from the mother country. As yet however there was no prospect of serious strife. In America the influence of George Washington allayed the irritation of Virginia; while Massachusetts contented itself with quarrelling with its Governor and refusing to buy tea so long as the duty was levied.

The temper of the colonists was in the main that of the bulk of English statesmen. Even George Grenville, though approving the retention of the duty in question, abandoned all dream of further taxation. But the king was now supreme. The reappearance and attack of Chatham at the opening of 1770 had completed the ruin of the ministry. Those of his adherents who still clung to it, Lord Camden, the Chancellor, Lord Granby, the Commander-in-Chief, Dunning, the Solicitor-General, resigned their posts. In a few days they were followed by the Duke of Grafton, who since Chatham's resignation had been nominally the head of the administration. All that remained of it were the Bedford faction and the dependents of the king; but George did not hesitate to form these into a ministry, and to place at its head the

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former Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord North, a man of some administrative ability, but unconnected with any political party, steadily opposed to any recognition of public opinion, and of an easy and indolent temper which yielded against his better knowledge to the stubborn doggedness of the king. The instinct of the country at once warned it of the results of such a change; and the City of London put itself formally at the head of the public discontent. In solemn addresses it called on George the Third to dismiss his ministers and to dissolve the Parliament; and its action was supported by petitions to the same effect from the greater counties. In the following year it fought, as we have seen, a battle with the House of Commons which established the freedom of the press. But the efforts of the country failed before the paralysis of political action which resulted from the position of the Whigs and the corruption of Parliament. The deaths of Grenville and Bedford broke up two of the Whig factions. Rockingham with the rest of the party held aloof from the popular agitation, and drew more and more away from Chatham as he favoured it. The Parliament remained steady to the king, and the king clung more and more to the ministry. The ministry was in fact a mere cloak for the direction of public affairs by George himself. "Not only did he direct the minister," a careful observer tells us, "in all important matters of foreign and

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domestic policy, but he instructed him as to the management of debates in Parliament, suggested what motions should be made or opposed, and how measures should be carried. He reserved for himself all the patronage, he arranged the whole cast of administration, settled the relative places and pretensions of ministers of State, law officers, and members of the household, nominated and promoted the English and Scotch judges, appointed and translated bishops and deans, and dispensed other preferments in the Church. He disposed of military governments, regiments, and commissions; and himself ordered the marching of troops. He gave and refused titles, honours, and pensions." All this immense patronage was persistently used for the creation and maintenance in both Houses of Parliament of a majority directed by the king himself; and its weight was seen in the steady action of such a majority. It was seen yet more in the subjection to which the ministry that bore North's name was reduced. George was in fact the minister through the years of its existence; and the shame of the darkest hour of English history lies wholly at his door.

His fixed purpose was to seize on the first opportunity of undoing the "fatal compliance of 1766." A trivial riot gave him at last the handle he wanted. In December 1773 the arrival of some English ships laden with tea kindled fresh irritation in Boston, where the non-importation

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agreement was strictly enforced ; and a mob in the disguise of Indians boarded the vessels and flung their contents into the sea. The outrage was deplored alike by the friends of America in England and by its own leading statesmen ; and both Washington and Chatham were prepared to support the Government in its looked-for demand of redress. But the thought of the king was not of redress but of repression, and he set roughly aside the more conciliatory proposals of Lord North and his fellow-ministers. They had already rejected as "frivolous and vexatious" a petition of the Assembly of Massachusetts for the dismissal of two public officers whose letters home advised the withdrawal of free institutions from the colonies. They now seized on the riot as a pretext for rigorous measures. A bill introduced into Parliament in the beginning of 1774 punished Boston by closing its port against all commerce. Another punished the State of Massachusetts by withdrawing the liberties it had enjoyed ever since the Pilgrim Fathers landed on its soil. Its charter was altered. The choice of its Council was transferred from the people to the Crown, and the nomination of its judges was transferred to the Governor. In the Governor too, by a provision more outrageous than even these, was vested the right of sending all persons charged with a share in the late disturbances to England for trial. To enforce these measures of repression

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troops were sent to America, and General Gage, the commander-in-chief there, was appointed Governor of Massachusetts. The king's exultation at the prospect before him was unbounded. "The die," he wrote triumphantly to his minister, "is cast. The colonies must either triumph or submit." Four regiments would be enough to bring the Americans to their senses. They would only be "lions while we are lambs." "If we take the resolute part," he decided solemnly, "they will undoubtedly be very meek."

Unluckily the blow at Massachusetts was received with anything but meekness. The jealousies between colony and colony were hushed by a sense that the liberties of all were in danger. If the British Parliament could cancel the charter of Massachusetts and ruin the trade of Boston, it could cancel the charter of every colony and ruin the trade of every port from the St. Lawrence to the coast of Georgia. All, therefore, adopted the cause of Massachusetts; and all their Legislatures save that of Georgia sent delegates to a Congress which assembled on the 4th of September at Philadelphia. Massachusetts took a yet bolder course. Not one of its citizens would act under the new laws. Its Assembly met in defiance of the Governor, called out the militia of the State, and provided arms and ammunition for it. But there was still room for reconciliation. The resolutions of the Congress had been moderate,

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for Virginia was the wealthiest and most influential among the States who sent delegates, and though resolute to resist the new measures of the government, Virginia still clung to the mother country. At home the merchants of London and Bristol pleaded loudly for reconciliation; and in January 1775 Chatham again came forward to avert a strife he had once before succeeded in preventing. With characteristic largeness of feeling he set aside all half-measures or proposals of compromise. "It is not cancelling a piece of parchment," he insisted, "that can win back America: you must respect her fears and her resentments." The bill which he introduced in concert with Franklin provided for the repeal of the late Acts and for the security of the colonial charters, abandoned the claim of taxation, and ordered the recall of the troops. A colonial assembly was directed to meet and provide means by which America might contribute towards the payment of the public debt.

Washington. Chatham's measure was contemptuously rejected by the Lords, as was a similar measure of Burke's by the House of Commons, and a petition of the City of London in favour of the Colonies by the king himself. With the rejection of these efforts for conciliation began the great struggle which ended eight years later in the severance of the American Colonies from the British Crown. The Congress of delegates from the Colonial Legislatures

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at once voted measures for general defence, ordered the levy of an army, and set George Washington at its head. No nobler figure ever stood in the forefront of a nation's life. Washington was grave and courteous in address; his manners were simple and unpretending; his silence and the serene calmness of his temper spoke of a perfect self-mastery. But there was little in his outer bearing to reveal the grandeur of soul which lifts his figure with all the simple majesty of an ancient statue out of the smaller passions, the meaner impulses, of the world around him. What recommended him for command was simply his weight among his fellow-landowners of Virginia, and the experience of war which he had gained by service in border contests with the French and the Indians, as well as in Braddock's luckless expedition against Fort Duquesne. It was only as the weary fight went on that the colonists discovered, however slowly and imperfectly, the greatness of their leader, his clear judgement, his heroic endurance, his silence under difficulties, his calmness in the hour of danger or defeat, the patience with which he waited, the quickness and hardness with which he struck, the lofty and serene sense of duty that never swerved from its task through resentment or jealousy, that never through war or peace felt the touch of a meaner ambition, that knew no aim save that of guarding the freedom of his fellow-countrymen, and no personal longing save that of returning to

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his own fireside when their freedom was secured. It was almost unconsciously that men learned to cling to Washington with a trust and faith such as few other men have won, and to regard him with a reverence which still hushes us in presence of his memory. But even America hardly recognised his real greatness while he lived. It was only when death set its seal on him that the voice of those whom he had served so long proclaimed him "the man first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his fellow-countrymen."

Declaration
of Inde-
pendence.

Washington more than any of his fellow-colonists represented the clinging of the Virginian landowners to the mother country, and his acceptance of a military command proved that even the most moderate among the colonists had no hope now save in arms. The struggle opened with a skirmish between a party of English troops and a detachment of militia at Lexington on the nineteenth of April 1775; and in a few days twenty thousand colonists appeared before Boston. The Congress reassembled, declared the States they represented "The United Colonies of America," and undertook the work of government. Meanwhile ten thousand fresh English troops landed at Boston. But the provincial militia, in number almost double that of the British force which prepared to attack them, seized a neck of ground which joins Boston to the mainland; and though on the 17th of June they were driven from the heights of Bunker's Hill which commanded the town, it was

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only after a desperate struggle in which their bravery put an end for ever to the taunts of cowardice which had been levelled against the colonists. "Are the Yankees cowards?" shouted the men of Massachusetts as the first English attack rolled back baffled down the hill-side. But a far truer courage was shown in the stubborn endurance with which Washington's raw militiamen, who gradually dwindled from sixteen thousand to ten, ill-fed, ill-armed, and with but forty-five rounds of ammunition to each man, cooped up through the winter a force of ten thousand veterans in the lines of Boston. The spring of 1776 saw them force these troops to withdraw from the city to New York, where the whole British army, largely reinforced by mercenaries from Germany, was concentrated under General Howe. Meanwhile a raid of the American General Arnold nearly drove the British troops from Canada; and though his attempt broke down before Quebec, it showed that all hope of reconciliation was over. The colonies of the south, the last to join in the struggle, had in fact expelled their Governors at the close of 1775; at the opening of the next year Massachusetts instructed its delegates to support a complete repudiation of the king's government by the Colonies; while the American ports were thrown open to the world in defiance of the Navigation Acts. These

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decisive steps were followed by the great act with which American history begins, the adoption on the 4th of July 1776 by the delegates in Congress after a fierce resistance from those of Pennsylvania and South Carolina, and in spite of the abstention of those of New York, of a Declaration of Independence. "We," ran its solemn words, "the representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, solemnly publish and declare that these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, Free and Independent States."

Saratoga.

But the earlier successes of the colonists were soon followed by suffering and defeat. Howe, an active general with a fine army at his back, cleared Long Island in August by a victory at Brooklyn; and Washington, whose force was weakened by withdrawals and defeat and disheartened by the loyal tone of the State in which it was encamped, was forced in the autumn of 1776 to evacuate New York and New Jersey, and to fall back first on the Hudson and then on the Delaware. The Congress prepared to fly from Philadelphia, and a general despair showed itself in cries of peace. But a well-managed surprise and a daring march on the rear of Howe's army restored the spirits of Washington's men, and forced the English general in his turn to fall back on New York.

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England however was now roused to more serious efforts; and the campaign of 1777 opened with a combined attempt for the suppression of the revolt. An army which had assembled in Canada under General Burgoyne marched in June by way of the Lakes to seize the line of the Hudson. Howe meanwhile sailed up the Chesapeake and advanced on Philadelphia, the temporary capital of the United States and the seat of the Congress. The rout of his little army of seven thousand men at Brandywine forced Washington to abandon Philadelphia, and after a bold but unsuccessful attack on his victors to retire into winter quarters on the banks of the Schuylkill, where the unconquerable resolve with which he nerved his handful of beaten and half-starved troops to face Howe's army in their camp at Valley Forge is the noblest of his triumphs. But in the north the war had taken another colour. Burgoyne's movement had been planned in view of a junction with at least a part of Howe's army from New York; a junction which would have enabled him to seize the line of the Hudson and thus cut off New England from her sister provinces. But Howe was held fast by Washington's resistance and unable to send a man to the north; while the spirit of New England, which had grown dull as the war rolled away from its borders, quickened again at the news of invasion and of the outrages committed by the Indians employed among the English troops. Its militia hurried from town and

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homestead to a camp with which General Gates had barred the road to Albany; and after a fruitless attack on the American lines, Burgoyne saw himself surrounded on the heights of Saratoga. On the 17th of October his whole force was compelled to surrender.

France and
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The news of this calamity gave force to the words with which Chatham at the very time of the surrender was pressing for peace. "You cannot conquer America," he cried when men were glorying in Howe's successes over Washington. "If I were an American as I am an Englishman, while a foreign troop was landed in my country, I never would lay down my arms—never, never, never!" Then, in a burst of indignant eloquence he thundered against an outrage which was at that moment nerving New England to its rally against Burgoyne, the use of the Indian with his scalping-knife as an ally of England against her children. The proposals which Chatham brought forward might perhaps in his hands even yet have drawn America and the mother country together. His plan was one of absolute conciliation. He looked forward to a federal union between the settlements and Great Britain which would have left the Colonies absolutely their own masters in all matters of internal government, and linked only by ties of affection and loyalty to the general body of the Empire. But the plan met with the same scornful rejection

as his previous proposals. Its rejection was at once followed by the news of Saratoga, and by the yet more fatal news that this disaster had roused the Bourbon Courts to avenge the humiliation of the Seven Years' War. Crippled and impoverished as she was at its close, France could do nothing to break the world-power which was rising in front of her; but in the very moment of her defeat, the foresight of Choiseul had seen in a future struggle between England and her Colonies a chance of ruining the great fabric which Pitt's triumphs had built up. Nor was Pitt blind to the steady resolve of France to renew the fight. In every attempt which he had made to construct a Ministry he had laid down as the corner-stone of his foreign policy a renewal of that alliance with the Protestant States of North Germany against the House of Bourbon which could alone save England from the dangers of the Family Compact. But his efforts had been foiled alike by the resistance of the king, the timid peacefulness of the Whigs, and at last by the distrust of England which had been rooted in the mind of Frederick the Great through the treachery of Lord Bute.

The wisdom of his policy was now brought home by the coming of the danger he had foreseen when the foresight of Choiseul was justified by the outbreak of strife between England and America. Even then for a while

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France looked idly on. Her king, Lewis the Sixteenth, was averse from war; her treasury was empty; her government, scared by the growth of new movements towards freedom about it, and fearful of endangering the monarchy by the encouragement these would receive from a union with the revolted Colonies, still doubted whether America had any real power of resisting Britain. It was to no purpose that from the moment when they declared themselves independent, the United States called on France for aid; or that Franklin pressed their appeal on its government. A year in fact passed without any decisive resolution to give aid to the colonists. But the steady drift of French policy and the passion of the French people pressed heavier every day on the hesitation of their government; and the news of Saratoga forced its hand. The American envoys at last succeeded in forming an alliance; and in February 1778 a treaty offensive and defensive was concluded between France and America. Lord North strove to meet the blow by fresh offers of conciliation, and by a pledge to renounce for ever the right of direct taxation over the Colonies; but he felt that such offers were fruitless, that the time for conciliation was past, while all hope of reducing America by force of arms had disappeared. In utter despair he pressed his resignation on the king. But George was as obstinate for war as ever; and the country, stung to the quick by

the attack of France, backed passionately the obstinacy of the king. But unlike George the Third, it instinctively felt that if a hope still remained of retaining the friendship of the Colonies and of baffling the efforts of the Bourbons, it lay in Lord Chatham; and in spite of the king's resistance the voice of the whole country called him back to power. The danger indeed which had scared Lord North into resignation, and before which a large party of the Whigs now advocated the acknowledgement of American independence, only woke Chatham to his old daring and fire. He had revolted from a war against Englishmen. But all his pride in English greatness, all his confidence in English power, woke afresh at the challenge of France. His genius saw indeed in the new danger a means of escape from the old. He would have withdrawn every soldier from America, and flung the whole force of Britain into the conflict with France. He believed that in the splendour of triumphs over her older enemy England might be brought to terms of amity which would win back the Colonies, and that the English blood of the colonists themselves would be quickened to a fresh union with the mother country by her struggle against a power from which she had so lately rescued them. Till such a trial had been made, with all the advantages that the

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magic of his name could give it in England and America alike, he would not bow to a need that must wreck the great Empire his hand had built up. Even at this hour there was a chance of success for such a policy; but on the eve of Chatham's return to office this chance was shattered by the hand of death. Broken with age and disease, the Earl was borne to the House of Lords on the seventh of April to utter in a few broken words his protest against the proposal to surrender America. "I rejoice," he murmured, "that I am still alive to lift up my voice against the dismemberment of this ancient and noble monarchy. His Majesty succeeded to an Empire as great in extent as its reputation was unsullied. Seventeen years ago this people was the terror of the world." He listened impatiently to the reply of the Duke of Richmond, and again rose to his feet. But he had hardly risen when he pressed his hand upon his heart, and falling back in a swoon was borne home to die.

England
 against
 Europe.

How well founded was Chatham's faith in the power of Britain was seen in the strife that now opened. From the hour of his death England entered on a conflict with enemies whose circle gradually widened till she stood single-handed against the world. At the close of 1778 the Family Compact bore its full fruit; Spain joined the league of France and America against her; and in the next year the joint fleets of the two powers rode the

masters of the Channel. They even threatened a descent on the English coast. But dead as Chatham was, his cry woke a new life in England. "Shall we fall prostrate," he exclaimed with his last breath, "before the House of Bourbon?" and the divisions which had broken the nation in its struggle with American liberty were hushed in the presence of this danger to its own existence. The weakness of the Ministry was compensated by the energy of England itself. For three years, from 1779 to 1782, General Elliott held against famine and bombardment from a French and Spanish army the rock fortress of Gibraltar. Although a quarrel over the right of search banded Holland and the Courts of the North in an armed neutrality against her, and added the Dutch fleet to the number of her assailants, England held her own at sea. In her Eastern dependency, where France sought a counterpoise to the power of Britain in that of the Mahrattas, freebooters of Hindoo blood whose tribes had for a century past carried their raids over India from the hills of the Western coast, and founded sovereignties in Guzerat, Malwa, and Tanjore, the tenacity and resource of Warren Hastings, the first Governor-General of British India, wrested victory from failure and defeat. Though the wide schemes of conquest which he formed were for the moment frustrated, the annexation of Benares, the extension of British rule along the Ganges,

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the reduction of Oudh to virtual dependence, the appearance of English armies in Central India, and the defeat of the Sultan of Mysore, laid the foundation of an Indian Empire which his genius was bold enough to foresee. Even in America the fortune of the war seemed for a while to turn. After Burgoyne's surrender the English generals had withdrawn from Pennsylvania, and bent all their efforts on the Southern States, where a strong Royalist party still existed. The capture of Charlestown and the successes of Lord Cornwallis in 1780 were rendered fruitless by the obstinate resistance of General Greene; but the United States remained weakened by bankruptcy and unnerved by hopes of aid from France.

America
 and
 Ireland.

Hardly a year however had passed when the face of the war in America was changed by a terrible disaster. Foiled in an attempt on North Carolina by the refusal of his fellow-general, Sir Henry Clinton, to assist him, Cornwallis fell back in 1781 on Virginia, and entrenched himself in the lines of York Town. A sudden march of Washington brought him to the front of the English troops at a moment when the French fleet held the sea, and the British army was driven by famine in October to a surrender as humiliating as that of Saratoga. The news fell like a thunderbolt on the wretched Minister, who had till now suppressed at his master's order his own conviction of the uselessness of further blood-

shed. Opening his arms and pacing wildly about the room, Lord North exclaimed, "It is all over," and resigned. At this moment indeed the country seemed on the brink of ruin. Humiliating as it was, England could have borne fifty such calamities as the surrender at York Town. But in the very crisis of the struggle with America she found herself confronted with a danger nearer home. The revolt of one great dependency brought with it a threatened revolt from another. In Ireland, as in the Colonies, England had shrunk from carrying out either a national or an imperial policy. She might have recognised Ireland as a free nationality, and bound it to herself by federal bonds; or she might have absorbed it, as she had absorbed Scotland, into the general mass of her own national life. With a perverse ingenuity she had not only refrained from taking either of these courses, but she had deliberately adopted the worst features of both. Ireland was absolutely subject to Britain, but she formed no part of it, she shared neither in its liberty nor its wealth. But on the other hand she was allowed no national existence of her own. While all the outer seeming of national life was left, while Ireland possessed in name an army, a Parliament, a magistracy, the mass of the Irish people was as strange to all this life as the savages of Polynesia. Every Catholic Irishman, and there were five Irish Catholics to every Irish Protestant, was treated as a stranger

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and a foreigner in his own country. The House of Lords, the House of Commons, the magistracy, all corporate offices in towns, all ranks in the army, the bench, the bar, the whole administration of government or justice, were closed against Catholics. The very right of voting for their representatives in Parliament was denied them. Few Catholic landowners had been left by the sweeping confiscations which had followed the successive revolts of the island, and oppressive laws forced even these few with scant exceptions to profess Protestantism. Necessity indeed had brought about a practical toleration of their religion and their worship; but in all social and political matters the native Catholics, in other words the immense majority of the people of Ireland, were simply hewers of wood and drawers of water for Protestant masters, for masters who still looked on themselves as mere settlers, who boasted of their Scotch or English extraction, and who regarded the name of "Irishman" as an insult.

Irish
Government.

But small as was this Protestant body, one-half of it fared little better as far as power was concerned than the Catholics. The Presbyterians, who formed the bulk of the Ulster settlers, were shut out by law from all civil, military, and municipal offices. The administration and justice of the country were thus kept rigidly in the hands of members of the Established Church, a body

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which comprised about a twelfth of the population of the island, while its government was practically monopolised by a few great Protestant landowners. The rotten boroughs, which had originally been created to make the Irish Parliament dependent on the Crown, had by this time fallen under the influence of the adjacent landlords, whose command of these made them masters of the House of Commons while they themselves formed in person the House of Peers. To such a length had this system been carried that at the time of the Union the great majority of the boroughs lay in the hands of a very few families. Two-thirds of the House of Commons, in fact, was returned by a small group of nobles, who were recognised as "parliamentary undertakers," and who undertook to "manage" Parliament on their own terms. Irish politics was for these men a mere means of public plunder; they were glutted with pensions, preferments, and bribes in hard cash, in return for their services; they were the advisers of every Lord-Lieutenant and the practical governors of the country. The results were what might have been expected. For more than a century Ireland was the worst governed country in Europe. That its government was not even worse than it was, was due to its connection with England and the subordination of its Parliament to the English Privy Council. The Irish Parliament had no power of originating legislative or financial

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measures, and could only say "yes" or "no" to Acts laid before it by the Privy Council in England. The English Parliament too claimed the right of binding Ireland as well as England by its enactments, and one of its statutes transferred the appellate jurisdiction of the Irish Peerage to the English House of Lords. Galling as these restrictions were to the plundering aristocracy of Ireland, they formed a useful check on its tyranny. But as if to compensate for the benefits of this protection, England did her best from the time of William the Third to annihilate Irish commerce and to ruin Irish agriculture. Statutes passed by the jealousy of English landowners forbade the export of Irish cattle or sheep to English ports. The export of wool was forbidden lest it might interfere with the profits of English wool-growers. Poverty was thus added to the curse of misgovernment; and poverty deepened with the rapid growth of the native population, a growth due in great part to the physical misery and moral degradation of their lives, till famine turned the country into a hell.

The
Volunteers.

The bitter lesson of the last conquest however long sufficed to check all dreams of revolt among the native Irish; and the outbreaks which sprang from time to time out of the general misery and discontent were purely social in their character, and were roughly repressed by the ruling class. When political revolt at last threatened English

supremacy over Ireland, the threat came from the ruling class itself. Some timid efforts made by the English Government at the accession of George the Third to control its tyranny were resented by a refusal of money bills, and by a cry for the removal of the checks imposed on the independence of the Irish Parliament. But it was not till the American war that this cry became a political danger. The threat of a French invasion and the want of any regular force to oppose it compelled the Government to call on Ireland to provide for its own defence, and in answer to its call forty thousand volunteers appeared in arms in 1779. The force was wholly a Protestant one, commanded by Protestant officers, and it was turned to account by the Protestant oligarchy. Threats of an armed revolt backed the eloquence of two Parliamentary leaders, Grattan and Flood, in their demand for the repeal of Poynings' Act, which took all power of initiative legislation from the Irish Parliament, and for the recognition of the Irish House of Lords as an ultimate Court of Appeal. But the Volunteers were forced to bid for the support of the native Catholics, who looked with indifference on these quarrels of their masters, by claiming for them a relaxation of the penal laws against the exercise of their religion and of some of their most oppressive disabilities. So real was the danger that England was forced to give way. The first demands were in effect a

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claim for national independence. But there were no means of resisting them, for England was without a soldier to oppose the Volunteers, while she was pressed hard by the league of Europe and America against her. In the face of such a rising close at home, it became plain even to the most dogged of Tories that it was impossible to continue a strife across three thousand miles of sea ; and to deal with the attitude of Ireland became even a more pressing need of the Ministry which followed that of Lord North than the need of dealing with America.

End of
 the war.

The blow which had shattered the attempt of England to wield an autocratic power over her Colonies had shattered the attempt of its king to establish an autocratic power over England itself. The Ministry which bore the name of Lord North had been a mere screen for the administration of George the Third, and its ruin was the ruin of the system he had striven to build up. Never again was the Crown to possess such a power as he had wielded during the past ten years. For the moment however there was nothing to mark so decisive a change ; and both to the king and his opponents it must have seemed only a new turn in the political game which they were playing when in March 1782 the Whigs returned to office. Rockingham was still at the head of the party ; and on Rockingham fell the double task of satisfying Ireland and of putting an end, at any cost,

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to the war with the United States. The task involved in both quarters a humiliating surrender; for neither Ireland nor America would be satisfied save by a full concession of their claims. It needed the bitter stress of necessity to induce the English Parliament to follow Rockingham's counsels, but the need was too urgent to suffer their rejection. The Houses therefore abandoned by a formal statute the judicial and legislative supremacy they had till then asserted over the Parliament of Ireland; and from this moment England and Ireland were simply held together by the fact that the sovereign of the one island was also the sovereign of the other. The grant of independence to the one great dependency made it easier to recognise the freedom of the other. Rockingham in fact took office with the purpose of winning peace by a full acknowledgement of the independence of the United States, and negotiations were soon entered into for that purpose.

But America was bound by its league with the Bourbon Courts to make no peace save one common to its allies, and from its allies peace was hard to win without concessions which would have stripped from England all that remained of her older greatness. With the revolt of Ireland and the surrender of Cornwallis the hopes of her enemies rose high. Spain refused to suspend hostilities at any other price than the surrender of Gibraltar; while France proposed that England should give

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up all her Indian conquests save Bengal. The triumph of the Bourbons indeed seemed secure. If terms like these were accepted the world-empire of Britain was at an end. Stripped of her Colonies in America, stripped of her rule in India, matched on the very ocean by rival fleets, England sank back into a European State, into the England of the first Georges. And yet there seemed little chance of her holding out against the demands of such a league as fronted her at a moment when her military power was paralysed by the attitude of Ireland. But the true basis of her world-power lay on the sea. It was by her command of the sea that such an empire could alone be possible; nor was it possible so long as she commanded the sea for all the armies of the Bourbon powers to rob her of it. And at this moment the command of the seas again became her own. On the 16th of January 1780 Admiral Rodney, the greatest of English seamen save Nelson and Blake, encountered the Spanish fleet off Cape St. Vincent, and only four of its vessels escaped to Cadiz. At the opening of 1782 the triumphs of the French admiral De Grasse called him to the West Indies; and on the 12th of April a manœuvre which he was the first to introduce broke his opponent's line, and drove the French fleet shattered from the Atlantic. With Rodney's last victory the struggle of the Bourbons was really over, for no means remained of attacking their enemy save at

Gibraltar, and here a last attack of the joint force gathered against it was repulsed by the heroism of Elliott. Nor would America wait any longer for the satisfaction of her allies. In November her commissioners signed the preliminaries of a peace in which Britain reserved to herself on the American continent only Canada and the island of Newfoundland; and acknowledged without reserve the independence of the United States.

The action of America ended the war; and the treaty of peace with the United States was a prelude to treaties of peace with the Bourbon powers. Their actual gains were insignificant. France indeed won nothing in the treaties with which the war ended; Spain gained only Florida and Minorca. Nor could they feel even in this hour of their triumph that the end at which they aimed had been fully reached. In half their great effort against the world-power of Britain they had utterly failed. She had even won ground in India. In America itself she still retained the northern dominion of Canada. Her West Indian islands remained intact. Above all, she had asserted more nobly than ever her command of the sea, and with it the possibility of building up a fresh power in such lands as Cook had called her to. But at the close of the war there was less thought of what she had retained than of what she had lost. She was parted from her American Colonies; and at the moment such a

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parting seemed to be the knell of her greatness. In wealth, in population, the American Colonies far surpassed all that remained of her Empire; and the American Colonies were irrecoverably gone. It is no wonder that in the first shock of such a loss England looked on herself as on the verge of ruin, or that the Bourbon Courts believed her position as a world-power to be practically at an end. How utterly groundless such a conception was the coming years were to show. The energies of England were in fact spurred to new efforts by the crisis in her fortunes. The industrial developement which followed the war gave her a material supremacy such as she had never known before, and the rapid growth of wealth which this industry brought with it raised her again into a mother of nations as her settlers built up in the waters of the Pacific Colonies as great as those which she had lost on the coast of America. But if the Bourbons overrated their triumph in one way, they immensely underrated it in another. Whatever might be the importance of American independence in the history of England, it was of unequalled moment in the history of the world. If it crippled for a while the supremacy of the English nation, it founded the supremacy of the English race. From the hour of American Independence the life of the English People has flowed not in one current, but in two; and while the older has shown little signs of

lessening, the younger has fast risen to a greatness which has changed the face of the world. In 1783 America was a nation of three millions of inhabitants, scattered thinly along the coast of the Atlantic Ocean. It is now a nation of forty millions, stretching over the whole continent from the Atlantic to the Pacific. In wealth and material energy, as in numbers, it far surpasses the mother country from which it sprang. It is already the main branch of the English People; and in the days that are at hand the main current of that people's history must run along the channel not of the Thames or the Mersey, but of the Hudson and the Mississippi. But distinct as these currents are, every year proves more clearly that in spirit the English People is one. The distance that parted England from America lessens every day. The ties that unite them grow every day stronger. The social and political differences that threatened a hundred years ago to form an impassable barrier between them grow every day less. Against this silent and inevitable drift of things the spirit of narrow isolation on either side the Atlantic struggles in vain. It is possible that the two branches of the English People will remain for ever separate political existences. It is likely enough that the older of them may again break in twain, and that the English People in the Pacific may assert as distinct a national life as the two English Peoples on either side the Atlantic. But

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the spirit, the influence, of all these branches will remain one. And in thus remaining one, before half-a-century is over it will change the face of the world. As two hundred millions of Englishmen fill the valley of the Mississippi, as fifty millions of Englishmen assert their lordship over Australasia, this vast power will tell through Britain on the old world of Europe, whose nations will have shrunk into insignificance before it. What the issues of such a world-wide change may be, not even the wildest dreamer would dare to dream. But one issue is inevitable. In the centuries that lie before us, the primacy of the world will lie with the English People. English institutions, English speech, English thought, will become the main features of the political, the social, and the intellectual life of mankind.

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CHAPTER III

INDUSTRIAL ENGLAND

1782—1792

THAT in the creation of the United States the world had reached one of the turning-points in its history seems at the time to have entered into the thought of not a single European statesman. What startled men most at the moment was the discovery that England herself was far from being ruined by the greatness of her defeat. She rose from it indeed stronger and more vigorous than ever. Never had she shown a mightier energy than in the struggle against France which followed only ten years after her loss of America, nor did she ever stand higher among the nations than on the day of Waterloo. Her internal developement was as imposing as her outer grandeur. Weary and disgraceful indeed as was the strife with the Colonies, the years of its progress were years of as mighty a revolution for the mother country as for its child. The England

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that is about us dates from the American War. It was then that the moral, the philanthropic, the religious ideas which have moulded English society into its present shape first broke the spiritual torpor of the eighteenth century. It was then that with the wider diffusion of intelligence our literature woke to a nobler and larger life which fitted it to become the mouthpiece of every national emotion. It was then that by a change unparalleled in history the country laid aside her older agricultural character to develop industrial forces which made her at a single bound the workshop of the world. Amidst the turmoil of the early years of George the Third Brindley was silently covering England with canals, and Watt as silently perfecting his invention of the steam-engine. It was amidst the strife with America that Adam Smith regenerated our economical, Gibbon our historical, and Burke our political literature; and peace was hardly declared when the appearance of Crabbe, Cowper, and Burns heralded a new birth of our poetry.

The
 religious
 movement.

No names so illustrious as these marked the more silent but even deeper change in the religious temper of the country. It dates, as we have seen, from the work of the Wesleys, but the Methodists themselves were the least result of the Methodist revival. Its action upon the Church broke the lethargy of the clergy; and the "Evangelical" movement, which found representatives

like Newton and Cecil within the pale of the Establishment, made the fox-hunting parson and the absentee rector at last impossible. In Walpole's day the English clergy were the idlest and the most lifeless in the world. In our own time no body of religious ministers surpasses them in piety, in philanthropic energy, or in popular regard. But the movement was far from being limited to the Methodists or the clergy. In the nation at large appeared a new moral enthusiasm which, rigid and pedantic as it often seemed, was still healthy in its social tone, and whose power showed itself in a gradual disappearance of the profligacy which had disgraced the upper classes, and the foulness which had infested literature ever since the Restoration. A yet nobler result of the religious revival was the steady attempt, which has never ceased from that day to this, to remedy the guilt, the ignorance, the physical suffering, the social degradation of the profligate and the poor. It was not till the Wesleyan impulse had done its work that this philanthropic impulse began. The Sunday Schools established by Mr. Raikes of Gloucester at the close of the century were the beginnings of popular education. By writings and by her own personal example Hannah More drew the sympathy of England to the poverty and crime of the agricultural labourer. A passionate impulse of human sympathy with the wronged and afflicted raised hospitals, endowed

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 Industrial the heathen, supported Burke in his plea for
 England. the Hindoo, and Clarkson and Wilberforce in
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 trade.

Howard. It is only the moral chivalry of his labours
 that amongst a crowd of philanthropists draws us
 most to the work and character of John Howard.
 The sympathy which all were feeling for the
 sufferings of mankind Howard felt for the suffer-
 ings of the worst and most hapless of men. With
 wonderful ardour and pre-severance he devoted
 himself to the cause of the debtor, the felon, and
 the murderer. An appointment to the office of
 High Sheriff of Bedfordshire in 1774 drew his
 attention to the state of the prisons which were
 placed under his care; and from that time the
 quiet country gentleman, whose only occupation
 had been reading his Bible and studying his
 thermometer, became the most energetic and
 zealous of reformers. Before a year was over he
 had personally visited almost every English gaol,
 and in nearly all of them he found frightful
 abuses which had been noticed half-a-century
 before, but which had been left unredressed by
 Parliament. Gaolers who bought their places
 were paid by fees, and suffered to extort what
 they could. Even when acquitted, men were
 dragged back to their cells for want of funds to
 discharge the sums they owed to their keepers.

Debtors and felons were huddled together in the prisons which Howard found crowded by the legislation of the day. No separation was preserved between different sexes, no criminal discipline was enforced. Every gaol was a chaos of cruelty and the foulest immorality, from which the prisoner could only escape by sheer starvation or through the gaol-fever that festered without ceasing in these haunts of misery. Howard saw everything with his own eyes, he tested every suffering by his own experience. In one prison he found a cell so narrow and noisome that the poor wretch who inhabited it begged as a mercy for hanging. Howard shut himself up in the cell and bore its darkness and foulness till nature could bear no more. It was by work of this sort and by the faithful pictures of such scenes which it enabled him to give that he brought about their reform. The book in which he recorded his terrible experience and the plans which he submitted for the reformation of criminals made him the father, so far as England is concerned, of prison discipline. But his labours were far from being confined to England. In journey after journey he visited the gaols of Holland and Germany, till his longing to discover some means of checking the fatal progress of the Plague led him to examine the lazarettos of Europe and the East. He was still engaged in this work of charity when he was seized by a malignant fever

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at Cherson in Southern Russia, and "laid quietly in the earth," as he desired.

In Howard's later labours the new sentiment of humanity had carried him far beyond the bounds of national sympathy; and forces at once of pity and religion told more and more in begetting a consciousness of the common brotherhood of man. Even at the close of the American war this feeling had become strong enough to colour our political life. It told on the attitude of England towards its great dependency of India. Discussions over rival plans of Indian administration diffused a sense of national responsibility for its good government, and there was a general resolve that the security against injustice and misrule which was enjoyed by the poorest Englishman should be enjoyed by the poorest Hindoo. It was this resolve which expressed itself in 1786 in the trial of Warren Hastings. Hastings returned from India at the close of the war with the hope of rewards as great as those of Clive. He had saved all that Clive had won. He had laid the foundation of a vast empire in the East. He had shown rare powers of administration, and the foresight, courage, and temperance which mark the born ruler of men. But with him came rumours of tyranny and wrong. Even those who admitted the wisdom and glory of his rule shrank from its terrible ruthlessness. He was charged with having sold for a vast sum the services of British

troops to crush the free tribes of the Rohillas, with having wrung half-a-million by extortion from the Rajah of Benares, with having extorted by torture and starvation more than a million from the Princesses of Oudh. He was accused of having kept his hold upon power by measures as unscrupulous, and with having murdered a native who opposed him by an abuse of the forms of English law. On almost all these charges the cooler judgement of later inquirers has acquitted Warren Hastings of guilt. Personally there can be little doubt that he had done much to secure to the new subjects of Britain a just and peaceable government. What was hardest and most pitiless in his rule had been simply a carrying out of the system of administration which was native to India and which he found existing there. But such a system was alien from the new humanity of Englishmen; and few dared to vindicate Hastings when Burke in words of passionate earnestness moved for his impeachment.

The great trial lingered on for years; and in the long run Hastings secured an acquittal. But the end at which the impeachment aimed had really been won. The attention, the sympathy of Englishmen had been drawn across distant seas to a race utterly strange to them; and the peasant of Cornwall or Cumberland had learned how to thrill at the suffering of a peasant of Bengal. And even while the trial was going on a yet wider

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extension of English sympathy made itself felt. The hero-seamen of Elizabeth had not blushed to make gain out of kidnapping negroes and selling them into slavery. One of the profits which England bought by the triumphs of Marlborough was a right to a monopoly of the slave-trade between Africa and the Spanish dominions; and it was England that had planted slavery in her American colonies and her West Indian islands. Half the wealth of Liverpool, in fact, was drawn from the traffic of its merchants in human flesh. The horrors and iniquity of the trade, the ruin and degradation of Africa which it brought about, the oppression of the negro himself, had till now moved no pity among Englishmen. But as the spirit of humanity told on the people this apathy suddenly disappeared. Philanthropy allied itself with the new religious movement in an attack on the slave-trade. At the close of the American war its evils began to be felt so widely and deeply that the question forced itself into politics. "After a conversation in the open air at the root of an old tree, just above the steep descent into the Vale of Keston," with the younger Pitt, his friend, William Wilberforce, whose position as a representative of the evangelical party gave weight to his advocacy of such a cause, resolved to bring in a bill for the abolition of the slave-trade. The bill which he brought forward in 1788 fell before the opposition of the Liverpool

slave merchants and the general indifference of the House of Commons. But the movement gathered fresh strength in the country with every year; in spite of the absorption of England in the struggle with the French Revolution, it succeeded at last in forcing on Parliament the abolition of the traffic in slaves; and this abolition was followed a few years later by the abolition of slavery itself.

Time was to show how wide were the issues to which this religious developement and the sentiment of humanity which it generated were to tend. But at the moment they told less directly and immediately on the political and social life of England than an industrial revolution which accompanied them. Though England already stood in the first rank of commercial states at the accession of George the Third, her industrial life at home was mainly agricultural. The growth of her manufactures was steady, but it continued to be slow; they gave employment as yet to but a small part of the population, and added in no great degree to the national wealth. The wool-trade remained the largest, as it was the oldest of them; it had gradually established itself in Norfolk, the West Riding of Yorkshire, and the counties of the south-west; while the manufacture of cotton was still almost limited to Manchester and Bolton, and though winning on its rival remained so unimportant that in the middle of the eighteenth

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century the export of cotton goods hardly reached the value of fifty thousand a year. There was the same slow and steady progress in the linen trade of Belfast and Dundee, and the silks of Spitalfields. But as yet textile manufactures contributed little to the national resources; nor did these resources owe much to the working of our minerals. The coal trade was small, and limited by the cost of carriage as well as by ignorance of any mode of employing coal in iron-smelting. On the other hand the scarcity of wood, which was used for that purpose, limited the production of iron. In 1750 only eighteen thousand tons were produced in England; and four-fifths of its iron goods were imported from Sweden. Nor did there seem any likelihood of a rapid change. Skilled labour was scarce; and the processes of manufacture were too rude to allow any large increase of production. It was only where a stream gave force to turn a mill-wheel that the wool-worker could establish his factory; and cotton was as yet spun by hand in the cottages, the "spinsters" of the family sitting with their distaffs round the weaver's handloom.

Canals.

But even had the processes of production become more efficient, they would have been rendered useless by the inefficiency of the means of distribution. The older main roads, which had lasted fairly through the Middle Ages, had broken down in later times before the growth of traffic and the

increase of wagons and carriages. The new lines of trade lay often along mere country lanes which had never been more than horse-tracks, and to drive heavy wains through lanes like these was all but impossible. Much of the woollen trade therefore had to be carried on by means of long trains of pack-horses ; and in most cases the cost of carriage added heavily to the price of production. In the case of yet heavier goods, such as coal, distribution was almost impracticable, save along the greater rivers or in districts accessible from the sea. But at the moment when England was just plunging into the Seven Years' War the enterprise of a duke and a millwright solved this problem of carriage, and started the country on a mighty course of industry which was to change both its social and its political character. Francis, Duke of Bridgewater, was a shy, dreamy man, whom a disappointment in love drove to a life of isolation on his estates in the north. He was the possessor of collieries at Worsley whose value depended on their finding a market at the neighbouring town of Manchester ; and it was to bring his coal to this market that he resolved to drive a canal from the mine to the river Irwell. With singular good luck he found the means of carrying out his design in a self-taught mechanic, James Brindley. But in Brindley's mind the scheme widened far beyond the plans of the duke. Canals, as he conceived them, were no longer to serve as

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mere adjuncts to rivers ; on the contrary, "rivers were only meant," he said, "to feed canals" ; and instead of ending in the Irwell, he carried the duke's canal by an aqueduct across that river to Manchester itself. What Brindley had discovered was in fact the water-road, a means of carrying heavy goods with the least resistance, and therefore the least cost, from the point of production to the point of sale ; and England at once seized on his discovery to free itself from the bondage in which it had been held. From the year 1767, when Brindley completed his enterprise, a network of such water-roads was flung over the country ; and before the movement had spent its force Great Britain alone was traversed in every direction by three thousand miles of navigable canals.

Mineral
developement.

To English trade the canal opened up the richest of all markets, the market of England itself. Every part of the country was practically thrown open to the manufacturer : and the impulse which was given by this facility of carriage was at once felt in a vast developement of production. But such a developement would have been impossible had not the discovery of this new mode of distribution been accompanied by the discovery of a new productive force. In the coal which lay beneath her soil England possessed a store of force which had hitherto remained almost useless. But its effects were now to make themselves felt. The first instance of the power of coal was shown in

utilizing the stores of iron which had lain side by side with it in the northern counties, but which had lain there unworked through the scarcity of wood, which was looked upon as the only fuel by which it could be smelted. In the middle of the eighteenth century a process for smelting iron with coal turned out to be effective; and the whole aspect of the iron-trade was at once revolutionized. In fifty years the annual production of iron in Great Britain rose from under twenty thousand to more than one hundred and seventy thousand tons. During the fifty years that followed it rose to six millions of tons. Iron was to become the working material of the modern world; and it is its production of iron which more than all else has placed England at the head of industrial Europe. But iron was not the only metal which coal drew from the soil to swell the national wealth. The increase in its production was rivalled by that of lead, copper, and tin; and the "mining districts" soon gathered a population which raised them into social as well as economical importance.

But it was not in its direct application to metallurgy that coal was destined to produce its most amazing effects. What was needed to turn England into a manufacturing country was some means of transforming the force stored up in coal into a labour force; and it was this transformation which was now brought about through the agency of steam. Engines in which steam was used as a

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The Steam-
 Engine.

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means of draining mines had long been in use ; but the power relied on was mainly that of the weight of the air pressing on a piston beneath which a vacuum had been created by the condensation of steam ; and the economical use of such engines was checked by the waste of fuel which resulted from the cooling of the cylinder at each condensation, and from the expenditure of heat in again raising it to its old temperature before a fresh stroke of the piston was possible. Both these obstacles were removed by the ingenuity of James Watt. Watt was a working engineer at Glasgow, whose mind had for some time been bent on the improvement of the steam-engine ; but it was not till the spring of 1765, amidst the political turmoil which characterized the early reign of George the Third, that as he strolled on a Sunday afternoon across the Green of Glasgow the means of effecting it burst on him. "I had gone," he says, "to take a walk on a fine Sabbath afternoon. I had entered the Green by the gate at the foot of Charlotte Street, and had passed the old washing-house. I was thinking upon the engine at the time, and had got as far as the herd's house, when the idea came into my mind that as steam was an elastic body it would rush into a vacuum, and if a communication were made between the cylinder and an exhausted vessel it would rush into it, and might there be condensed without cooling the cylinder. I had not walked

farther than the Golf-House when the whole thing was arranged in my mind." The employment of a separate condenser, with the entire discarding of any other force in its action save that of steam itself, changed the whole conditions of the steam-engine. On the eve of the American war, in 1776, its use passed beyond the mere draining of mines; and it was rapidly adopted as a motive-force for all kinds of manufacturing industry.

The almost unlimited supply of labour-power in the steam-engine came at a time when the existing supply of manual labour was proving utterly inadequate to cope with the demands of the manufacturer. This was especially the case in textile fabrics. In its earlier stages the manufacture of cotton had been retarded by the difficulty with which the weavers obtained a sufficient supply of cotton yarn from the spinsters; and this difficulty became yet greater when the invention of the fly-shuttle enabled one weaver to do in a single day what had hitherto been the work of two. The difficulty was solved by a Blackburn weaver, John Hargreaves, who noticed that his wife's spindle, which had been accidentally upset, continued to revolve in an upright position on the floor, while the thread was still spinning in her hand. The hint led him to connect a number of spindles with a single wheel, and thus to enable one spinster to do the work of eight. Hargreaves's invention only spurred the wits of a barber's

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The Cotton
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assistant, Richard Arkwright, to yet greater improvement in the construction of a machine for spinning by rollers revolving at different rates of speed ; and this in its turn was improved and developed in the "mule" of a Bolton weaver, Samuel Crompton. The result of these inventions was to reverse the difficulty which hampered the trade, for the supply of yarn became so rapid and unlimited as to outrun the power of the hand-loom weaver to consume it ; but a few years after the close of the American war this difficulty was met by the discovery of the power-loom, which replaced the weaver by machinery. Ingenious however as these inventions were, they would have remained comparatively useless had it not been for the revelation of a new and inexhaustible labour-force in the steam-engine. It was the combination of such a force with such means of applying it that enabled Britain during the terrible years of her struggle with France and Napoleon to all but monopolise the woollen and cotton trades, and raised her into the greatest manufacturing country that the world had seen.

How mighty a force this industrial revolution was to exert on English politics and English society time was to show. By the transfer of wealth and population from southern to northern England, and from the country to the town, it was in the next fifty years to set on foot a revolution in both, the results of which have still to be dis-

closed. Of such a revolution no English statesman as yet had a glimpse ; but already the growth of industrial energy and industrial wealth was telling on the conditions of English statesmanship. The manufacturer and the merchant were coming fast to the front ; and their temper was more menacing to the monopoly of political power by the Whigs and the landed aristocracy whom the Whigs represented than the temper of the king himself. Already public opinion was finding in them a new concentration and weight ; and it was certain that as the representatives of public opinion they would at last demand a share in the work of government. Such a demand might have been delayed for a while had they been content with the way in which England was governed. But they were far from being content with it. To no class indeed could the selfishness, the corruption, the factiousness, and the administrative inefficiency of the ruling order be more utterly odious. Their tone was moral, and they were influenced more and more by the religious and philanthropic movement about them. As men of business, they revolted against the waste and mismanagement which seemed to have become normal in every department of government. Their patriotism, their pride in England's greatness, alienated them from men who looked upon political eminence as a means of personal gain. Above all their personal energy, their consciousness of wealth and power, and to some

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CHAP. III. extent the natural jealousy of the trader against
 Industrial the country gentleman, urged them to press
 England. for an overthrow of the existing monopoly, and
 1782-1792. for a fairer distribution of political influence. But
 such a pressure could only bring them into conflict
 with the Whigs whom the fall of Lord North had
 recalled to office. Though the Tories had now
 grown to a compact body of a hundred and fifty
 members, the Whigs still remained superior to
 their rivals in numbers and ability as well as in
 distinctness of political aim ; for the return of the
 Bedford section to the general body of the party,
 as well as its steady opposition to the American
 war, had restored much of their early cohesion.
 But this reunion only strengthened their aristo-
 cratic and exclusive tendencies, and widened the
 breach which was steadily opening on questions
 such as Parliamentary Reform between the bulk
 of the Whigs and the small fragment of their
 party which remained true to the more popular
 sympathies of Chatham.

William
 Pitt.

Lord Shelburne stood at the head of the Chatham party, and it was reinforced at this moment by the entry into Parliament of the second and youngest son of Chatham himself. William Pitt had hardly reached his twenty-second year ; but he left college with the learning of a ripe scholar, and his ready and sonorous eloquence had been matured by his father's teaching. "He will be one of the first men in Parliament," said a member to

Charles Fox, the Whig leader in the Commons, after Pitt's earliest speech in that house. "He is so already," replied Fox. Young as he was, the haughty self-esteem of the new statesman breathed in every movement of his tall, spare figure, in the hard lines of a countenance which none but his closer friends saw lighted by a smile, in his cold and repulsive address, his invariable gravity of demeanour, and his habitual air of command. But none knew how great the qualities were which lay beneath this haughty exterior; nor had any one guessed how soon this "boy," as his rivals mockingly styled him, was to crush every opponent and to hold England at his will. There was only a smile of wonder when he refused any of the minor posts which were offered him in the Rockingham administration, and the wonder passed into angry sarcasms as soon as it was known that he claimed, if he took office at all, to be at once admitted to the Cabinet. But Pitt had no desire to take office under Rockingham. He was the inheritor of that side of his father's policy which was most distasteful to the Whigs. To him as to Chatham the main lesson of the war was the need of putting an end to those abuses in the composition of Parliament by which George the Third had been enabled to plunge the country into it. A thorough reform of the House of Commons was the only effectual means of doing this, and Pitt brought forward a bill founded on his father's

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plans for that purpose. But though a more liberal section of the Whigs, with Charles Fox at their head, were wavering round to a wish for reform, the great bulk of the party could not nerve themselves to the sacrifice of property and influence which such a reform would involve. Rockingham remained hostile to reform, and Burke, whose influence still told much upon Rockingham, was yet more hostile than his chief. Pitt's bill therefore was thrown out. In its stead the Ministry endeavoured to weaken the means of corrupt influence which the king had unscrupulously used by disqualifying persons holding government contracts from sitting in Parliament, by depriving revenue officers of the elective franchise (a measure which diminished the weight of the Crown in seventy boroughs), and above all by a bill for the reduction of the civil establishment, of the pension list, and of the secret service fund, which was brought in by Burke. These measures were to a great extent effectual in diminishing the influence of the Crown over Parliament, and they are memorable as marking the date when the direct bribery of members absolutely ceased. But they were utterly inoperative in rendering the House of Commons really representative of or responsible to the people of England.

The
 Coalition.

The jealousy which the mass of the Whigs entertained of the followers of Chatham and their

plans was more plainly shown however on the death of Lord Rockingham in July. Shelburne, who had hitherto served as Secretary of State, was called by the king to the head of the Ministry, a post to which his eminent talents and the ability which he was showing in the negotiations for the Peace clearly gave him a title. But Shelburne had been hampered in these negotiations by the jealousy of Charles Fox, who as joint Secretary of State with him claimed in spite of usage a share in conducting them, and who persisted without a show of reason in believing himself to have been unfairly treated. It was on personal grounds therefore that Fox refused to serve under Shelburne; but the refusal of Burke and the bulk of Rockingham's followers was based on more than personal grounds. It sprang from a rooted distrust of the more popular tendencies of which Shelburne was justly regarded as the representative. To Pitt, on the other hand, these tendencies were the chief ground of confidence in the new Ministry; and, young as he was, he at once entered office as Chancellor of the Exchequer. But his tenure of this post was a brief one. The Shelburne Ministry in fact only lasted long enough to conclude the final peace with the United States on the base of their independence; for in the opening of 1783 it was overthrown by the most unscrupulous coalition known in our history, a union of the Whig followers of Fox with the Tories who

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still clung to Lord North. In Parliament such a coalition was irresistible, and the resignation of Shelburne at once made way for an administration in which both the triumphant parties were represented. But the effect on England at large was very different. Whatever new credit the Whigs had gained with the country during their long exclusion from office had been due to their steady denunciation of the policy and temper of Lord North's administration. That they should take office hand in hand with men whom they had for years denounced as the worst of Ministers shocked even their most loyal adherents; and the shock was the greater that a new seriousness in politics, a longing for a deeper and more earnest treatment of political questions, was making mere faction intolerable to Englishmen. But behind all this was the sense that something more than mere faction had really brought the two parties together. It was their common dread of the popular tendencies which Shelburne's Ministry represented, their common hatred of parliamentary reform, which hushed for the moment the bitter hostility between the followers of Rockingham and the followers of North. Yet never had the need of representative reform been more clearly shown than by a coalition which proved how powerless was the force of public opinion to check even the most shameless faction in Parliament, how completely the lessening of royal influence

by the measures of Burke and Rockingham had tended to the profit not of the people but of the borough-mongers who usurped its representation. The turn of public opinion was quick in disclosing itself. Fox was the most popular of the Whigs, but he was hooted from the platform when he addressed his constituents at Westminster. Pitt, on the other hand, whose attacks on the new union rose to a lofty and indignant eloquence, was lifted by it into an almost solitary greatness.

But in Parliament Pitt was as powerless as he was influential in the country. His renewed proposal of Parliamentary Reform, though he set aside the disfranchisement of rotten boroughs as a violation of private property, and limited himself to the disfranchisement of boroughs convicted of corruption, and to the addition of one hundred members to the county representation, was rejected by a majority of two to one. Secure in their parliamentary majority, and heedless of the power of public opinion outside the walls of the House of Commons, the new Ministers entered boldly on a greater task than had as yet taxed the constructive genius of English statesmen. To leave such a dominion as Warren Hastings had built up in India to the control of a mere Company of traders was clearly impossible; and Fox proposed to transfer its political government from the Directors of the Company to a board of seven Commissioners. The appointment of the seven was vested in the

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Fall of the
Coalition.

CHAP. III. first instance in Parliament, and afterwards in the
 Industrial Crown; their office was to be held for five years,
 England. but they were removable on address from either
 1782-1792. House of Parliament. The proposal was at once
 met with a storm of opposition. The scheme
 indeed was an injudicious one; for the new Com-
 missioners would have been destitute of that
 practical knowledge of India which belonged to
 the Company, while the want of any immediate
 link between them and the actual Ministry of the
 Crown would have prevented Parliament from
 exercising an effective control over their acts. But
 the real faults of this India Bill were hardly noticed
 in the popular outcry against it. It had challenged
 the hostility of powerful influences. The merchant-
 class was galled by the blow levelled at the greatest
 merchant-body in the realm: corporations trembled
 at the cancelling of a charter; the king viewed
 the measure as a mere means of transferring the
 patronage of India to the Whigs. But it might
 have defied the opposition of corporations and the
 king had it not had to meet the bitter hostility of the
 nation at large. With the nation the faults of the bill
 lay not in this detail or that, but in the character of
 the Ministry which proposed it. To give the rule
 and patronage of India over to the existing House
 of Commons was to give a new and immense
 power to a body which misused in the grossest
 way the power it possessed. It was the sense of
 this popular feeling which encouraged the king to

exert his personal influence to defeat the measure in the Lords, and on its defeat to order his Ministers to deliver up the seals. The unpopularity of Shelburne stood in the way of his resumption of office, and in December 1783 Pitt accepted the post of First Lord of the Treasury. His position would at once have been untenable had the country gone with its nominal representatives. He was defeated again and again by large majorities in the Commons; but the majorities dwindled as a shower of addresses from every quarter, from the Tory University of Oxford as from the Whig Corporation of London, proved that public opinion went with the Minister and not with the House. It was the general sense of this that justified Pitt in the firmness with which, in the teeth of addresses for his removal from office, he delayed the dissolution of Parliament for five months, and gained time for that ripening of the national sentiment on which he counted for success. When the election of 1784 came the struggle was at once at an end. The public feeling took a strength which broke through the corrupt influences that commonly governed its representation. Every great constituency, the counties and the large towns, returned supporters of Pitt. Of the majority which had defeated him in the Commons, a hundred and sixty members were unseated. Fox hardly retained his seat for Westminster, Burke lost his seat for Bristol, and only a

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fragment of the Whig party was saved by its command of nomination boroughs.

When Parliament came together after the overthrow of the Coalition, the Minister of twenty-five was master of England as no Minister had been before. Even George the Third yielded to his sway, partly through gratitude for the triumph he had won for him, partly from a sense of the madness which was soon to strike him down, but still more from a gradual discovery that the triumph which he had won over his political rivals had been won, not to the profit of the crown, but of the nation at large. The Whigs, it was true, were broken, unpopular, and without a policy; while the Tories, whom the Coalition had disgusted with Lord North, as it had estranged Fox from their opponents, clung to the Minister who had "saved the king." But it was the support of a new political power that really gave his strength to the young Minister. The sudden rise of English industry was pushing the manufacturer to the front; and the manufacturer pinned his faith from the first in William Pitt. All that the trading classes loved in Chatham, his nobleness of temper, his consciousness of power, his patriotism, his sympathy with a wider world than the world within the Parliament-house, they saw in his son. He had little indeed of the poetic and imaginative side of Chatham's genius, of his quick perception of what was just and what was possible, his far-

reaching conceptions of national policy, his outlook into the future of the world. Pitt's flowing and sonorous commonplaces rang hollow beside the broken phrases which still make his father's eloquence a living thing to Englishmen. On the other hand he possessed some qualities in which Chatham was utterly wanting. His temper, though naturally ardent and sensitive, had been schooled in a proud self-command. His simplicity and good taste freed him from his father's ostentation and extravagance. Diffuse and commonplace as his speeches seem to the reader, they were adapted as much by their very qualities of diffuseness and commonplace as by their lucidity and good sense to the intelligence of the classes whom Pitt felt to be his real audience. In his love of peace, his immense industry, his despatch of business, his skill in debate, his knowledge of finance, he recalled Sir Robert Walpole; but he had virtues which Walpole never possessed, and he was free from Walpole's worst defects. He was careless of personal gain. He was too proud to rule by corruption. His lofty self-esteem left no room for any jealousy of subordinates. He was generous in his appreciation of youthful merits; and the "boys" he gathered round him, such as Canning and Lord Wellesley, rewarded his generosity by a devotion which death left untouched. With Walpole's cynical inaction Pitt had no sympathy whatever. His policy from the

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first was a policy of active reform, and he faced every one of the problems, financial, constitutional, religious, from which Walpole had shrunk. Above all, he had none of Walpole's scorn of his fellow-men. The noblest feature in his mind was its wide humanity. His love for England was as deep and personal as his father's love, but of the sympathy with English passion and English prejudice which had been at once his father's weakness and strength he had not a trace. When Fox taunted him with forgetting Chatham's jealousy of France and his faith that she was the natural foe of England, Pitt answered nobly that "to suppose any nation can be unalterably the enemy of another is weak and childish."

His states-
 manship.

The temper of the time, and the larger sympathy of man with man which especially marks the eighteenth century as a turning-point in the history of the human race, was everywhere bringing to the front a new order of statesmen, such as Turgot and Joseph the Second, whose characteristics were a love of mankind, and a belief that as the happiness of the individual can only be secured by the general happiness of the community to which he belongs, so the welfare of individual nations can only be secured by the general welfare of the world. Of these Pitt was one. But he rose high above the rest in the consummate knowledge and the practical force which he brought to the realization of his aims. His strength lay in

finance ; and he came forward at a time when the growth of English wealth made a knowledge of finance essential to a great Minister. The progress of the nation was wonderful. Population more than doubled during the eighteenth century, and the advance of wealth was even greater than that of population. Though the war had added a hundred millions to the national debt, the burden was hardly felt. The loss of America only increased the commerce with that country, and industry, as we have seen, had begun that great career which was to make England the workshop of the world. To deal wisely with such a growth required a knowledge of the laws of wealth which would have been impossible at an earlier time. But it had become possible in the days of Pitt. If books are to be measured by the effect which they have produced on the fortunes of mankind, the "Wealth of Nations" must rank among the greatest of books. Its author was Adam Smith, an Oxford scholar and a professor at Glasgow. Labour, he contended, was the one source of wealth, and it was by freedom of labour, by suffering the worker to pursue his own interest in his own way, that the public wealth would best be promoted. Any attempt to force labour into artificial channels, to shape by laws the course of commerce, to promote special branches of industry in particular countries, or to fix the character of the intercourse between one country and another, is not only a

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wrong to the worker or the merchant, but actually hurtful to the wealth of a state. The book was published in 1776, at the opening of the American war, and studied by Pitt during his career as an undergraduate at Cambridge. From that time he owned Adam Smith for his master; and he had hardly become Minister before he took the principles of the "Wealth of Nations" as the groundwork of his policy.

Pitt and
 Parli-
 amentary
 reform.

It was thus that the ten earlier years of Pitt's rule marked a new point of departure in English statesmanship. He was the first English Minister who really grasped the part which industry was to play in promoting the welfare of the world. He was not only a peace Minister and a financier, as Walpole had been, but a statesman who saw that the best security for peace lay in the freedom and widening of commercial intercourse between nations; that public economy not only lessened the general burdens but left additional capital in the hands of industry; and that finance might be turned from a mere means of raising revenue into a powerful engine of political and social improvement. That little was done by Pitt himself to carry these principles into effect was partly owing to the mass of ignorance and prejudice with which he had to contend, and still more to the sudden break of his plans through the French Revolution. His power rested above all on the trading classes, and these were still persuaded that wealth meant

gold and silver, and that commerce was best furthered by jealous monopolies. It was only by patience and dexterity that the mob of merchants and country squires who backed him in the House of Commons could be brought to acquiesce in the changes he proposed. How small his power was when it struggled with the prejudices around him was seen in the failure of the first great measure he brought forward. The question of parliamentary reform which had been mooted during the American war had been coming steadily to the front. Chatham had advocated an increase of county members, who were then the most independent part of the Lower House. The Duke of Richmond talked of universal suffrage, equal electoral districts, and annual Parliaments. Wilkes anticipated the Reform Bill of a later time by proposing to disfranchise the rotten boroughs, and to give members in their stead to the counties and to the more populous and wealthy towns. William Pitt had made the question his own by bringing forward a motion for reform on his first entry into the House, and one of his earliest measures as Minister was to bring in a bill in 1785 which, while providing for the gradual extinction of all decayed boroughs, disfranchised thirty-six at once, and transferred their members to counties. He brought the king to abstain from opposition, and strove to buy off the borough-mongers, as the holders of rotten boroughs were called, by offering

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to compensate them for the seats they lost at their market-value. But the bulk of his own party joined the bulk of the Whigs in a steady resistance to the bill, while it received no effective support from the general opinion of the people without. The more glaring abuses, indeed, within Parliament itself, the abuses which stirred Chatham and Wilkes to action, had in great part disappeared. The bribery of members had ceased. Burke's Bill of Economical Reform had just dealt a fatal blow at the influence which the king exercised by suppressing a host of useless offices, household appointments, judicial and diplomatic charges, which were maintained for the purpose of corruption. But what was probably the most fatal obstacle to any pressure for reform was the triumph of public opinion to which Pitt owed his power. The utter overthrow of the Coalition, the complete victory of public opinion, had done much to diminish the sense of any real danger from the opposition which Parliament had shown till now to the voice of the nation. England, then as now, was indifferent to all but practical grievances; and the nation cared little for anomalies in the form of representation so long as it felt itself represented. "Terribly disappointed and beat," as Wilberforce tells us Pitt was by the rejection of his measure, the temper of the House and of the people was too plain to be mistaken, and though his opinion remained unaltered, he never brought it forward again.

The failure of his constitutional reform was more than compensated by the triumphs of his finance. When he entered office public credit was at its lowest ebb. The debt had been doubled by the American war, yet large sums still remained unfunded, while the revenue was reduced by a vast system of smuggling which turned every coast-town into a nest of robbers. The deficiency in the revenue was met for the moment by new taxes, but the time which was thus gained served to change the whole face of public affairs. The first of Pitt's financial measures—his plan for gradually paying off the debt by a sinking fund—was undoubtedly an error; but it had a happy effect in restoring public confidence. He met the smuggler by a reduction of Custom-duties which made his trade unprofitable. He revived Walpole's plan of an Excise. Meanwhile the public expenses were reduced, and commission after commission was appointed to introduce economy into every department of the public service. The rapid development of the national industry which we have already noted no doubt aided the success of these measures. Credit was restored. The smuggling trade was greatly reduced. In two years there was a surplus of a million, and though duty after duty was removed the revenue rose steadily with every remission of taxation. Meanwhile Pitt was showing the political value of the new finance in a wider field. Ireland, then as now, was England's

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difficulty. The tyrannous misgovernment under which she had groaned ever since the battle of the Boyne was producing its natural fruit; the miserable land was torn with political faction, religious feuds, and peasant conspiracies; and so threatening had the attitude of the Protestant party which ruled it become during the American war that they had forced the English Parliament to relinquish its control over their Parliament in Dublin. Pitt saw that much at least of the misery and disloyalty of Ireland sprang from its poverty. The population had grown rapidly, while culture remained stationary and commerce perished. And of this poverty much was the direct result of unjust law. Ireland was a grazing country, but to protect the interest of English graziers the import of its cattle into England was forbidden. To protect the interests of English clothiers and weavers, its manufactures were loaded with duties. To redress this wrong was the first financial effort of Pitt, and the bill which he introduced in 1785 did away with every obstacle to freedom of trade between England and Ireland. It was a measure which, as he held, would "draw what remained of the shattered empire together," and repair in part the loss of America by creating a loyal and prosperous Ireland; and, struggling almost alone in face of a fierce opposition from the Whigs and the Manchester merchants, he dragged it through the English Parliament, though only to see it flung

aside by the Protestant faction under Grattan which then ruled the Parliament of Ireland. But the defeat only spurred him to a greater effort elsewhere. If Ireland was England's difficulty, France had been looked upon as England's natural enemy. We have seen how nobly Pitt rebuked prejudices such as this ; but he knew that nothing could so effectively dispel it as increased intercourse between nation and nation. In 1787 therefore he concluded a Treaty of Commerce with France which enabled subjects of both countries to reside and travel in either without licence or passport, did away with all prohibition of trade on either side, and reduced every import duty.

The immediate result of this treaty was a great increase of trade between France and England ; and brief as its course was fated to be, it at once set Pitt on a higher level than any rival statesman of his time. But the spirit of humanity which breathed through his policy had to wrestle with difficulties both at home and abroad. No measure secured a warmer support from the young Minister than the bill for the suppression of the slave-trade ; but in 1788 it was defeated by the vigorous opposition of the trading classes and the prejudice of the people at large. His efforts to sap the enmity of nation against nation by a freer intercourse encountered a foe even more fatal than English prejudice, in the very movement of which his measures formed a part. Across the

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England
and
Europe.

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Industrial revolution which was to change the face of the
England. world. That such a revolution must one day
1782-1792. come, every observer who had compared the state
of Europe with that of England had long seen to
be inevitable. So far as England was concerned,
the Puritan resistance of the seventeenth century
had in the end succeeded in checking the general
tendency of the time to religious and political
despotism. Since the Revolution of 1688 freedom
of conscience and the people's right to govern
itself through its representatives in Parliament
had been practically established. Social equality
had begun long before. Every man from the
highest to the lowest was subject to, and protected
by, the same law. The English aristocracy,
though exercising a powerful influence on govern-
ment, were possessed of few social privileges, and
hindered from forming a separate class in the
nation by the legal and social tradition which
counted all save the eldest son of a noble house as
commoners. No impassable line parted the
gentry from the commercial classes, and these
again possessed no privileges which could part
them from the lower classes of the community.
Public opinion, the general sense of educated
Englishmen, had established itself after a short
struggle as the dominant element in English
government. But in all the other great states of
Europe the wars of religion had left only the

name of freedom. Government tended to a pure despotism. Privilege was supreme in religion, in politics, in society. Society itself rested on a rigid division of classes from one another, which refused to the people at large any equal rights of justice or of industry.

We have already seen how alien such a conception of national life was from the ideas which the wide diffusion of intelligence during the eighteenth century was spreading throughout Europe; and in almost every country some enlightened rulers were striving by administrative reforms to satisfy in some sort the sense of wrong which was felt around them. The attempts of sovereigns like Frederick the Great in Prussia and Joseph the Second in Austria and the Netherlands were rivalled by the efforts of statesmen such as Turgot in France. It was in France indeed that the contrast between the actual state of society and the new ideas of public right was felt most keenly. Nowhere had the victory of the Crown been more complete. The aristocracy had been robbed of all share in public affairs; it enjoyed social privileges and exemption from any contribution to the public burdens without that sense of public duty which a governing class to some degree always possesses. Guilds and monopolies fettered the industry of the trader and the merchant, and cut them off from the working classes, as the value attached to noble blood cut

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off both from the aristocracy. If its political position indeed were compared with that of most of the countries round it, France stood high. Its government was less oppressive, its general wealth was larger and more evenly diffused, there was a better administration of justice, and greater security for public order. Poor as its peasantry seemed to English eyes, they were far above the peasants of Germany or Spain. Its middle class was the quickest and most intelligent in Europe. Under Lewis the Fifteenth opinion was practically free, and a literary class had sprung up which devoted itself with wonderful brilliancy and activity to popularizing the ideas of social and political justice which it learned from English writers, and in the case of Montesquieu and Voltaire from personal contact with English life. The moral conceptions of the time, its love of mankind, its sense of human brotherhood, its hatred of oppression, its pity for the guilty and the poor, its longing after a higher and nobler standard of life and action, were expressed by a crowd of writers, and above all by Rousseau, with a fire and eloquence which carried them to the heart of the people. But this new force of intelligence only jostled roughly with the social forms with which it found itself in contact. The philosopher denounced the tyranny of the priesthood. The peasant grumbled at the lord's right to judge him in his courts and to exact feudal

services from him. The merchant was galled by the trading restrictions and the heavy taxation. The country gentry rebelled against their exclusion from public life and from the government of the country. Its powerlessness to bring about any change at home turned all this new energy into sympathy with a struggle against tyranny abroad. Public opinion forced France to ally itself with America in its contest for liberty, and French volunteers under the Marquis de Lafayette joined Washington's army. But while the American war spread more widely throughout the nation the craving for freedom, it brought on the Government financial embarrassments from which it could only free itself by an appeal to the country at large. Lewis the Sixteenth resolved to summon the States-General, which had not met since the time of Richelieu, and to appeal to the nobles to waive their immunity from taxation. His resolve at once stirred into vigorous life every impulse and desire which had been seething in the minds of the people; and the States-General no sooner met at Versailles in May 1789 than the fabric of despotism and privilege began to crumble. A rising in Paris destroyed the Bastille, and the capture of this fortress was taken for the dawn of a new era of constitutional freedom in France and through Europe. Even in England men thrilled with a strange joy at the tidings of its fall. "How much is this the greatest event that ever

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CHAP. III. happened in the world," Fox cried with a burst
 Industrial of enthusiasm, "and how much the best!"
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Pitt and
 Russia.

Pitt regarded the approach of France to sentiments of liberty which had long been familiar to England with greater coolness, but with no distrust. For the moment indeed his attention was distracted by an attack of madness which visited George the Third in 1788, and by the claim of a right to the Regency which was at once advanced by the Prince of Wales. The Prince belonged to the Whig party; and Fox, who was travelling in Italy, hurried home to support his claim in full belief that the Prince's Regency would be followed by his own return to power. Pitt successfully resisted the claim on the constitutional ground that in such a case the right to choose a temporary Regent, under what limitations it would, lay with Parliament; and a bill which conferred the Regency on the Prince, in accordance with this view, was already passing the Houses when the recovery of the king put an end to the long dispute. Foreign difficulties, too, absorbed Pitt's attention. Russia had risen into greatness under Catharine the Second; and Catharine had resolved from the first on the annexation of Poland, the expulsion of the Turks from Europe, and the setting up of a Russian throne at Constantinople. In her first aim she was baffled for the moment by Frederick the Great. She had already made herself virtually mistress of the

whole of Poland, her armies occupied the kingdom, and she had seated a nominee of her own on its throne, when Frederick in union with the Emperor Joseph the Second forced her to admit Germany to a share of the spoil. If the Polish partition of 1773 brought the Russian frontier westward to the upper waters of the Dwina and the Dnieper, it gave Galicia to Maria Theresa, and West Prussia to Frederick himself. Foiled in her first aim, she waited for the realization of her second till the alliance between the two German powers was at an end through the resistance of Prussia to Joseph's schemes for the annexation of Bavaria, and till the death of Frederick removed her most watchful foe. Then in 1788 Joseph and the Empress joined hands for a partition of the Turkish Empire. But Prussia was still watchful, and England was no longer fettered as in 1773 by troubles with America. The friendship established by Chatham between the two countries, which had been suspended by Bute's treachery and all but destroyed during the Northern League of Neutral Powers, had been restored by Pitt through his co-operation with the successor of Frederick the Great in the restoration of the Dutch Stadtholderate. Its political weight was now seen in an alliance of England, Prussia, and Holland, in 1789, for the preservation of the Turkish Empire. A great European struggle seemed at hand. In such a struggle the sympathy and aid

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CHAP. III. of France were of the highest importance ; and it
 Industrial was only as weakening her in face of such a
 England. crisis that Pitt looked on the Revolution with any
 1782-1792. fear. But with the treaty the danger passed
 away. In the spring of 1790 Joseph died broken-
 hearted at the failure of his plans and the revolt
 of the Netherlands against his innovations ;
 Austria practically withdrew from the war with
 the Turks ; and the young Minister could give
 free expression to the sympathy with which the
 French movement inspired him.

The French
 Revolution.

In France indeed things were moving fast.
 By breaking down the division between its
 separate orders the States-General became a
 National Assembly, which abolished the privileges
 of the provincial parliaments, of the nobles, and
 the Church. In October 1789 the mob of Paris
 marched on Versailles and forced both King and
 Assembly to return with them to the capital ; and
 a Constitution hastily put together was accepted
 by Lewis the Sixteenth in the stead of his old
 despotic power. To Pitt the tumult and disorder
 with which these great changes were wrought
 seemed transient matters. In January 1790 he
 still believed that "the present convulsions in
 France must sooner or later culminate in general
 harmony and regular order," and that when her
 own freedom was established, "France would
 stand forth as one of the most brilliant powers of
 Europe." But the coolness and goodwill with

which Pitt looked on the Revolution were far from being universal in the nation at large. The cautious good sense of the bulk of Englishmen, their love of order and law, their distaste for violent changes and for abstract theories, as well as their reverence for the past, were rousing throughout the country a dislike of the revolutionary changes which were hurrying on across the Channel; and both the political sense and the political prejudice of the nation were being fired by the warnings of Edmund Burke. The fall of the Bastille, though it kindled enthusiasm in Fox, roused in Burke only distrust. "Whenever a separation is made between liberty and justice," he wrote a few weeks later, "neither is safe." The night of the fourth of August, when the privileges of every class were abolished, filled him with horror. He saw, and rightly saw, in it the critical moment which revealed the character of the Revolution, and his part was taken at once. "The French," he cried in January, while Pitt was foretelling a glorious future for the new Constitution, "the French have shown themselves the ablest architects of ruin who have hitherto existed in the world. In a short space of time they have pulled to the ground their army, their navy, their commerce, their arts and their manufactures."

But in Parliament Burke stood alone. The Whigs, though distrustfully, followed Fox in his

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applause of the Revolution. The Tories, yet more distrustfully, followed Pitt; and Pitt warmly expressed his sympathy with the constitutional government which was ruling France. At this moment indeed the more revolutionary party in that country gave a signal proof of its friendship for England. Irritated by an English settlement at Nootka Sound in California, Spain appealed to France for aid in accordance with the Family Compact; and the French Ministry, with a party at its back which believed things had gone far enough, resolved on a war as the best means of checking the progress of the Revolution and restoring the power of the Crown. The revolutionary party naturally opposed this design; and after a bitter struggle the right of declaring war, save with the sanction of the Assembly, was taken from the king. With this vote all danger of hostilities passed away. "The French Government," Pitt asserted, "was bent on cultivating the most unbounded friendship for Great Britain," and he saw no reason in its revolutionary changes why Britain should not return the friendship of France. What told even more on his temper towards that country was a conviction that nothing but the joint action of France and England would in the end arrest the troubles of Eastern Europe. His intervention foiled for the moment a fresh effort of Prussia to rob Poland of Dantzic and Thorn. But though Russia was still pressing

Turkey hard, a Russian war was so unpopular in England that a hostile vote in Parliament forced Pitt to discontinue his armaments; and a fresh union of Austria and Prussia, which promised at this juncture to bring about a close of the Turkish struggle, promised also a fresh attack on the independence of Poland. To prevent a new partition without the co-operation of France was impossible; and in the existing state of things Pitt saw nothing to hinder the continuance of a friendship which would make such a co-operation inevitable.

But while Pitt was pleading for friendship between the two countries, Burke was resolved to make friendship impossible. In Parliament, as we have seen, he stood alone. He had long ceased, in fact, to have any hold over the House of Commons. The eloquence which had vied with that of Chatham during the discussions on the Stamp Act had become distasteful to the bulk of its members. The length of his speeches, the profound and philosophical character of his argument, the splendour and often the extravagance of his illustrations, his passionate earnestness, his want of temper and discretion, wearied and perplexed the squires and merchants about him. He was known nowadays as "the dinner-bell of the House," so rapidly did its benches thin at his rising. For a time his energies found scope in the impeachment of Hastings; and the grandeur of

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his appeals to the justice of England hushed detraction. But with the close of the impeachment his repute had again fallen; and the approach of old age, for he was now past sixty, seemed to counsel retirement from an assembly where he stood unpopular and alone. But age and disappointment and loneliness were forgotten as Burke saw rising across the Channel the embodiment of all that he hated—a Revolution founded on scorn of the past, and threatening with ruin the whole social fabric which the past had reared; the ordered structure of classes and ranks crumbling before a doctrine of social equality; a State rudely demolished and reconstituted; a Church and a Nobility swept away in a night. Against the enthusiasm of what he rightly saw to be a new political religion he resolved to rouse the enthusiasm of the old. He was at once a great orator and a great writer; and now that the House was deaf to his voice, he appealed to the country by his pen. The “Reflections on the French Revolution” which he published in October 1790 not only denounced the acts of rashness and violence which sullied the great change that France had wrought, but the very principles from which the change had sprung. Burke’s deep sense of the need of social order, of the value of that continuity in human affairs “without which men would become like flies in a summer,” blinded him to all but the faith in

mere rebellion and the yet sillier faith in mere novelty which disguised a real nobleness of aim and temper even in the most ardent of the revolutionists. He would see no abuses in the past, now that it had fallen, or anything but the ruin of society in the future. He preached a crusade against men whom he regarded as the foes of religion and civilization, and called on the armies of Europe to put down a Revolution whose principles threatened every state with destruction.

The great obstacle to such a crusade was Pitt : and one of the grandest outbursts of the "Reflections" closed with a bitter taunt at the Minister. "The age of chivalry," Burke cried, "is gone ; that of sophisters, economists, and calculators has succeeded, and the glory of Europe is extinguished for ever." But neither taunt nor invective moved Pitt from his course. At the moment when the "Reflections" appeared he gave a fresh assurance to France of his resolve to have nothing to do with any crusade against the Revolution. "This country," he wrote, "means to persevere in the neutrality hitherto scrupulously observed with respect to the internal dissensions of France ; and from which it will never depart unless the conduct held there makes it indispensable as an act of self-defence." So far indeed was he from sharing the reactionary panic which was spreading around him that he chose this time

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His
failure in
Parliament.

CHAP. III. for supporting Fox in his Libel Act, a measure
 Industrial which, by transferring the decision on what was
 England. libellous in any publication from the judge to the
 1782-1792. jury, completed the freedom of the press; and
 himself passed in 1791 a bill which, though little
 noticed among the storms of the time, was one of
 the noblest of his achievements. He boldly put
 aside the dread which had been roused by the
 American war, that the gift of self-government to
 our colonies would serve only as a step towards
 their secession from the mother country, and
 established a House of Assembly and a Council in
 the two Canadas. "I am convinced," said Fox,
 who gave the measure his hearty support, "that
 the only method of retaining distant colonies with
 advantage is to enable them to govern themselves";
 and the policy of the one statesman as well as the
 foresight of the other has been justified by the
 later history of our dependencies. Nor had
 Burke better success with his own party. Fox
 remained an ardent lover of the Revolution, and
 answered a fresh attack of Burke upon it with
 more than usual warmth. Till now a close
 affection had bound the two men together; but
 no sooner had this defence been uttered than the
 fanaticism of Burke declared their union to be
 over. "There is no loss of friendship," Fox
 exclaimed, with a sudden burst of tears. "There
 is!" Burke repeated. "I know the price of my
 conduct. Our friendship is at an end."

Within the walls of Parliament however Burke as yet stood utterly alone. His "Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs," in June 1791, failed to detach a follower from Fox; while Pitt coldly counselled him rather to praise the English Constitution than to rail at the French. "I have made many enemies and few friends," Burke wrote sadly to the French princes who had fled from their country and were gathering in arms at Coblenz, "by the part I have taken." But the opinion of the people was slowly drifting to his side; and a sale of thirty thousand copies showed that the "Reflections" echoed the general sentiment of Englishmen. At this moment indeed the mood of England was singularly unfavourable to any fair appreciation of the Revolution across the Channel. Her temper was above all industrial. Men who were working hard and fast growing rich, who had the narrow and practical turn of men of business, looked angrily at this sudden disturbance of order, this restless and vague activity, these rhetorical appeals to human feeling, these abstract and often empty theories. In England it was a time of political content and social well-being, of steady economic progress, as well as of a powerful religious revival; and an insular lack of imaginative interest in other races hindered men from seeing that every element of this content, of this order, of this peaceful and harmonious progress, of this reconciliation of

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CHAP. III. society and religion, was wanting abroad. The
 Industrial sympathy which the first outbreak of the Revolu-
 England. tion had roused among Englishmen grew cooler in
 1782-1792. fact with every step which the Revolution took. While the Declaration of the Rights of Man roused France to a frenzy of enthusiasm, it was set aside as a dream by the practical islanders who based their rights on precedent and not on theory. The abolition of all social privileges on the 12th of August, the most characteristic step in the French Revolution, was met with grave disapproval by a people more alien from social equality than any people in Europe. Every incident in the struggle between the French people and their king widened the breach of feeling. The anarchy of the country, the want of political sense in its Assembly, the paltry declamation of its clubs, the exaggerated sentiment, the universal suspicion, the suspension of every security for personal freedom, the arrests, the murders, the overthrow of the Church, the ruin of the Crown, were watched with an ever-growing severity by a nation whose chief instinct was one of order, whose bent was to practical politics, whose temper was sober and trustful, whose passionate love of personal liberty was only equalled by its passionate abhorrence of bloodshed in civil strife, and whose ecclesiastical and political institutions were newly endeared to it by a fresh revival of religious feeling, and by the constitutional attitude of its Government for a hundred years.

Sympathy in fact was soon limited to a few groups of reformers who gathered in "Constitutional Clubs," and whose reckless language quickened the national reaction. But in spite of Burke's appeals and the cries of the nobles who had fled from France and longed only to march against their country, Europe held back from any attack on the Revolution, and Pitt preserved his attitude of neutrality, though with a greater appearance of reserve. So anxious, in fact, did the aspect of affairs in the East make him for the restoration of tranquillity in France, that he foiled a plan which its emigrant nobles had formed for a descent on the French coast, and declared formally at Vienna that England would remain absolutely neutral should hostilities arise between France and the Emperor. But the Emperor was as anxious to avoid a French war as Pitt himself. Though Catharine, now her strife with Turkey was over, wished to plunge the two German powers into a struggle with the Revolution which would leave her free to annex Poland single-handed, neither Leopold nor Prussia would tie their hands by such a contest. The flight of Lewis the Sixteenth from Paris in June 1791 brought Europe for a moment to the verge of war; but he was intercepted and brought back: and for a while the danger seemed to incline the revolutionists in France to greater moderation. Lewis too not only accepted the Constitution, but pleaded earnestly

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CHAP. III. with the Emperor against any armed intervention
 as certain to bring ruin to his throne. In their
 Industrial conference at Pillnitz therefore, in August, Leopold
 England. and the king of Prussia contented themselves with
 1782-1792. a vague declaration inviting the European powers
 to co-operate in restoring a sound form of govern-
 ment in France, availed themselves of England's
 neutrality to refuse all military aid to the French
 princes, and dealt simply with the affairs of Poland.
 But the peace they desired soon became impossible.
 The Constitutional Royalists in France availed
 themselves of the irritation caused by the Declara-
 tion of Pillnitz to revive the cry for a war which,
 as they hoped, would give strength to the throne.
 The more violent revolutionists, or Jacobins, on
 the other hand, abandoned their advocacy of peace.
 Under the influence of the "Girondists," the
 deputies from the south of France, whose aim was
 a republic, and who saw in a great national struggle
 a means of overthrowing the monarchy, they
 decided, in spite of the opposition of their leader,
 Robespierre, on a contest with the Emperor.
 Both parties united to demand the breaking up of
 an army which the emigrant princes had formed
 on the Rhine; and though Leopold before his
 death assented to this demand, France declared
 war against his successor, Francis, in April 1792.

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CHAPTER IV

ENGLAND AND REVOLUTIONARY FRANCE

1792—1801

THAT the war with Germany would widen into a vast European struggle, a struggle in which the peoples would rise against their oppressors, and the freedom which France had won diffuse itself over the world, no French revolutionist doubted for an hour. Nor did they doubt that in this struggle England would join them. It was from England that they had drawn those principles of political and social liberty which they believed themselves to be putting into practice. It was to England that they looked above all for approbation and sympathy, and on the aid of England that they confidently counted in their struggle with a despotic and priest-ridden Europe. Absorbed in the mighty events about them, and utterly ignorant of the real set of English feeling or the real meaning of Pitt's policy, they were astonished and indignant at his firm refusal of their alliance and his resolve

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to stand apart from the struggle. It was in vain that Pitt strove to allay this irritation by demanding only that Holland should remain untouched, and promising neutrality even though Belgium should be occupied by a French army, or that he strengthened these pledges by a reduction of military forces, and by bringing forward in 1792 a peace-budget which rested on a large remission of taxation. To the revolutionists at Paris the attitude of England remained unintelligible and irritating. Instead of the aid they had counted on, they found but a cold neutrality. In place of the sympathy on which they reckoned, they saw, now that they looked coolly across the Channel, a reserve passing into disapproval. The pen of Burke was denouncing the Revolution as the very negation of those principles on which English liberty rested. The priests and nobles who had fled from the new France were finding pity and welcome on English shores. And now that France flung herself on an armed Europe to win freedom for its peoples from their kings, England stood coldly apart. To men frenzied with a passionate enthusiasm, and frenzied yet more with a sudden terror at the dangers they were encountering, such an attitude of neutrality in such a quarter seemed like a stab in the back.

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efforts in
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But that this attitude was that of the English people as a whole was incredible to the French enthusiasts. Conscious as no Englishman could

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be conscious of the great evils they had overthrown, of the great benefits they had won for their country, they saw in the attitude of England only the sympathy of an aristocracy with the aristocracy they had struck down. The cries for a parliamentary reform which reached them across the Channel became in their ears cries of a people as powerless and oppressed as the people of France had been. They still clung to the hope of England's aid in the emancipation of Europe from despotism and superstition, but they came now to believe that England must itself be emancipated before such an aid could be given. Their first work therefore they held to be the bringing about a revolution in England which might free the people from the aristocracy and the aristocratic government which held it down. But this was far from being all the work they looked to accomplishing. The aristocracy which oppressed the people at home oppressed, as they believed, great peoples beyond the bounds of England itself. It was subjecting to its sway nation after nation in India. Its rule over Ireland was a masterpiece of tyranny. To rouse India, to rouse Ireland to a struggle which should shake off the English yoke, became necessary steps to the establishment of freedom in England itself. From the moment therefore that the opposition between the two countries declared itself, French agents were busy "sowing the revolution" in each quarter. In Ireland they

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entered into communication with the United Irishmen. In India they appeared at the courts of the native princes, and above all at the court of Mysore. Meanwhile in England itself they strove through a number of associations, which had formed themselves under the name of Constitutional Clubs, to rouse the same spirit which they had roused in France; and the French envoy, Chauvelin, protested warmly against a proclamation which denounced this correspondence as seditious.

The
 Coalition
 attacks
 France.

Such a course could only knit men of all parties together in a common resentment; and the effect of these revolutionary efforts on the friends of the Revolution was seen in a declaration which they wrested from Fox, that at such a moment even the discussion of parliamentary reform was inexpedient. A far worse result was the new strength they gave to its foes. Burke was still working hard in writings whose extravagance of style was forgotten in their intensity of feeling to spread alarm throughout Europe. He had from the first encouraged the emigrant princes to take arms, and sent his son to join them at Coblenz. "Be alarmists," he wrote to them; "diffuse terror!" But the royalist terror which he sowed would have been of little moment had it not roused a revolutionary terror in France itself. At the threat of war against the Emperor the two German Courts had drawn together, and reluct-

antly abandoning all hope of peace with France, gathered eighty thousand men under the Duke of Brunswick, and advanced slowly in August 1792 on the Meuse. France, though she had forced on the struggle, was really almost defenceless; her forces in Belgium broke at the first shock of arms into shameful rout; and the panic, as it spread from the soldiery to the nation at large, took violent and horrible forms. At the first news of Brunswick's advance the mob of Paris broke into the Tuileries on the 10th of August; and at its demand Lewis, who had taken refuge in the Assembly, was suspended from his office and imprisoned in the Temple. In the following September, while General Dumouriez by boldness and adroit negotiations was arresting the progress of the Allies in the defiles of the Argonne, bodies of paid murderers butchered the royalist prisoners who crowded the gaols of Paris, with a view of influencing the elections to a new Convention which met to proclaim the abolition of royalty. The retreat of the Prussian army, whose numbers had been reduced by disease till an advance on Paris became impossible, and a brilliant victory won by Dumouriez at Jemappes which laid the Netherlands at his feet, turned the panic of the French into a wild self-confidence. In November the Convention decreed that France offered the aid of her soldiers to all nations who would strive for freedom. "All governments are our enemies,"

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cried its President; "all peoples are our allies."

In the teeth of treaties signed only two years before, and of the stipulation made by England when it pledged itself to neutrality, the French Government resolved to attack Holland, and ordered its generals to enforce by arms the opening of the Scheldt.

France
declares
war with
England.

To do this was to force England into war. Public opinion was already pressing every day harder upon Pitt. The horror of the massacres of September, the hideous despotism of the Parisian mob, did more to estrange England from the Revolution than all the eloquence of Burke. But even while withdrawing our Minister from Paris on the imprisonment of the king, to whose Court he had been commissioned, Pitt clung stubbornly to a policy of peace. His hope was to bring the war to an end through English mediation, and to "leave France, which I believe is the best way, to arrange its own internal affairs as it can." No hour of Pitt's life is so great as the hour when he stood lonely and passionless before the growth of national passion, and refused to bow to the gathering cry for war. Even the news of the September massacres could only force from him a hope that France might abstain from any war of conquest and might escape from its social anarchy. In October the French agent in England reported that Pitt was about to recognize the Republic. At the opening of November he still

pressed on Holland a steady neutrality. It was France, and not England, which at last wrenched peace from his grasp. The decree of the Convention and the attack on the Dutch left him no choice but war, for it was impossible for England to endure a French fleet at Antwerp, or to desert allies like the United Provinces. But even in December the news of the approaching partition of Poland nerved him to a last struggle for peace; he offered to aid Austria in acquiring Bavaria if she would make terms with France, and pledged himself to France to abstain from war if that power would cease from violating the independence of her neighbour states. But desperately as Pitt struggled for peace, his struggle was in vain. Across the Channel his moderation was only taken for fear, while in England the general mourning which followed on the news of the French king's execution showed the growing ardour for the contest. The rejection of his last offers indeed made a contest inevitable. Both sides ceased from diplomatic communications, and in February 1793 France issued her Declaration of War.

From that moment Pitt's power was at an end. His pride, his immoveable firmness, and the general confidence of the nation, still kept him at the head of affairs; but he could do little save drift along with a tide of popular feeling which he never fully understood. Around him the country broke out in a fit of passion and panic which rivalled the

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passion and panic over sea. The confidence of France in its illusions as to opinion in England deluded for the moment even Englishmen themselves. The partisans of Republicanism were in reality but a few handfuls of men who played at gathering Conventions, and at calling themselves citizens and patriots, in childish imitation of what was going on across the Channel. But in the mass of Englishmen the dread of these revolutionists passed for the hour into sheer panic. Even the bulk of the Whig party believed property and the constitution to be in peril, and forsook Fox when he still proclaimed his faith in France and the Revolution. The "Old Whigs," as they called themselves, with the Duke of Portland, Earls Spencer and Fitzwilliam, and Mr. Windham at their head, followed Burke in giving their adhesion to the Government. Pitt himself, though little touched by the political reaction which was to constitute the creed of those who represented themselves as "Pittites," was shaken by the dream of social danger, which was turning the wisest heads about him. For a moment at least his cool good sense bent to believe in the existence of "thousands of bandits" who were ready to rise against the throne, to plunder every landlord, and to sack London. "Paine is no fool," he said to his niece, who quoted to him a passage from the *Rights of Man*, in which that author had vindicated the principles

of the Revolution. "He is perhaps right; but if I did what he wants I should have thousands of bandits on my hands to-morrow and London burnt." It was this sense of social danger which alone reconciled him to the war. It would have been impossible indeed for Pitt, or for any other English statesman, to have stood idly by while France annexed the Netherlands and marched to annex Holland. He must in any case have fought even had France not forced him to fight by her declaration of war. But bitter as the need of such a struggle was to him, he accepted it with the less reluctance that war, as he trusted, would check the progress of "French principles" in England itself.

The worst issue of this panic was the series of legislative measures in which it found expression. The Habeas Corpus Act was suspended, a bill against seditious assemblies restricted the liberty of public meeting, and a wider scope was given to the Statute of Treasons. Prosecution after prosecution was directed against the Press; the sermons of some dissenting ministers were indicted as seditious; and the conventions of sympathizers with France were roughly broken up. The worst excesses of this panic were witnessed in Scotland, where young Whigs, whose only offence was an advocacy of parliamentary reform, were sentenced to transportation, and where a brutal Judge openly expressed his regret that the practice of torture in

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seditions should have fallen into disuse. But the panic soon passed away for sheer want of material to feed on. The bloodshed and anarchy of the Jacobin rule disgusted the last sympathizers with France. To staunch Whigs like Romilly, the French, after the massacres of October, seemed a mere "nation of tigers." The good sense of the nation discovered the unreality of the dangers which had driven it to its short-lived frenzy; and when the leaders of the Corresponding Society, a body which expressed sympathy with France, were brought to trial in 1794 on a charge of high treason, their acquittal told that all active terror was over. So far indeed was the nation from any danger of social overthrow that, save for occasional riots to which the poor were goaded by sheer want of bread, no social disturbance troubled England during the twenty years of struggle which lay before it. But though the public terror passed, it left a terrible legacy behind. The blind reaction against all reform which had sprung from the panic lasted on when the panic was forgotten. For nearly a quarter of a century it was hard to get a hearing for any measure which threatened change to an existing institution, beneficial though the change might be. Even the philanthropic movement which so nobly characterized the time found itself checked and hampered by the dread of revolution.

Easy however as Pitt found it to deal with

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“French principles” at home, he found it less easy to deal with French armies abroad. The very excellences of his character indeed unfitted him for the conduct of a war. He was at heart a Peace Minister; he was forced into war by a panic and enthusiasm which he shared in a very small degree; and he was utterly destitute of his father’s gift of entering instinctively into the sympathies and passions around him, and of rousing passions and sympathies in return. At first indeed all seemed to go ill for France. When the campaign of 1793 opened she was girt in along her whole frontier by a ring of foes. The forces of the House of Austria, of the Empire, and of the King of Prussia, pressed her to the north and the east; those of Spain and Sardinia attacked her in the south; and the accession of England to this league threatened to close the sea against her. The efforts of these foreign foes were seconded too by civil war. The peasants of Poitou and Brittany, estranged from the revolution by its attack on the clergy, rose in revolt against the government at Paris; while Marseilles and Lyons were driven into insurrection by the violent leaders who now seized on power in the capital. The campaign opened therefore with a series of terrible reverses. In spite of the efforts of General Dumouriez the French were foiled in their attack on Holland and driven, after a disastrous defeat at Neerwinden,

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from the Netherlands. At the moment when the Duke of York with ten thousand English troops joined the Austrian army on the northern border of France, a march upon Paris would have crushed the revolution. But the chance was lost. At this moment indeed the two German powers were far from wishing honestly for the suppression of the Republic and the re-establishment of a strong monarchy in France. Such a restoration would have foiled their projects of aggrandizement in Eastern Europe. The strife on the Rhine had set Russia free, as Pitt had foreseen, to carry out her schemes of aggression ; and Austria and Prussia saw themselves forced, in the interest of a balance of power, to share in her annexations at the cost of Poland. But this new division of Poland would have become impossible had France been enabled by a restoration of its monarchy to take up again its natural position in Europe, and to accept the alliance which Pitt would in such a case have offered her. The policy of the German courts therefore was to prolong an anarchy which left them free for the moment to crush Poland, and which they counted on crushing in its turn at a more convenient time ; and the allied armies which might have marched upon Paris were purposely frittered away in sieges in the Netherlands and the Rhine.

The revival
of France.

Such a policy gave France all that she needed to recover from the shock of her past disasters : it

gave her time. Whatever were the crimes and tyranny of her leaders, the country felt in spite of them the value of the Revolution, and rallied enthusiastically to its support. The strength of the revolt in La Vendée was broken. The insurrection in the south was drowned in blood. The Spanish invaders were held at bay at the foot of the Pyrenees, and the Piedmontese were driven from Nice and Savoy. At the close of the year a fresh blow fell upon the struggling country in the revolt of Toulon, the naval station of its Mediterranean fleet. The town called for foreign aid against the government at Paris; and Lord Hood entered the port with an English squadron, while a force of 11,000 men, gathered hastily from every quarter, was despatched under General O'Hara as a garrison. But the successes against Spain and Savoy freed the hands of France at this critical moment: the town was at once invested, and the seizure of a promontory which commanded the harbour, a step counselled by a young artillery officer, Napoleon Buonaparte, brought about the withdrawal of the garrison and the surrender of Toulon. The success was a prelude of what was to come. At the opening of 1794 a victory at Fleurus, which again made the French masters of the Netherlands, showed that the tide had turned. France was united within by the cessation of the Terror and of the tyranny of the Jacobins, while on every border victory followed

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the gigantic efforts with which she met the coalition against her. The coalition indeed was fast breaking up. Spain sued for peace. Prussia, more intent on her gains in the east than on any battle with the revolution on the west, prepared to follow Spain's example by the withdrawal of her armies from the Rhine. It was only by English subsidies that Austria and Sardinia were still kept in the field; and the Rhine provinces were wrested from the first, while the forces of Sardinia were driven back from the Riviera and the Maritime Alps into the plain of Piedmont. Before the year ended Holland was lost. Pichegru crossed the Waal in midwinter with an overwhelming force, and the wretched remnant of ten thousand men who had followed the Duke of York to the Netherlands, thinned by disease and by the hardships of retreat, re-embarked for England.

Howe's
victory.

In one quarter only had the fortune of war gone against the French republic. The victories of Rodney at the close of the strife with America had concentrated English interest on the fleet. Even during the peace, while the army was sacrificed to financial distress, great efforts were made to preserve the efficiency of the navy; and the recent alarms of war with Russia and Spain had ended in raising it to a strength which it had never reached before. But France was as eager as England herself to dispute the

sovereignty of the seas, and almost equal attention had been bestowed on the navy which crowded the great harbours of Toulon and Brest. In force as in number of ships it was equal in effective strength to that of England; and both nations looked with hope to the issue of a contest at sea. No battle marked the first year of the war; but, as it ended, the revolt of Toulon gave a fatal wound to the naval strength of France in the almost total destruction of her Mediterranean fleet. That of the Channel however remained unhurt; and it was this which Lord Howe at last encountered off Brest in 1794, in the battle which is known by the name of the day on which it was fought—The “First of June.” The number of ships on either side was nearly the same, and the battle was one of sheer hard fighting, unmarked by any display of naval skill. But the result was a decisive victory for England, and the French admiral, weakened by a loss of seven vessels and three thousand men, again took refuge in Brest.

The success of Lord Howe did somewhat to counteract the discouragement which sprang from the general aspect of the war. At the opening of 1795 the coalition finally gave way. Holland had been detached from it by Pichegru’s conquest, and the Batavian republic which he set up there was now an ally of France. In the spring Prussia bought peace at Basle by the cession of her posses-

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sions west of the Rhine. Peace with Spain followed in the summer, while Sweden and the Protestant cantons of Switzerland recognized the republic. These terrible blows were hardly met by the success of the Austrian army in relieving Maintz, or by the colonial acquisitions of England. The latter indeed were far from being inconsiderable. Most of the West-Indian Islands which had been held by France now fell into British hands; and the alliance of Holland with the French threw open to English attack the far more valuable settlements of the Dutch. The surrender of Cape Town in September gave England the colony of the Cape of Good Hope, the nucleus of what has since grown into a vast southern settlement which is destined to play a great part in the history of Africa. At the close of the year the Island of Ceylon was added to our Indian dependencies. Both of these acquisitions were destined to remain permanently attached to England, though at the moment their value was eclipsed by the conquest of the Dutch colonies in the Pacific, the more famous Spice Islands of the Malaccas and Java. But, important as these gains were in their after issues, they had no immediate influence on the war. The French armies prepared for the invasion of Italy; while in France itself discord came well-nigh to an end. A descent by a force of French emigrants on the coast

of Brittany ended in their massacre at Quiberon and in the final cessation of the war in La Vendée; while the royalist party in Paris was crushed as soon as it rose against the Convention by the genius of Napoleon Buonaparte.

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But the fresh severities against the ultra-republicans which followed on the establishment of a Directory after this success indicated the moderate character of the new government, and Pitt seized on this change in the temper of the French Government as giving an opening for peace. The dread of a Jacobin propagandism was now all but at an end. In spite of an outbreak of the London mob, whose cries meant chiefly impatience of dear bread, but which brought about a fresh suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act and the introduction of a Bill "for the prosecution of seditious meetings," the fear of any social disturbance or of the spread of "French principles" in England was fast passing away from men's minds. The new constitution which France accepted in 1795 showed that the tendencies of the French themselves were now rather to order than to freedom. The old grounds for the struggle therefore had ceased to exist; while the pressure of it grew hourly more intolerable. Pitt himself was sick of the strife. The war indeed had hardly begun when he found himself without the means of carrying it on. The English navy was in a high state of

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efficiency ; but the financial distress which followed the American war had brought with it a neglect of the army. The army was not only small, but without proper equipment ; and the want of military experience among its soldiers was only equalled by the incapacity of their leaders. "We have no general," Lord Grenville wrote bitterly, "but some old woman in a red riband." Wretched, too, as had been the conduct of the war, its cost was already terrible ; for if England was without soldiers she had wealth, and in default of nobler means of combating the revolution Pitt had been forced to use wealth as an engine of war. He became the paymaster of the coalition, and his subsidies kept the allied armies in the field. But the immense loans which these called for, and the quick growth of expenditure, undid all the financial reforms on which the young minister prided himself. Taxation, which had reached its lowest point at the outbreak of the contest, mounted ere a few years were past to a height undreamed of before. The debt rose by leaps and bounds. In three years nearly eighty millions had been added to it, a sum greater than that piled up by the whole war with America, and in the opening of 1796 votes were taken for loans which amounted to twenty-five millions more.

The dogged
temper of
England.

Nor was this wreck of his financial hopes Pitt's only ground for desiring a close of the war. From

the first, as we have seen, he had been keenly sensitive to the European dangers which the contest involved; nor had he shown, even in his moment of social panic, the fanatical blindness of men like Burke to the evils which had produced the revolution, or to the good which it had wrought. But he could only listen in silence while the Marquis of Lansdowne, the Lord Shelburne of earlier days and the successor of Chatham as the advocate of a more liberal policy, met the rhetoric of Burke by a cool demonstration of the benefit which the recent change had brought to the mass of the French people, and by pointing to the profit which Russia was drawing from the struggle in the west. In their wide-reaching view of European affairs, in their justice to the revolution, Shelburne and Pitt stood alone. Around them men were hardened and blinded by passion. The old hatred between nation and nation, which Pitt had branded as irrational, woke up fiercer than ever at the clash of arms, for with it was blended a resentment that had smouldered in English breasts ever since the war with America at the blow which France had dealt England in that hour of her weakness, and a disgust which only slowly grew fainter at her overthrow of every social and political institution that Englishmen held dear. On the dogged temper of the nation at large the failure of the coalition produced little effect. It had no fear of fighting France single-

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handed, nor could it understand Pitt's suggestion that a time had come for opening negotiations with a view to peace. Public opinion indeed went hotly with Burke in his denunciation of all purpose of relaxing England's hostility against the revolution, a denunciation which was embodied in his "Letters on a Regicide Peace," the last outcry of that fanaticism which had done so much to plunge the world in blood.

The Irish
danger.

But though Pitt stood all but alone, he was firm in his purpose to bring the war, if he could, to a close. What specially moved him was not the danger on the Continent, whether that danger sprang from French victories or from aggression in the east. It was a danger in the west. Vain as the expectations of the French revolutionists had proved in the case of England, they had better ground for their hopes elsewhere. Even before the outbreak of the war Pitt had shown how keen was his sense of a possible danger from Ireland. In that wretched country the terrible fruits of a century of oppression and wrong were still to reap. From the close of the American war, when her armed Volunteers had wrung legislative independence from the Rockingham ministry, Ireland had continued to be England's difficulty. She was now "independent"; but her independence was a mere name for the uncontrolled rule of a few noble families. The victory of the Volunteers had been won simply to the profit of "undertakers," who

returned a majority of members in the Irish House of Commons, while they themselves formed the Irish House of Lords. The suspension of any effective control or interference from England left Ireland at these men's mercy, and they soon showed that they meant to keep it for themselves. When the Catholics claimed admission to the franchise or to equal civil rights as a reward for their aid in the late struggle, their claim was rejected. A similar demand of the Presbyterians, who had formed a good half of the Volunteers, for the removal of their disabilities was equally set aside. Even Grattan, when he pleaded for a reform which would make the Parliament at least a fair representative of the Protestant Englishry, utterly failed. The ruling class found government too profitable to share it with other possessors. It was only by hard bribery that the English viceroys could secure their co-operation in the simplest measures of administration. "If ever there was a country unfit to govern itself," said Lord Hutchinson, "it is Ireland. A corrupt aristocracy, a ferocious commonalty, a distracted Government, a divided people!"

The real character of this Parliamentary rule was seen in the rejection of Pitt's offer of free trade. In Pitt's eyes the danger of Ireland lay above all in the misery of its people. Although the Irish Catholics were held down by the brute force of their Protestant rulers, he saw that their

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discontent was growing fast into rebellion, and that one secret at any rate of their discontent lay in Irish poverty, a poverty increased if not originally brought about by the jealous exclusion of Irish products from their natural markets in England itself. One of his first commercial measures therefore, as we have seen, aimed at putting an end to this exclusion by a bill which established freedom of trade between the two islands. But though he met successfully the fears and jealousies of the English farmers and manufacturers he was foiled by the factious ignorance of the Irish landowners, and his bill was rejected by the Irish Parliament. So utterly was he discouraged that for the moment he ceased from all further attempts to improve the condition of Ireland. But the efforts which the French revolutionists made to excite rebellion amongst the Irish roused him to fresh measures of conciliation and good government. The hopes of some reform of the Irish Parliament had been fanned by the eloquence of Grattan and by the pressure of the United Irishmen, an association which had sprung up in Ulster, where Protestant dissenters, who were equally excluded with Catholics from any share in political power, formed the strongest part of the population. These hopes however were growing every day fainter. To the Irish aristocracy parliamentary reform meant the close of a corrupt rule which had gone on unchecked since the

American war. But to the Irish Catholic it meant far more ; it meant his admission, not only to the electoral franchise, but in the end to all the common privileges of citizenship from which he was excluded, his "emancipation," to use the word which now became common, from the yoke of slavery which had pressed on him ever since the Battle of the Boyne.

To such an emancipation Pitt was already looking forward. In 1792, a year before the outbreak of war with France, he forced on the Irish Parliament measures for the admission of Catholics to the electoral franchise and to civil and military office within the island, which promised a new era of religious liberty. But the promise came too late. The hope of conciliation was lost in the fast rising tide of religious and social passion. As the dream of obtaining Parliamentary reform died away the United Irishmen of the North drifted into projects of insurrection and a correspondence with France. The news of the French Revolution fell with a yet more terrible effect on the Catholic peasantry, brooding over their misery and their wrongs. Their discontent broke out in social disorder, in the outrages of secret societies of "Defenders" and "Peep o' Day Boys," which spread panic among the ruling classes. It was only by sheer terror and bloodshed that the Protestant landowners, who banded together in "Orange" societies to meet the secret societies

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about them, could hold the country down. Outrages on the one side, tyranny on the other, deepened the disorder and panic every day, and the hopes of the reformers grew fainter as the terror rose fast around them. The maddened Protestants scouted all notions of further concessions to men whom they looked upon as on the verge of revolt; and Grattan's motions for reform were defeated by increasing majorities. On the other hand the entry of the anti-revolutionary Whigs into Pitt's ministry revived Grattan's hopes, for Burke and his followers were pledged to a liberal policy towards Ireland, and Lord Fitzwilliam, who came over as viceroy in 1794, encouraged Grattan to bring in a bill for the entire emancipation of the Catholics at the opening of the next year. Such a step can hardly have been taken without Pitt's assent; but the minister was now swept along by a tide of feeling which he could not control. The Orangemen threatened revolt, the Tories in Pitt's own Cabinet recoiled from the notion of reform, and Lord Fitzwilliam was not only recalled, but replaced by Lord Camden, an avowed enemy of all change or concession to the Catholics. From that moment the United Irishmen became a revolutionary society; and one of their leaders, Wolfe Tone, made his way to France, in the spring of 1796, to seek aid in a national rising.

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It is probable that Tone's errand was known to

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Pitt; it is certain that Lord Edward Fitzgerald, another of the patriot leaders, who had been summoned to carry on more definite negotiations in Basle, revealed inadvertently as he returned the secret of his hopes to an agent of the English Cabinet. Vague as were the offers of the United Irishmen, they had been warmly welcomed by the French Government. Masters at home, the Directory were anxious to draw off the revolutionary enthusiasm which the French party of order dreaded as much as Burke himself to the channels of foreign conquest. They were already planning that descent of their army in the Alps upon Lombardy which was to give a fatal blow to one of their enemies, Austria; and they welcomed the notion of a French descent upon Ireland and an Irish revolt, which would give as fatal a blow to their other enemy, England. An army of 25,000 men under General Hoche was promised, a fleet was manned, and preparations were being made for the expedition during the summer. But the secret was ill kept, and the news of such an attempt was, we can hardly doubt, the ground of the obstinacy with which Pitt persisted in the teeth of the national feeling and of Burke's invectives in clinging to his purpose of concluding a peace. In October 1796 Lord Malmesbury was despatched to Paris and negotiations were finally opened for that purpose. The terms which Pitt offered were terms of mutual restitution.

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France was to evacuate Holland and to restore Belgium to the Emperor. England on the other hand was to restore the colonies she had won to France, Holland, and Spain. As the English Minister had no power of dealing with the territories already ceded by Prussia and other states, such a treaty would have left France, as her eastern border, the line of the Rhine. But even had they desired peace at all, the Directors would have scorned it on terms such as these. While Malmesbury was negotiating indeed France was roused to new dreams of conquest by the victories of Napoleon Buonaparte. The genius of Carnot, the French Minister of War, had planned a joint advance upon Vienna by the French armies of Italy and the Rhine, the one under Buonaparte, the other under Moreau. The plan was only partly successful. Moreau, though he pushed forward through every obstacle to Bavaria, was compelled to fall back by the defeat of a lieutenant ; and was only enabled by a masterly retreat through the Black Forest to reach the Rhine. But the disaster of Moreau was more than redeemed by the victories of Buonaparte. With the army which occupied the Riviera and the Maritime Alps the young general marched on Piedmont at the opening of the summer, separated its army from the Austrian troops, and forced the king of Sardinia to conclude a humiliating peace. A brilliant victory at the bridge of Lodi brought him to

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Milan, and drove the Austrians into the Tyrol. Lombardy was in the hands of the French, the Duchies south of the Po pillaged, and the Pope driven to purchase an armistice at enormous cost, before the Austrian armies, raised to a force of 50,000 men, again descended from the Tyrol for the relief of Mantua. But a fatal division of their forces by the Lake of Garda enabled Buonaparte to hurl them back broken upon Trent, and to shut up their general, Wurmser, in Mantua with the remnant of his men; while fresh victories at the bridge of Arcola and at Bassano drove back two new Austrian armies who advanced to Wurmser's rescue.

It was the success of Buonaparte which told on the resolve of the Directory to reject all terms of peace. After months of dilatory negotiations the offers of Lord Malmesbury were definitely declined, and the English envoy returned home at the end of the year. Every hour of his stay in Paris had raised higher hopes of success against England in the minds of the Directory. At the moment of his arrival Spain had been driven to declare war as their ally against Britain; and the Spanish and Dutch fleets were now at the French service for a struggle at sea. The merciless exactions of Buonaparte poured gold into the exhausted treasury; and the energy of Hoche rapidly availed itself of this supply to equip a force for operations in Ireland. At the opening of December he was

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ready to put to sea with a fleet of more than forty sail and 25,000 men; and the return of Lord Malmesbury was the signal for the despatch of his expedition from Brest. The fleet at Toulon, which was intended to co-operate with that at Brest, and which had sailed through the Straits of Gibraltar for that purpose, was driven into Port l'Orient by an English squadron: but contrary winds baffled the fleet which was watching Hoche, and his armament slipped away with little hindrance towards the Irish coast. Had it reached Ireland unbroken and under such a general, the island might well have been lost to the English Crown. But the winds fought against France, as they had fought against the Armada of Spain; and the ships were parted from one another by a gale which burst on them as they put to sea. Seventeen reached Bantry Bay, but hearing nothing of their leader or of the rest, they sailed back again to Brest, in spite of the entreaties of the soldiers to be suffered to land. Another division reached the Shannon to be scattered and driven home again by a second storm. Twelve vessels were wrecked or captured, and the frigate in which Hoche had embarked returned to port without having seen any of its companions. The invasion had failed, but the panic which it roused woke passions of cruelty and tyranny which turned Ireland into a hell. Soldiers and yeomanry marched over the country torturing and scourging

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the "croppies," as the Irish peasantry were termed from their short-cut hair; robbing, ravishing, and murdering at their will. The lightest suspicion, the most unfounded charges, were taken as warrants for bloodshed. So hideous were these outrages that the news of them as it reached England woke a thrill of horror in the minds of even the blindest Tories; but by the landowners who formed the Irish Parliament they were sanctioned in a Bill of Indemnity and protected for the future by an Insurrection Act. The terror however only woke a universal spirit of revolt. Ireland drank in greedily that hatred of England and of English rule which all the justice and moderation of later government has failed to destroy; and the United Irishmen looked with more passionate longing than ever to France.

Nor had France abandoned the design of invasion; while her victories made such a design every day more formidable. The war was going steadily in her favour. A fresh victory at Rivoli, the surrender of Mantua, and an advance through Styria on Vienna, enabled Buonaparte to wring a peace from England's one ally, Austria. The armistice was concluded in April 1797, and the final treaty which was signed at Campo Formio in October not only gave France the Ionian Islands, a part of the old territory of Venice (whose Italian possessions passed to the Emperor), as well as the Netherlands and the whole left bank of the Rhine,

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but united Lombardy with the Duchies south of the Po and the Papal States as far as the Rubicon into a "Cisalpine Republic," which was absolutely beneath her control. The withdrawal of Austria left France without an enemy on the Continent, and England without an ally. The stress of the war was pressing more heavily on her every day. A mutiny in the fleet was suppressed with difficulty. The news of Hoche's expedition brought about a run for gold which forced on the Bank a suspension of specie payments. It was in this darkest hour of the struggle that Burke passed away, protesting to the last against the peace which, in spite of his previous failure, Pitt was again striving to bring about by fresh negotiations at Lille. Peace seemed more needful than ever to him now that France was free to attack her enemy with the soldiers who had fought at Arcola and Rivoli. Their way, indeed, lay across the sea, and at sea Britain was supreme. But her supremacy was threatened by a coalition of naval forces such as had all but crushed her in the American war. Again the Dutch and Spanish fleets were allied with the fleets of France; and it was necessary to watch Cadiz and the Scheldt as well as Brest and Toulon. A single victory of the three confederates, or even such a command of the Channel as they had held for months during the war with America, would enable the Directory to throw overwhelming armies not only on the shores of England, but on the

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shores of Ireland, and whatever might be the fate of the one enterprise, there could be little doubt of the success of the other. The danger was real ; but it had hardly threatened England when it was dispelled by two great victories. The Spanish fleet, which put out to sea with twenty-seven sail of the line, was met on the fourteenth of February 1797 by Admiral Jervis off Cape St. Vincent with a force of but fifteen ; and driven back to Cadiz with a loss of four of its finest vessels. Disheartened as they were, however, their numbers still exceeded that of the force which blockaded them ; and France counted with confidence on the fleet of Holland, which was ordered to join its own fleet at Brest. The aim of this union was to protect a fresh force in its descent upon Ireland, where the United Irishmen now declared themselves ready for revolt. But a yet sterner fortune awaited the Dutch than that which had fallen on the Spaniards. Their admiral, De Winter, who had quitted the Texel during a storm with eleven sail of the line and four frigates, fell in on the eleventh of October with a far larger fleet under Admiral Duncan off Camperdown. The Hollanders fought with a stubborn courage worthy of their old renown, and it was only when their ships were riddled with shot into mere wrecks that they fell into the hands of the English.

The French project for an expedition to Ireland hung on the junction of the Dutch fleet with that

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of Brest, and the command of the Channel which this junction would have given them. Such a command became impossible after the defeat of Camperdown. But the disappointment of their hopes of foreign aid only drove the adherents of revolt in Ireland to a rising of despair. The union of the national party, which had lasted to some extent from the American war, was now broken up. The Protestants of Ulster still looked for aid to France. The Catholics, on the other hand, were alienated from the French by their attack on religion and the priesthood; and the failure of the French expedition, while it damped the hopes of the Ulstermen, gave force to the demands of the Catholic party for a purely national rising. So fierce was this demand that the leaders of the United Irishmen were forced to fix on the spring of 1798 for the outbreak of an insurrection, in which Lord Edward Fitzgerald, who had some small military experience, was to take the command. But while yielding on this point to the Catholic section of their party they conciliated the Protestants by renewed appeals for aid to the Directory. In spite of its previous failures France again promised help; and a division was prepared during the winter for service in Ireland. But the passion of the nation was too intense to wait for its arrival. The government too acted with a prompt decision in face of the danger, and an arrest of Lord Edward Fitzgerald with three of

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their chief leaders in February 1798 broke the plans of the insurgents. On the 23rd of May, however, the day fixed for the opening of the revolt, the Catholic peasantry of the south rose in arms. Elsewhere their disorderly gatherings were easily dispersed by the yeomanry; but Wexford surrendered to 14,000 insurgents who marched on it, headed by a village priest, and the town at once became the centre of a formidable revolt.

Fortunately for the English rule the old religious hatred which had so often wrecked the hopes of Ireland broke out in the instant of this triumph. The Protestant inhabitants of Wexford were driven into the river or flung into prison. Another body of insurgents, frenzied by the cruelties of the royal troops, massacred a hundred Protestants in cool blood. The atrocities of the soldiers and the yeomanry were avenged with a fiendish ruthlessness. Loyalists were lashed and tortured in their turn, and every soldier taken was butchered without mercy. The result of these outrages was fatal to the insurrection. The Ulster Protestants, who formed the strength of the United Irishmen, stood sullenly aloof from rebels who murdered Protestants. The Catholic gentry threw themselves on the side of the government against a rising which threatened the country with massacre and anarchy. Few in fact had joined the insurgents in Wexford when

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Lord Lake appeared before their camp upon Vinegar Hill with a strong force of English troops on the 21st of May. The camp was stormed, and with the dispersion of its defenders the revolt came suddenly to an end. But its suppression came only just in time to prevent greater disasters; for a few weeks after the close of the rebellion the long-expected aid arrived from France. The news of the outbreak had forced the armament which was being equipped in the French ports to put to sea with forces utterly inadequate to the task it had set itself, but fresh aid was promised to follow, and the nine hundred soldiers who landed in August under General Humbert on the coast of Mayo showed by their first successes how formidable a centre they would have given to the revolt had the revolt held its ground. But in the two months which had passed since Vinegar Hill all trace of resistance to the English rule had been trodden out in blood, and Humbert found himself alone in a country exhausted and panic-stricken. He marched however boldly on Castlebar, broke a force of yeomanry and volunteers three times his number, and only surrendered when Lord Cornwallis, who had succeeded to the Lord-Lieutenancy, faced him with thirty thousand men.

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designs on
India.

Of the threefold attack on which the Directory had relied for the ruin of England two parts had now broken down. Humbert's surrender and the failure of the native insurrection left little hope

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for future attack on the side of Ireland. The naval confederacy which was to rob England of the command of the seas had been foiled by the utter wreck of the Dutch fleet, and the imprisonment of the Spanish fleet in Cadiz. But the genius of Buonaparte had seized on the schemes for a rising against the English rule in Hindostan, and widened them into a project of all but world-wide conquest. At this time the strongest and most vigorous of the Indian powers was that of Mysore, at the southern extremity of the peninsula, where a Mussulman state had been built up by the genius of an adventurer, Hyder Ali. In the days when the English were winning their supremacy over the Carnatic, Hyder had been their chief difficulty; and his attack had once brought them to the verge of ruin. The hostility of his son Tippoo was even more bitter; but the victories of Lord Cornwallis had taught the Sultan of Mysore that he was no match for the British power single-handed; and his hopes, like those of the United Irishmen, were fixed upon France. He was striving to get aid from the Afghans and from the Nizam, but what he most counted on for the expulsion of the English from the Carnatic was a force of thirty thousand French soldiers. Letters requesting such a force were despatched by him to France in 1797. Buonaparte had already fixed on Mysore as a basis of operations against the British rule in Hindostan; and after

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dismissing as impracticable a project suggested to him on his return from Italy after the treaty of Campo Formio for a descent upon England itself, he laid before the Directory a plan for the conquest and occupation of Egypt as a preliminary to a campaign in Southern India. Utterly as this plan was foiled in the future, it was far from being the wild dream which it has often been considered. Both the Ministry and East Indian Directors were roused into anxiety by the first news of Buonaparte's expedition. The Earl of Mornington, Governor-General of British India, was warned of a possible attack from the Red Sea. Four thousand soldiers were hurried off to reinforce his army; while the English fleet watched anxiously in the Mediterranean. But so perfect was the secrecy with which the French plans were combined that Buonaparte was able to put to sea in May 1798 with a force of 30,000 veterans drawn from the army of Italy, and making himself master of Malta as he passed to land near Alexandria at the close of June.

The battle
of the Nile.

The conquest of Egypt proved as easy and complete as Buonaparte had hoped. The Mamelukes were routed in the battle of the Pyramids; Cairo was occupied; and the French troops pushed rapidly up the valley of the Nile. Their general meanwhile showed his genius for government by a masterly organization of the conquered country, by the conciliation of his new subjects, and by

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measures for the enrolment of native soldiers which would in a short time have placed him at the head of a formidable army. Of his ultimate aim there can be little doubt; for he had hardly landed at Alexandria when he despatched the news of his arrival and promises of support to Tippoo. All chance however of success in his projects hung on the maintenance of communications with France. With Italy, with the Ionian Islands, with Alexandria in French holding, it was all but impossible to prevent supplies of men and arms from being forwarded to Egypt, so long as the French fleet remained in the waters of the Mediterranean and kept the English force concentrated by the necessity of watching its movements. But the French were hardly masters of Egypt when their fleet ceased to exist. The thirteen men-of-war which had escorted the expedition were found by Admiral Nelson in Aboukir Bay, moored close to the coast in a line guarded at either end by gunboats and batteries. Nelson resolved to thrust his ships between the French and the shore. On the morning of the 1st of August his own flag-ship led the way in this attack; and after a terrible fight of twelve hours, nine of the French vessels were captured and destroyed, two were burned, and five thousand French seamen were killed or made prisoners. "Victory," cried Nelson, "is not a name strong enough for such a scene." Few victories indeed

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in history have produced more effective results than the battle of the Nile. The French flag was swept from the waters of the Mediterranean. All communication between France and Buonaparte's army was cut off; and his hopes of making Egypt a starting-point for the conquest of India fell at a blow. To hold Egypt itself soon became difficult, for a desperate revolt broke out at the news of Nelson's victory in the streets of Cairo, and a Turkish army advanced from Syria to recover the valley of the Nile.

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Europe.

Secure against invasion at home as against rebellion in Ireland, secure too against the dangers that threatened her rule in India, and mistress of the seas, England was free in her turn to attack the assailant who had so long threatened her very existence. And in such an attack she was aided at this moment by the temper of the European powers, and by the ceaseless aggressions of France. The treaties of Basle and Campo Formio were far from being accepted by the Directory as a final settlement of the relations of France with Europe. Some faint remnant of the older dreams of freeing oppressed peoples may have lingered in the aid which it gave to the rising of the subject districts of Basle and Vaud against their Bernese masters in the opening of 1798. But mere greed of gold was seen in the plunder of the treasury of Berne, a plunder which served to equip the army that sailed with Buonaparte to the shores of

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Egypt, and to recruit the exhausted treasury of the Directory; and an ambition, as reckless as this greed, broke out in an attack on the mountain cantons, states whose democratic institutions gave no such excuse for hostility as had been afforded by the aristocracy of Berne. A French decree abolished the Swiss Confederation, and the independence of its several states, and established in their place an Helvetic Republic modelled on a plan sent from Paris, and placed under the protection of France. The mountain cantons rose against this overthrow of a freedom compared with which the freedom of France was but of yesterday; but desperate as was their struggle they were overwhelmed by numbers, and the men of Uri, of Unterwalden and of Schwytz bowed for the first time to a foreign conqueror.

The overthrow of this immemorial house of freedom opened the eyes of the blindest enthusiast to the real character of the French aggressions. Even in the group of young English poets, Coleridge, Wordsworth, and Southey, who had clung till now to the dream of the Revolution, of a Europe freed and regenerated by the arms of the new republic, all belief in such a dream passed finally away. But the France of the Directory would have cared little for this alienation of the peoples, had it not been backed by the revived hostility of their kings. What England counted on in her efforts for a revival of the

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coalition was the resentment of Austria at the aggressions which the Directory had ever since the peace of Campo Formio been carrying on in Italy. In the opening of 1798 a French force entered Rome, set up a Roman republic, and carried off Pius VI. a prisoner to Siena; while the king of Sardinia was driven to admit French garrisons into his fortresses. Austria however was still too weak after her defeats to listen to Pitt's advances, had Pitt stood alone. But Russia was now about to take a new part in European affairs. Under Catharine the Second this power had availed itself of the war against France in the west to carry out its own projects of conquest in eastern Europe; and, as we have seen, Pitt had watched its advance at the opening of the Revolution with far greater dread than the movements in France. It was in *fact the need which the two German states felt of balancing the Russian annexations in Poland by annexations of their own which had paralysed their armies on the Rhine and saved France at the moment of her greatest danger in 1793.* It is probable that the Directory still counted on the persistence of Russia in a similar policy, and believed that Catharine would see in their attack on Egypt and the Turks only a fresh opportunity for conquests on the Danube. But the sudden greatness of France had warned Russia that its policy of selfishness had been carried too far. It had allowed the Republic to tower into supremacy

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over the Continent, and if once such a supremacy was firmly established it would prove a fatal obstacle to the Russian advance. France would again, as under the monarchy, aim at the restoration of Poland; she would again bar the way to Constantinople; and her action would be backed by the weight of all western Europe, which had been thrown into her scale by the policy of the very state she defied. To avert such a result it was necessary to restore that balance of the Continent by which France and the German powers held one another in check; and with a view to this restoration Russia suddenly declared itself an enemy of France. Catharine's successor, the Czar Paul, set aside the overtures of the Directory. A close alliance was formed with Austria, and while an Imperial army gathered on the Bavarian frontier Russian troops hurried to the west.

The appearance of this new element in the struggle changed its whole conditions; and it was with renewed hope that Pitt lavished subsidies on the two allies at the close of 1798. But his preparations for the new strife were far from being limited to efforts abroad. In England he had found fresh resources in an Income-Tax, from which he anticipated an annual return of ten millions. Heavy as the tax was, and it amounted to ten per cent on all incomes above £200 a year, the dogged resolution of the people to fight on

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was seen in the absence of all opposition to this proposal. What was of even greater importance was to remove all chance of fresh danger from Ireland. Pitt's temper was of too statesmanlike a mould to rest content with the mere suppression of insurrection or with the system of terrorism which for the moment held the country down. His disgust at "the bigoted fury of Irish Protestants" had backed Lord Cornwallis in checking the reprisals of his troops and of the Orangemen; but the hideous cruelty which he was forced to witness brought about a firm resolve to put an end to the farce of "Independence" which left Ireland helpless in such hands. The political necessity for a union of the two islands had been brought home to every English statesman by the course of the Irish Parliament during the disputes over the Regency. While England repelled the claims of the Prince of Wales to the Regency as of right, the legislature of Ireland admitted them. As the only union left between the two peoples since the concession of legislative independence was their obedience to a common ruler, such an act might conceivably have ended in their entire severance; and the sense of this danger secured a welcome in England for the proposal which Pitt made at the opening of 1799 to unite the two Parliaments. The opposition of the Irish borough-mongers was naturally stubborn and determined, and when the plan was introduced into the

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Parliament at Dublin, it was only saved from rejection by a single vote. But with men like these it was a sheer question of gold; and their assent was bought with a million in money, and with a liberal distribution of pensions and peerages. Base and shameless as were such means, Pitt may fairly plead that they were the only means by which the bill for the Union could have been passed. As the matter was finally arranged in June 1800, one hundred Irish members became part of the House of Commons at Westminster, and twenty-eight temporal peers chosen by their fellows for life, with four spiritual peers succeeding in a fixed rotation, took their seats in the House of Lords. Commerce between the two countries was freed from all restrictions, and every trading privilege of the one thrown open to the other, while taxation was proportionately distributed between the two peoples.

While the Union was being pushed slowly forward, the struggle abroad was passing through strange vicissitudes. At the opening of 1799 the efforts of the new coalition were crowned with success in every quarter. Though Naples had been turned into a Parthenopean Republic at the close of the previous year, and the French supremacy extended over the whole peninsula, the descent of an Austrian army from the Tyrol at the end of March, and a victory of the Russian and Austrian forces at Cassano, compelled the French army to

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evacuate Southern Italy and Lombardy, while a fresh defeat at Novi flung it back on the Maritime Alps. A campaign conducted with more varying success drove the armies which advanced into Germany back over the Rhine. In Switzerland however the stubborn energy of Massena enabled his soldiers to hold their ground against the combined attack of Russian and Austrian forces; and the attempt of a united force of Russians and English to wrest Holland from its French masters was successfully repulsed. Twelve of the thirty thousand men who formed this army consisted of English troops; and Sir Ralph Abercromby succeeded in landing at their head, in seizing what remained of the Dutch fleet at the Texel, and in holding General Brune at bay when he advanced with superior forces. But Abercromby was superseded in his command by the Duke of York; and in another month the new leader was glad to conclude a convention by which the safe withdrawal of his troops was secured.

Buonaparte
in Syria.

In the East however England was more successful. Even had Buonaparte not been baffled in his plans of a descent on Southern India from the basis of Egypt by the battle of the Nile, they would have been frustrated by the energy of Lord Wellesley. Mysore was invaded, its capital stormed, and Tippoo slain, before a French soldier could have been despatched to its aid. But foiled as were his dreams of Indian conquest the daring

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genius of the French general plunged into wilder projects. He conceived the design of the conquest of Syria and of the creation of an army among its warlike mountaineers. "With a hundred thousand men on the banks of the Euphrates," he said years afterwards, "I might have gone to Constantinople or India, I might have changed the face of the world." Gaza was taken, Jaffa stormed, and ten thousand French soldiers advanced under their young general on Acre. Acre was the key of Syria, and its reduction was the first step in these immense projects. "Once possessed of Acre," wrote Napoleon, "the army would have gone to Damascus and the Euphrates. The Christians of Syria, the Druses, the Armenians, would have joined us. The provinces of the Ottoman Empire were ready for a change, and were only waiting for a man." But Acre was stubbornly held by the Turks, the French battering train was captured at sea by an English captain, Sir Sidney Smith, whose seamen aided in the defence of the place, and after a loss of three thousand men by sword and plague, the besiegers were forced to fall back upon Egypt.

Egypt indeed was more than ever their own, for their army had now penetrated to the cataracts of the Nile, and a Turkish force which landed near Alexandria was cut to pieces by Buonaparte in the battle of Aboukir. But the news of defeat at home and the certainty that all wider hopes in

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the East were at an end, induced him only a month after his victory to leave his army. With a couple of frigates he set sail for France; and his arrival in Paris was soon followed by a change in the government. The Directors were divided among themselves, while the disasters of their administration made them hateful to the country; and a revolution brought about by the soldiery on the 10th of November put an end to their power. In the new system which followed three consuls took the place of the Directors; but the system only screened the government of a single man, for under the name of First Consul Buonaparte became in effect sole ruler of the country. His energy at once changed the whole face of European affairs. The offers of peace which he made to England and Austria were intended to do little more than to shake the coalition, and gain breathing time for the organization of a new force which was gathering in secrecy at Dijon, while Moreau with the army of the Rhine pushed again along the Danube. The First Consul crossed the Saint Bernard with this army in the spring of 1800, and on the 14th of June a victory at Marengo left the Austrian army, which had just succeeded in reducing Genoa, helpless in his hands. It was by the surrender of all Lombardy to the Oglio that the defeated general obtained an armistice for his troops; and a similar truce arrested the march of Moreau, who had captured

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Munich and was pushing on to Vienna. The armistice only added to the difficulties of Buonaparte's opponents, for Russia, as anxious not to establish a German supremacy as she had been to weaken the supremacy of France, had withdrawn from the contest as soon as the coalition seemed to be successful; and Austria was only held back from peace by her acceptance of English subsidies. But though she fought on, the resumption of the war in the autumn failed to reverse the fortune of arms. The Austrians were driven back on Vienna; and on the second of December Moreau crushed their army on the Iser in the victory of Hohenlinden. But the aim of the First Consul was only to wrest peace from his enemies by these triumphs; while the expiration of her engagements with England left his opponent free to lay down her arms. In February 1801 therefore the Continental War was brought suddenly to an end by the Peace of Lunéville.

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CHAPTER V

ENGLAND AND NAPOLEON

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The New
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THE treaty of Lunéville was of far greater import than the treaties which had ended the struggle of the first coalition. It was in effect the close of the attack which revolutionary France had directed against the Continental powers. With it expired the outer energy of the Revolution, as its inner energy expired with the elevation of Buonaparte to the First Consulate. The change that the French onset had wrought in the aspect of Europe had no doubt been great. In the nine years which had passed since the earlier league of the powers against her, France had won all and more than all that the ambition of her older statesmen had ever aimed at. She had absorbed the Netherlands. She was practically mistress of Holland, Switzerland, and Piedmont, whose dependent republics covered her frontier; while she had revived that union with Spain which had fallen for a time with

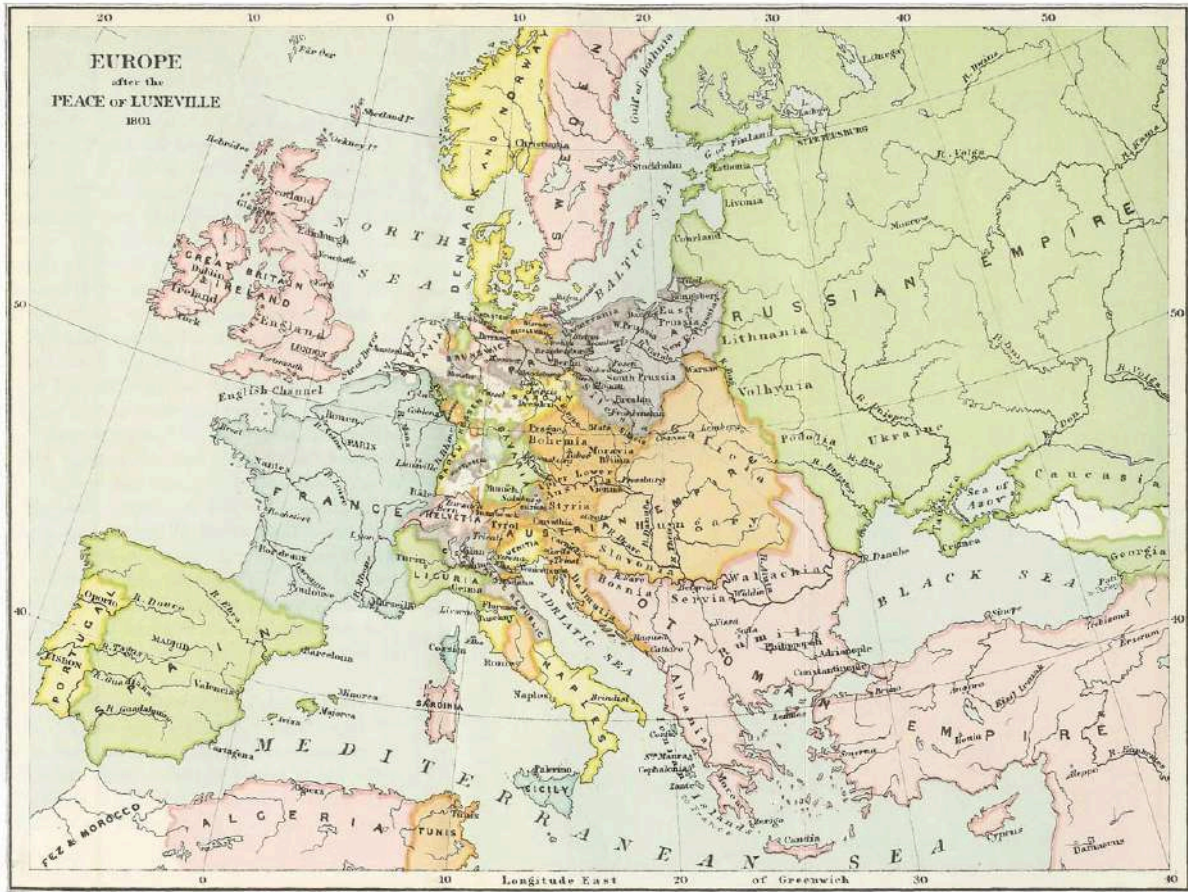
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the Family Compact of the House of Bourbon. But in spite of this growth the dread of French aggression was far less keenly felt by her neighbour states than in the early years of the war. What they had dreaded then was not so much the political reconstruction of Europe as the revolutionary enthusiasm which would have pushed this political reconstruction into a social revolution. But at the opening of the nineteenth century the enthusiasm of France had faded away. She was again Christian. She was again practically monarchical. What her neighbours saw in her after all these years of change was little more than the old France with a wider frontier; and now that they could look upon those years as a whole, it was clear that much of this widening of her borders was only a fair counterbalance for the widened borders of the states around her. If France had grown great, other powers had grown in greatness too. If France had pushed her frontier to the Rhine and established dependencies across the Rhone and the Alps, Russia during the same period had annexed the bulk of Poland, and the two great German powers had enlarged themselves both to the east and the west. The Empire had practically ceased to be; but its ruin had given fresh extension and compactness to the states which had profited by it. The cessions of Prussia had been small beside her gains. The losses of Austria had been more than counter-

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CHAP. V. balanced in Italy by her acquisition of Venice,
 England and far more than counterbalanced by seculariza-
 and tions and annexations within Germany itself.
 Napoleon.

1801-1815. Although therefore the old Europe and its
 France and balance of power had passed away, the new Europe
 Britain. which had taken its place presented a balance of
 power which might be regarded as even more
 effective; and the peace of Lunéville was in
 reality the recognition on both sides of a European
 settlement on the basis of such a balance. But in
 the mind of Buonaparte it was far more than this.
 It was the first step in an entire reversal of the
 policy which Revolutionary France had pursued
 in her dealings with the world. It was a return
 to the older policy of the French monarchy.
 Under the guidance of the revolutionists France
 had striven for supremacy among the states of
 Europe. But for such a supremacy the First
 Consul cared comparatively little. What he cared
 for was what Choiseul and the statesmen who
 followed him cared for, the supremacy of the
 world. And he saw that with every year of war
 on the Continent such a supremacy grew more
 distant than ever. The very victories of France
 indeed were playing into the hands of England.
 Amidst all the triumphs of the revolutionary war
 the growth of the British Empire had been steady
 and ceaseless. She was more than ever mistress
 of the sea. The mastery of Holland by the French
 had only ended in the removal of one of the



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obstacles to such a mastery by the ruin of the Dutch navy, and the transfer of the rich Dutch colonies to the British crown. The winning of Egypt had but spurred her to crush the only Mussulman power that could avert her rule over southern India. But her growth was more than a merely territorial growth. She was turning her command of the seas to a practical account. Not only was she monopolizing the carrying trade of the European nations, but the sudden uprush of her industries was making her the workshop as well as the market of the world. From the first the mind of Buonaparte had been set on a struggle with this growing world-power. Even amidst his earliest victories he had dreamed of wresting from England her dominion in the East; and if his Egyptian expedition had done nothing for India, it had secured in Egypt itself a stepping-stone for further efforts. But now that France was wholly at his disposal, the First Consul resolved to free his hands from the strife with the Continent, and to enter on that struggle with Britain which was henceforth to be the task of his life.

The significance then of the Peace of Lunéville lay in this, not only that it was the close of the earlier revolutionary struggle for supremacy in Europe, the abandonment by France of her effort to "liberate the peoples," to force new institutions on the nations about her by sheer dint of arms;

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but that it marked the concentration of all her energies on a struggle with Britain for the supremacy of the world. For England herself the event which accompanied it, the sudden withdrawal of William Pitt from office which took place in the very month of the treaty, was hardly less significant. To men of our day the later position of William Pitt seems one of almost tragic irony. An economist heaping up millions of debt, a Peace Minister dragged into the costliest of wars, he is the very type of the baffled statesman; and the passionate loyalty with which England clung to him through the revolutionary struggle is one of the least intelligible passages of our history. But if England clung to Pitt through these years of gloom, it was because then more than ever she saw in him her own representative. His strength had lain throughout in his reflection of public opinion: and public opinion saw itself reflected in him still. At the outset of his career the set of opinion had been towards a larger and more popular policy than of old. New facilities of communication, new industrial energy, and a quick accumulation of wealth, as well as the social changes which followed hard on these economical changes, all pointed forward to political progress, to an adaptation of our institutions to the varied conditions of the time. The nation was quivering with a new sense of life; and it faced eagerly questions of religion, of philanthropy, of education,

of trade, as one after another they presented themselves before it. Above all it clung to the young minister whose ideas were its own, who, alien as his temper seemed from that of an innovator, came boldly to the front with projects for a new Parliament, a new finance, a new international policy, a new imperial policy, a new humanitarian policy. It was this oneness of Pitt's temper with the temper of the men he ruled that made him sympathize, in spite of the alarm of the court, with the first movements of the revolution in France, and deal fairly, if coldly, with its after-course. It was this that gave him strength to hold out so long against a struggle with it.

But as the alarm deepened, as the nation saw its social, political, and religious traditions alike threatened, the bulk of Englishmen swung round into an attitude of fierce resistance. The craving for self-preservation hushed all other cravings. What men looked for in Pitt now was not the economist or the reformer, but the son of Chatham, the heir of his father's courage, of his father's faith in the greatness of England. And what they looked for they found. Pitt was no born War Minister; he had none of the genius that commands victory, or of the passionate enthusiasm that rouses a nation to great deeds of arms. But he had faith in England. Even when she stood alone against the world he never despaired. Reading him, as we read him now, we see the

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CHAP. V. sickness and the gloom of his inner soul; but no
England sign betrayed it to the world. As the tempest
and gathered about them, men looked with trust that
Napoleon. deepened into awe on the stately figure that
1801-1815. embodied their faith in England's fortunes, and
huddled in the darkness round "the pilot that
weathered the storm." But there were deeper
and less conscious grounds for their trust in him.
Pitt reflected far more than the nation's resolve.
He reflected the waverings and inconsistencies of
its political temper in a way that no other man
did. In the general swing round to an attitude
of resistance, the impulse of progress had come
utterly to an end. Men doubted of the truth of
principles that seemed to have brought about the
horrors of the Revolution. They listened to
Burke as he built up his theory of political immo-
bility on the basis of an absolute perfection in the
constitution of things as they were. But even in
this moment of reaction they still clung uncon-
sciously to a belief in something better, to a trust
that progress would again be possible, and to the
man who reflected their trust. Like them, Pitt
could understand little of the scene about him,
that seething ocean of European change where
states vanished like dreams, and the very elements
of social life seemed to melt in a mist; his mind,
like theirs, was baffled with doubt and darkness,
with the seeming suicide of freedom, the seeming
triumph of violence and wrong. But, baffled and

bewildered as he was, he never ceased to believe in liberty, or to hope that the work of reform which he had begun might yet be carried into effect.

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It was as the representative of this temper of the people at large, of its mingled mood of terror at the new developments of freedom and yet of faith in freedom itself, of its dread of progress and yet its hope of a time when a larger national life should again become possible, that Pitt had gathered the nation round him from the opening of the war. Much indeed of the seeming weakness and uncertainty of his statesmanship throughout the struggle sprang from the fidelity with which he reflected this double aspect of national opinion. He has been blamed for fighting the French Revolution at all, as he has been blamed for not entering on an anti-revolutionary crusade. But his temper was that of the nation as a whole. He shrank from the fanaticism of Burke as he shrank from the fanaticism of Tom Paine: his aim was not to crush France or the Revolution, but to bring the struggle with them to such an end as might enable England to return in safety to the work of progress which the struggle had interrupted. And it was this that gave significance to his fall. It was a sign that the time had come when the national union which Pitt embodied must dissolve with the disappearance of the force that created it; when resistance had done its work, and the

CHAP. V. England and Napoleon. 1801-1815. arrest of all national movement had come to an end with the attitude of mere resistance from which it sprang; when in face of a new France and a new French policy England could again return to her normal political life, and the impulses towards progress which had received so severe a check in 1792 could again flow in their older channels. In such a return Pitt himself took the lead; and his proposal of Catholic emancipation was as significant of a new era of English life as the Peace of Lunéville was significant of a new settlement of Europe.

Catholic
Emanci-
pation.

In Pitt's mind the Union which he brought about in 1800 was more than a mere measure for the security of the one island; it was a first step in the regeneration of the other. The legislative connexion of the two countries was only part of the plan which he had conceived for the conciliation of Ireland. With the conclusion of the Union indeed, his projects of free trade between the two countries, projects which had been defeated a few years back by the folly of the Irish Parliament, came quietly into play; and in spite of insufficient capital and social disturbance the growth of the trade, shipping, and manufactures of Ireland has gone on without a check from that time to this. The change which brought Ireland directly under the common Parliament was followed too by a gradual revision of its oppressive laws and an amendment in their administration;

while taxation was lightened, and a faint beginning made of public instruction. But in Pitt's mind the great means of conciliation was the concession of religious equality. In proposing to the English Parliament the union of the two countries he pointed out that when thus joined to a Protestant country like England all danger of a Catholic supremacy in Ireland, even should Catholic disabilities be removed, would be practically at an end. In such a case, he suggested that "an effectual and adequate provision for the Catholic clergy" would be a security for their loyalty. His words gave strength to the hopes of "Catholic emancipation," as the removal of what remained of the civil disabilities of Catholics was called, which were held out by his agent, Lord Castlereagh, in Ireland itself as a means of hindering any opposition to the project of Union on the part of the Catholics. It was agreed on all sides that their opposition would have secured its defeat; and the absence of such a Catholic opposition showed the new trust in Pitt which was awakened by the hints of Lord Castlereagh. The trust had good grounds to go on. After the passing of the bill Pitt prepared to lay before his Cabinet a measure which would have raised not only the Irish Catholic but the Irish Dissenter to a perfect equality of civil rights. He proposed to remove all religious tests which limited the exercise of the franchise, or which were required for admission to

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CHAP. V. Parliament, the magistracy, the bar, municipal
 England offices, or posts in the army or the service of the
 and State. An oath of allegiance and of fidelity to
 Napoleon. the Constitution was substituted for the Sacra-
 1801-1815. mental test ; while the loyalty of the Catholic and
 Dissenting clergy was secured by a grant of some
 provision to both on the part of the State. To
 win over the Episcopal Church to such an equality
 measures were added for strengthening its modes of
 discipline, as well as for increasing the stipends of
 its poorer ministers, while a commutation of tithes
 was planned as a means of removing a constant
 source of quarrel between the Protestant clergy
 and the Irish people.

Pitt's
 resignation.

But the scheme was too large and statesmanlike
 to secure the immediate assent of the Cabinet ;
 and before that assent could be won or the plan
 laid with full ministerial sanction before the king,
 it was communicated through the treachery of the
 Chancellor, Lord Loughborough, to George the
 Third. "I count any man my personal enemy,"
 George broke out angrily to Dundas, "who pro-
 poses any such measure." Pitt answered this
 outburst by submitting his whole plan to the king.
 "The political circumstances under which the
 exclusive laws originated," he wrote, "arising
 either from the conflicting power of hostile and
 nearly balanced sects, from the apprehension of a
 Popish queen as successor, a disputed succession
 and a foreign pretender, a division in Europe

between Catholic and Protestant Powers, are no longer applicable to the present state of things." But argument was wasted upon George the Third. In spite of the decision of the lawyers whom he consulted, the king declared himself bound by his Coronation Oath to maintain the tests; and his obstinacy was only strengthened by a knowledge that such a refusal must drive Pitt from office. George was weary of his minister's supremacy. He was longing for servants who would leave him more than a show of power, and he chose his ground for a struggle with all the cunning of his earlier years. It was by his command of public opinion that Pitt had been able to force his measures on the king. But in the question of Catholic Emancipation George knew that opinion was not with his minister, but with himself. On this point his bigotry was at one with the bigotry of the bulk of his subjects, as well as with their political distrust of Catholics and Irishmen. He persisted therefore in his refusal; and it was followed by the event he foresaw. In February 1801, at the moment of the Peace of Lunéville, William Pitt resigned his office into the hands of the king.

It was with a sense of relief that George found himself freed from the great minister whose temper was so alien from his own. But it was with a yet greater sense of relief that he saw him followed into retirement not only by Lord Grenville, but

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 Addington
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by nearly all the more liberal section of the ministry, by men like Windham and Lord Spencer, the representatives of the "Old Whigs" who had joined Pitt on the disruption of their party through the French Revolution. Such a union indeed could hardly have lasted much longer. The terror which had so long held these Whigs in their alliance with the Tories who formed the bulk of the administration was now at an end; and we have already seen their pressure for a more liberal policy in the action of Lord Fitzwilliam as Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. But the question of Emancipation finally brought about a restoration of the natural position of parties; and from this moment the old Whigs, who accepted Lord Grenville as their head, fell into alliance with the more revolutionary Whigs who had remained faithful to Fox. The Whig party thus became again a powerful element in English politics, while in face of the reunited Whigs stood the Tories, relieved like themselves from the burthen of an alliance which grew hourly more distasteful. The bulk of the old Ministry returned in a few days to office with Mr. Addington at their head, and his administration received the support of the whole Tory party in Parliament.

Without the walls of Parliament however the nation looked on such a change with dismay. Addington was regarded as a weak and narrow-minded man; and the favour with which the king

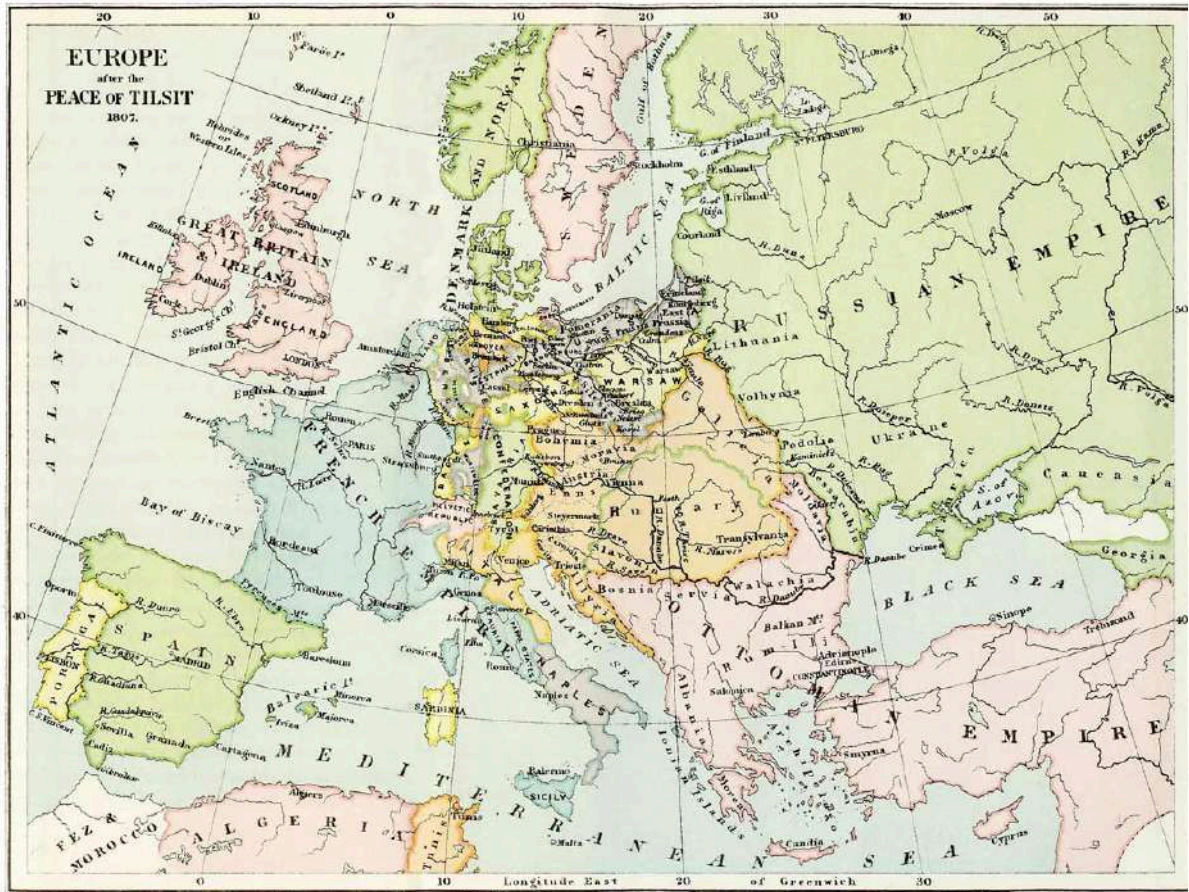
welcomed him was due to a consciousness of their common bigotry. Of Lord Hawkesbury, who succeeded Lord Grenville in the conduct of foreign affairs, nothing was known outside the House of Commons. It was with anxiety that England found itself guided by men like these at a time when every hour brought darker news. The scarcity of bread was mounting to a famine. Taxes were raised anew, and yet the loan for the year amounted to five-and-twenty millions. The country stood utterly alone; while the peace of Lunéville secured France from all hostility on the Continent. And it was soon plain that this peace was only the first step in a new policy on the part of the First Consul. What he had done was to free his hands for a decisive conflict with Britain itself, both as a world-power and as a centre of wealth. England was at once the carrier of European commerce and the workshop of European manufactures. While her mines, her looms, her steam-engines, were giving her almost a monopoly of industrial production, her merchant ships sufficed not only to spread her own products through the world, but to carry to every part of it the products of other countries. Though the war had already told on both these sources of wealth, it was far from having told fatally. It had long closed France indeed to English exports, while the waste of wealth in so wide a strife had lessened the buying power of Europe at large.

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CHAP. V. But in Europe the loss was to some extent made
 England up for the moment by the artificial demand for
 and supplies which war creates; the home market
 Napoleon. still sufficed to absorb a vast quantity of manu-
 1801-1815. factures; and America, which was fast growing
 into the most important of English customers,
 remained unaffected by the struggle. Industry
 had thus suffered but little loss, while commerce
 believed itself to have greatly gained. All rivals
 save one had in fact been swept from the sea; the
 carrying trade of France and Holland alike had
 been transferred to the British flag, and the
 conquest of their wealthier settlements had thrown
 into British hands the whole colonial trade of the
 world.

League of
 Neutrals.

To strike at England's wealth had been among
 the projects of the Directory: it was now the
 dream of the First Consul. It was in vain for
 England to produce, if he shut her out of every
 market. Her carrying trade must be annihilated
 if he closed every port against her ships. It was
 this gigantic project of a "Continental System"
 that revealed itself as soon as Buonaparte became
 finally master of France. From France itself and
 its dependencies in Holland and the Netherlands
 English trade was already excluded. But Italy
 also was shut against her after the Peace of
 Lunéville, and Spain not only closed her own
 ports but forced Portugal to break with her
 English ally. In the Baltic Buonaparte was



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more active than even in the Mediterranean. In a treaty with America, which was destined to bring this power also in the end into his great attack, he had formally recognized the rights of neutral vessels which England was hourly disputing; and in her disregard of them he not only saw the means of bringing the northern powers into his system of exclusion, but of drawing on their resources for a yet more decisive blow. He was set upon challenging not only England's wealth but her world-empire; and his failure in Egypt had taught him that the first condition of success in such an enterprise was to wrest from her her command of the seas. The only means of doing this lay in a combination of naval powers; and the earlier efforts of France had left but one naval combination for Buonaparte to try. The Directory had been able to assail England at sea by the joint action of the French fleet with those of Holland and of Spain. But the Spanish navy had been crippled by the battle of Cape St. Vincent, and the Dutch fleet destroyed in the victory of Camperdown. The only powers which now possessed naval resources were the powers of the North. The fleets of Denmark, Sweden, and Russia numbered forty sail of the line, and they had been untouched by the strife. Both the Scandinavian states resented the severity with which Britain enforced that right of search which had brought about their armed neutrality at the

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CHAP. V. close of the American war; while Denmark was
 England besides an old ally of France, and her sympathies
 and were still believed to be French. The First
 Napoleon. Consul therefore had little trouble in enlisting
 1801-1815. them in a league of neutrals, which was in effect
 a declaration of war against England, and which
 Prussia as before showed herself ready to join.

Russia's
 designs.

Russia indeed seemed harder to gain. Since Paul's accession she had been the moving spirit in the confederacy which had only been broken up by the victory of Marengo. But the spirit of revolutionary aggression which had nominally roused Paul to action, had, as the Czar believed, been again hushed by the First Consul. Buona- parte had yielded to his remonstrances in pre- serving the independence of Naples and Sardinia; and with Italian subtlety he now turned the faith in French moderation which these concessions created in the mind of Paul into a dread of the ambition of England and a jealousy of her sovereignty of the seas. But his efforts would have been in vain had they not fallen in with the general current of Russian policy. From the first outbreak of the Revolutionary struggle Russia, as we have seen, had taken advantage of the strife among the Western nations to push forward her own projects in the East. Catharine had aimed at absorbing Poland, and at becoming the mistress of European Turkey. In the first she had been successful, but the second still

remained unaccomplished when her empire passed to her son. For a time Paul had been diverted from the task by the turn of affairs in Western Europe, where the victories of the French Republic threatened an utter overthrow of the powers opposed to it, which would have foiled the plans of Russia by bringing about a European union that must have paralysed her advance. The Czar therefore acted strictly in the spirit of Catharine's policy when he stepped in again to feed the strife by raising the combatants to a new equality, and when he withdrew his armies at the very moment that this was done. But successful as his diversion had been, Paul saw that one obstacle remained in the way of his projects upon Turkey. Pitt had never hidden his opposition to the Russian plans. His whole policy at the outbreak of the Revolution had been guided by a desperate hope of binding the powers again together to prevent the ruin of Poland, or of hindering it by a league of England and France alone. Foiled as he had been in these efforts, he was even more resolute to check the advance of Russia on Constantinople. Already her growing empire in India was telling on the European policy of England; and the security of Egypt, of Syria, of Turkey at large, was getting deemed to be essential to the maintenance of her communication with her great dependency. The French descent on Egypt, the attack on Syria, had bound Britain and Turkey

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CHAP. V. together; and Paul saw that an attack on the
 England one would bring him a fresh opponent in the
 and other.
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1801-1815. It was to check the action of Britain in the
 The League East that the Czar now turned to the French
 broken up. Consul, and seconded his efforts for the formation
 of a naval confederacy in the North, while his
 minister, Rostopchin, planned a division of the
 Turkish Empire in Europe between Russia and
 her allies. Austria was to be satisfied with the
 western provinces of the Balkan peninsula; Russia
 gained Moldavia, Bulgaria, and Roumelia as far
 as Constantinople; while Greece fell to the lot
 of France, whose troops were already on the
 Italian shores, at a day's sail from the Illyrian
 coast. A squabble over Malta, which had been
 blockaded since its capture by Buonaparte, and
 which surrendered at last to a British fleet, but
 whose possession the Czar claimed as his own on
 the ground of an alleged election as Grand Master
 of the Order of St. John, served as a pretext for
 a quarrel with England; and at the close of 1800
 Paul openly prepared for hostilities. In October
 he announced an armed neutrality; in December
 he seized three hundred English vessels in his
 ports, and sequestered all English goods found
 in his Empire. The Danes, who throughout the
 year had been struggling to evade the British
 right of search, at once joined this neutral league,
 and were followed by Sweden in their course. It

was plain that, as soon as the spring of 1801 opened the Baltic, the fleets of the three Powers would act in practical union with those of France and Spain. But the command of the seas which such a union threatened was a matter for England of life and death, for at this very moment the Peace of Lunéville left Buonaparte without a foe on the Continent, and able to deal as he would with the whole military resources of France. Once master of the Channel he could throw a force on the southern coast of England which she had no means of meeting in the field. But dexterous as the combination was, it was shattered at a blow. On the first of April 1801 a British fleet of eighteen men-of-war forced the passage of the Belt, appeared before Copenhagen, and at once attacked the city and its fleet. In spite of a brave resistance from the Danish batteries and gunboats six Danish ships were taken, and the Crown Prince was forced to conclude an armistice which enabled the English ships to enter the Baltic, where the Russian fleet was still detained by the ice. But their work was really over. The seizure of English goods and the declaration of war had bitterly irritated the Russian nobles, whose sole outlet for the sale of the produce of their vast estates was thus closed to them; and on the twenty-fourth of March, nine days before the battle of Copenhagen, Paul fell in a midnight attack by conspirators in his own palace. With

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CHAP. V. Paul fell the Confederacy of the North. The
 England and Napoleon. policy of his successor, the Czar Alexander, was
 1801-1815. far more in unison with the general feeling of his
 subjects; in June a Convention between England
 and Russia settled the vexed questions of the
 right of search and contraband of war, and this
 Convention was accepted by Sweden and Denmark.

French lose
 Egypt.

The First Consul's disappointment was keen; but he saw clearly that with this dissolution of the Northern alliance the war came virtually to an end. He no longer had any means of attacking Britain save by the efforts of France itself, and even with the aid of Holland and Spain France was at this moment helpless before the supremacy of England at sea. On the other hand the continuance of the struggle would give triumph after triumph to his foes. One such blow had already fallen. Even in the midst of his immense schemes against Britain at home, Buonaparte had not abandoned the hope of attacking her in India. Egypt was needful to such a scheme; and from the first moment of his power he strained every nerve to retain Egypt in the hands of France. Menou, who commanded there, was ordered to hold the country; an expedition was fitted out in the Spanish ports for its relief; and light vessels were hurried from the Italian coast with arms and supplies. But at the very moment of the attack on Copenhagen, a stroke as effective wrecked his projects in the East. England had not forgotten

the danger to her dependency; ever since Buona-
 parte's expedition her fleet had blockaded Malta,
 the island fortress whose possession gave France
 a first stepping-stone in any enterprise against it;
 and the surrender of Malta left her unquestioned
 mistress of the Mediterranean. From Malta she
 now turned to Egypt itself. Triumphant as
 England had been at sea since the opening of the
 war, her soldiers had proved no match for the
 French on land. Two expeditions had been sent
 against Holland, and each had ended in a disastrous
 retreat. But at this moment England reappeared
 as a military power. In March 1801 a force of
 15,000 men under General Abercromby anchored
 in Aboukir Bay. Deserted as they were by
 Buonaparte, the French had firmly maintained
 their hold on Egypt. They had suppressed a
 revolt at Cairo, driven back Turkish invaders in
 a fresh victory, and by native levies and reinforce-
 ments raised the number of their troops to 30,000
 men. But their army was foolishly scattered,
 and Abercromby was able to force a landing five
 days after his arrival on the coast. The French
 however rapidly concentrated; and on the 21st
 of March their general attacked the English army
 on the ground it had won with a force equal to
 its own. The battle was a stubborn one, and
 Abercromby fell mortally wounded ere its close;
 but after six hours' fighting the French drew off
 with heavy loss; and their retreat was followed

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CHAP. V. by the investment of Alexandria and Cairo, into
 England and which Menou had withdrawn his army. All hope
 and however was over. Five thousand Turks, with
 Napoleon. a fresh division from England and India, rein-
 1801-1815. forced the besiegers; and at the close of June the
 capitulation of the 13,000 soldiers who remained
 closed the French rule over Egypt.

*The Peace
 of Amiens.*

Bitter as was the anger with which the First Consul received the news of this surrender, it only strengthened his resolve to suspend a war of which Britain only could now reap the fruits, and whose continuance might in the present temper of Russia and its Czar disturb that peace of the Continent on which all his plans against England rested. It was to give time for such an organization of France and its resources as might enable him to reopen the struggle with other chances of success that the First Consul opened negotiations for peace at the close of 1801. His offers were at once met by the English Government. In the actual settlement of the Continent indeed England saw only an imperfect balance to the power of France, but it had no means of disputing the settlement, as France had no means of disturbing its supremacy at sea. If Buonaparte wished to husband his resources for a new attack all but the wilder Tories were willing to husband the resources of England for the more favourable opportunity of renewing it which would come with a revival of European energy. With such

a temper on both sides the conclusion of peace became easy; and the negotiations which went on through the winter between England and the three allied Powers of France, Spain, and the Dutch, brought about in March 1802 the Peace of Amiens. The terms of the Peace were necessarily simple; for as England had no claim to interfere with the settlement of the Continent, which had been brought about by the treaties of its powers with the French Republic, all that remained for her was to provide that the settlement should be a substantial one by a pledge on the part of France to withdraw its forces from Southern Italy, and to leave to themselves the republics it had set up along its border in Holland, Switzerland, and Piedmont. In exchange for this pledge England recognized the French government, restored all the colonies which they had lost, save Ceylon and Trinidad, to France and its allies, acknowledged the Ionian Islands as a free republic, and engaged to restore Malta within three months to its old masters, the Knights of St. John.

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There was a general sense of relief at the close of so long a struggle; and for a moment the bitter hatred which England had cherished against France seemed to give place to more friendly feelings. The new French ambassador was drawn in triumph on his arrival through the streets of London; and thousands of Englishmen crossed the Channel to visit a country which had conquered

Buonaparte.

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the world, and to gaze on the young general who after wonderful victories had given a yet more wonderful peace to Europe. But amidst all the glare of success, shrewd observers saw the dangers that lay in the temper of the First Consul. Whatever had been the errors of the French Revolutionists, even their worst attacks on the independence of the nations around them had been veiled by a vague notion of freeing the peoples whom they invaded from the yoke of their rulers. But the aim of Buonaparte was simply that of a vulgar conqueror. He was resolute to be master of the Western world, and no notions of popular freedom or sense of national right interfered with his resolve. The means at his command for carrying out such a design were immense. The political life of the Revolution had been cut short by his military despotism, but the new social vigour which the Revolution had given to France through the abolition of privileges and the creation of a new middle class on the ruins of the clergy and the nobles still lived on; and while the dissensions which tore the country asunder were hushed by the policy of the First Consul, by his restoration of the Church as a religious power, his recall of the exiles, and the economy and wise administration that distinguished his rule, the centralised system of government that had been bequeathed by the Monarchy to the Revolution and by the Revolution to

Buonaparte enabled him easily to seize this national vigour for the profit of his own despotism. On the other hand, the exhaustion of the brilliant hopes raised by the Revolution, the craving for public order, the military enthusiasm and the impulse of a new glory given by the wonderful victories France had won, made a Tyranny possible; and in the hands of Buonaparte this tyranny was supported by a secret police, by the suppression of the press and of all freedom of opinion, and above all by the iron will and immense ability of the First Consul himself.

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Once chosen Consul for life, he felt himself secure at home, and turned restlessly to the work of outer aggression. The pledges given at Amiens were set aside. The republics established on the borders of France were brought into mere dependence on his will. Piedmont and Parma were actually annexed to France; and a French army occupied Switzerland. The temperate protests of the English Government were answered by demands for the expulsion of the French exiles who had been living in England ever since the Revolution, and for its surrender of Malta, which was retained till some security could be devised against a fresh seizure of the island by the French fleet. Meanwhile huge armaments were preparing in the French ports; and a new activity was seen in those of Spain. Not for a moment indeed had Buonaparte relinquished his design of attacking

His designs.

CHAP. V. Britain. He had made peace because peace would
 England and Napoleon. serve his purpose, both in strengthening the
 1801-1815. tranquillity of the Continent, which was essential
 to his success in any campaign across the Channel,
 and in giving him time to replace by a new
 combination the maritime schemes which had
 broken down. Beaten as it had been, the Spanish
 fleet was still powerful; and a union with the
 French fleet which the First Consul was forming
 might still enable it to dispute the command of
 the sea. All that he wished for was time; and
 time was what the Peace gave him. But delay
 was as dangerous to England, now that it dis-
 cerned his plans, as it was profitable to France;
 and in May 1803 the British Government
 anticipated his attack by a declaration of war.

The
 Camp at
 Boulogne.

The breach only quickened Buonaparte's resolve
 to attack his enemy at home. The difficulties in
 his way he set contemptuously aside; "Fifteen
 millions of people," he said, in allusion to the
 disproportion between the population of England
 and France, "must give way to forty millions";
 and the invasion was planned on a gigantic scale.
 A camp of one hundred thousand men was formed
 at Boulogne, and a host of flat-bottomed boats
 gathered for their conveyance across the Channel.
 The peril of the nation forced Addington from
 office and recalled Pitt to power. His health was
 broken, and as the days went by his appearance
 became so haggard and depressed that it was

plain death was drawing near. But dying as he really was, the nation clung to him with all its old faith. He was still the representative of national union; and he proposed to include Fox and the leading Whigs in his new ministry, but he was foiled by the bigotry of the king; and the refusal of Lord Grenville and of Windham to take office without Fox, as well as the loss of his post at a later time by his ablest supporter, Dundas, left him almost alone. But lonely as he was, he faced difficulty and danger with the same courage as of old. The invasion seemed imminent when Buonaparte, who now assumed the title of the Emperor Napoleon, appeared in the camp at Boulogne. A slight experience however showed him the futility of his scheme for crossing the Channel in open boats in the teeth of English men-of-war; and he turned to fresh plans of securing its passage. "Let us be masters of the Channel for six hours," he is reported to have said, "and we are masters of the world." A skilfully-combined plan, by which the British fleet would have been divided while the whole French navy was concentrated in the Channel, was delayed by the death of the admiral destined to execute it. But the alliance with Spain placed the Spanish fleet at Napoleon's disposal, and in 1805 he planned its union with that of France, the crushing of the squadron which blocked the ports of the Channel before the English ships

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CHAP. V. which were watching the Spanish armament could
 England come to its support, and a crossing of the vast
 and armament thus protected to the English shore.
 Napoleon. 1801-1815. Though three hundred thousand volunteers
 Trafalgar. mustered in England to meet the coming attack,
 such a force would have offered but small hindrance
 to the veterans of the Grand Army, had they once
 crossed the Channel. But Pitt had already found
 them work elsewhere. It was not merely the
 danger of Britain, and the sense that without this
 counterpoise they would be helpless before the
 new French Empire, that roused the alarm of the
 Continental powers. They had been scared by
 Napoleon's course of aggression since the settle-
 ment at Lunéville, and his annexation of Genoa
 brought their alarm to a head. Pitt's offer of
 subsidies removed the last obstacle in the way of
 a league; and Russia, Austria, and Sweden joined
 in an alliance to wrest Italy and the Low Countries
 from the grasp of the French Emperor. Napoleon
 meanwhile swept the sea in vain for a glimpse
 of the great armament whose assembly in the
 Channel he had so skilfully planned. Admiral
 Villeneuve, uniting the Spanish ships with his
 own squadron from Toulon, drew Nelson in
 pursuit to the West Indies, and then suddenly
 returning to Cadiz, hastened to form a junction
 with the French squadron at Brest and to crush
 the English fleet in the Channel. But a headlong
 pursuit brought Nelson up with him ere the

manceuvre was complete, and the two fleets met on the 21st of October 1805 off Cape Trafalgar. "England" ran Nelson's famous signal, "expects every man to do his duty"; and though he fell himself in the hour of victory, twenty French sail had struck their flag ere the day was done. The French and Spanish navies were in fact annihilated. From this hour the supremacy of England at sea remained unquestioned; and the danger of any invasion of England rolled away like a dream.

Her allies were less fortunate. "England has saved herself by her courage," Pitt said in what were destined to be his last public words: "she will save Europe by her example!" But even before the victory of Trafalgar Napoleon had abandoned the dream of invading England to meet the coalition in his rear; and swinging round his forces on the Danube, he forced an Austrian army to capitulation in Ulm three days before his naval defeat. From Ulm he marched on Vienna, and at the close of November he crushed the combined armies of Austria and Russia in the battle of Austerlitz. "Austerlitz," Wilberforce wrote in his diary, "killed Pitt." Though he was still but forty-seven, the hollow voice and wasted frame of the great Minister had long told that death was near; and the blow to his hopes proved fatal. "Roll up that map," he said, pointing to a map of Europe which hung upon the wall; "it will not be wanted these ten

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The Peace
 of Tilsit.

CHAP. V. years!" Once only he rallied from stupor; and
 England those who bent over him caught a faint murmur
 and of "My country! How I leave my country!"
 Napoleon. On the twenty-third of January 1806 he breathed
 1801-1815. his last; and was laid in Westminster Abbey in
 the grave of Chatham. "What grave," exclaimed
 Lord Wellesley, "contains such a father and such
 a son! What sepulchre embosoms the remains of
 so much human excellence and glory!" So great
 was felt to be the loss that nothing but the union
 of parties, which Pitt had in vain desired during
 his lifetime, could fill up the gap left by his
 death. In the new ministry Fox, with the small
 body of popular Whigs who were bent on peace
 and internal reform, united with the aristocratic
 Whigs under Lord Grenville and with the Tories
 under Lord Sidmouth. All home questions, in
 fact, were subordinated to the need of saving
 Europe from the ambition of France, and in the
 resolve to save Europe Fox was as resolute as
 Pitt himself. His hopes of peace indeed were
 stronger; but they were foiled by the evasive
 answer which Napoleon gave to his overtures, and
 by a new war which he undertook against Prussia,
 the one power which seemed able to resist his
 arms. On the 14th of October 1806 a decisive
 victory at Jena laid North Germany at the
 Emperor's feet. From Berlin Napoleon marched
 into the heart of Poland to bring to terms the
 last opponent now left him on the Continent;

and though checked in the winter by the stubborn defence of the Russian forces on the field of Eylau, in the summer of 1807 a decisive victory at Friedland brought the Czar to consent to the Peace of Tilsit.

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The Peace of Tilsit marked an overthrow for the time of that European settlement and balance of power which had been established five years before by the Peace of Lunéville. The change in his policy had been to a great extent forced on Napoleon; for the league of 1805 had shown that his plan of such a Continental peace as would suffer him to concentrate his whole strength on an invasion of Britain was certain to be foiled by the fears of the Continental states; and that an unquestioned supremacy over Europe was a first condition in the struggle with his great rival. Even with such a supremacy, indeed, his plans for a descent on Britain itself, or for winning the command of the sea which was the necessary preliminary to such a descent, still remained impracticable. The battle of Trafalgar had settled the question of an invasion of England; and a thousand victories on land would not make him master, even for "six hours," of the "silver streak" of sea that barred his path. But Napoleon was far from abandoning his struggle against Britain; on the contrary, he saw in his mastery of Europe the means of giving fresh force and effectiveness to his attack in a quarter where his

The
 Continental
 System.

CHAP. V. foe was still vulnerable. It was her wealth that
 England had raised up that European coalition against him
 and which had forced him to break up his camp at
 Napoleon. Boulogne; and in his mastery of Europe he saw
 1801-1815. the means of striking at her wealth. His earlier
 attempt at the enforcement of a "Continental
 System" had broken down with the failure of
 the Northern League; but he now saw a yet
 more effective means of realising his dream. It
 was this gigantic project which revealed itself as
 soon as Jena had laid Prussia at his feet. Napoleon
 was able to find a pretext for his new attack in
 England's own action. By a violent stretch of
 her rights as a combatant she had declared the
 whole coast occupied by France and its allies,
 from Dantzic to Trieste, to be in a state of
 blockade. It was impossible to enforce such an
 order as this, even with the immense force at her
 disposal; but it was ostensibly to meet this
 "paper blockade" that Napoleon issued from
 Berlin, on the twenty-first of November 1806, a
 decree which—without a single ship to carry it
 out—placed the British Islands in a state of
 blockade. All commerce or communication with
 them was prohibited; all English goods or manu-
 factures found in the territory of France or its
 allies were declared liable to confiscation; and
 their harbours were closed, not only against
 vessels coming from Britain, but against all
 who had touched at her ports. An army of

inspectors spread along the coasts to carry out this decree.

But it was almost impossible to enforce such a system. It was foiled by the rise of a widespread contraband trade, by the reluctance of Holland to aid in its own ruin, by the connivance of officials along the Prussian and Russian shores, and by the pressure of facts. It was impossible even for Napoleon himself to do without the goods he pretended to exclude; an immense system of licences soon neutralized his decree; and the French army which marched to Eylau was clad in greatcoats made at Leeds, and shod with shoes made at Northampton. Vexatious therefore as the system might be at once to England and to Europe, it told on British industry mainly by heightening the price of its products, and so far by restricting the market for them. But it told far more fatally on British commerce. Trade at once began to move from English vessels, which were subject to instant confiscation, and to shelter itself under neutral flags, where goods had at least to be proved to be British before they could be seized. America profited most by this transfer. She was now entering on that commercial career which was to make her England's chief trading rival; and she rapidly availed herself of the Berlin decree to widen her carrying trade. But the British Government at once felt the pressure of the merchant class. As yet this class had profited

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Its results.

CHAP. V. above all others by the war and by the monopoly
 England which war placed in its hands; and now that not
 and only its monopoly but its very existence was
 Napoleon. threatened, it called on the Government to protect
 1801-1815. it. It was to this appeal that the administration
 of Lord Grenville replied, in January 1807, by an
 Order in Council which declared all the ports of
 the coast of France and her allies under blockade,
 and any neutral vessels trading between them to
 be good prize.

Fall of the Such a step however, though it arbitrarily shut
 Grenville neutral vessels out from the coasting trade of most
 Ministry. of Europe, was far from satisfying the British
 merchants, for it left the whole trade between
 Europe and other countries, which virtually
 included the colonial trade, untouched; and this
 passed as of old into American bottoms. But
 their appeal was no longer to Lord Grenville.
 The work which his ministry had set itself to do
 was to continue the double work of Pitt, his
 resolute maintenance of English greatness, and his
 endeavour to carry on even amidst the stress of
 the fight that course of philanthropic and political
 progress which was struggling back into renewed
 vigour after its long arrest through the French
 Revolution. But the forces of ignorance and
 bigotry which had been too strong for Pitt were
 too strong for the Grenville ministry, weakened as
 it was by the death of Fox at the close of the
 previous year. Its greatest work, the abolition of

the slave-trade, in February 1807, was done in the teeth of a vigorous opposition from the Tories and the merchants of Liverpool; and in March the first indication of its desire to open the question of religious equality by allowing Catholic officers to serve in the army was met on the part of the king by the demand of a pledge not to meddle with the question. On the refusal of this pledge the Ministry was dismissed. Its fall was the final close of that union of parties in face of the war with France which had brought about the junction of the bulk of the Whig party with the Tories, and which had been to some extent renewed after the temporary breach in Pitt's last ministry by the junction of Lord Sidmouth and a large body of the Tories with the Whigs. The union had been based on the actual peril to England's existence, and on the suspension of all home questions in face of the peril. But with the break-up of the camp at Boulogne and the victory of Trafalgar the peril of invasion had disappeared. England again broke into the party that called for progress and the party that resisted it.

The last was still the stronger: for in the mass of the nation progress was still confounded with the destruction of institutions, the passion for war absorbed public attention, and the Tories showed themselves most in earnest in the prosecution of the war. From this time therefore to the end of the war England was wholly governed by the

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The
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Tories. The nominal head of the ministry which succeeded that of Lord Grenville was the Duke of Portland; its guiding spirit was the Foreign Secretary, George Canning, a young and devoted adherent of Pitt, whose brilliant rhetoric gave him power over the House of Commons, while the vigour and breadth of his mind gave a new energy and colour to the war. At no time had opposition to Napoleon seemed so hopeless as at the moment of his entry into power. From foes the two Emperors of Western and Eastern Europe had become friends, and the hope of French aid in the conquest of Turkey drew Alexander to a close alliance with Napoleon. Russia not only enforced the Berlin decrees against British commerce, but forced Sweden, the one ally that England still retained on the Continent, to renounce her alliance. The Russian and Swedish fleets were thus placed at the service of France; and the two Emperors counted on securing in addition the fleet of Denmark, and again threatening by this union the maritime supremacy which formed England's real defence. The hope was foiled by the decision of the new ministers. In July 1807 an expedition was promptly and secretly equipped by Canning, with a demand for the surrender of the Danish fleet into the hands of England, on pledge of its return at the close of the war. On the refusal of the Danes the demand was enforced by a bombardment of Copenhagen; and the whole Danish fleet,

with a vast mass of naval stores, was carried into British ports. It was in the same spirit of almost reckless decision that Canning turned to meet Napoleon's Continental System. The cry of the British merchant fell upon willing ears. Of trade or the laws of trade Canning was utterly ignorant; nor could he see that the interests of the country were not necessarily the interests of a class; but he was resolute at any cost to hinder the transfer of commerce to neutral flags; and he saw in the crisis a means of forcing the one great neutral power, America, to join Britain in her strife with France. In November 1807, therefore, he issued fresh Orders in Council. By these France, and every Continental state from which the British flag was excluded, were put in a state of blockade, and all vessels bound for their harbours were held subject to seizure unless they had touched at a British port. The orders were at once met by another decree of Napoleon issued at Milan in December, which declared every vessel, of whatever nation, coming from or bound to Britain or any British colony, to have forfeited its character as a neutral, and to be liable to seizure.

The policy of Napoleon was at any rate a consistent one in these measures; for his sole aim was to annihilate the industry as well as the commerce of Britain; and he had little to fear from the indignation of America. But the aim of Britain was to find outlets for her manufactures;

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The
 American
 Embargo.

CHAP. V. and of these outlets America was now far the
England most important. She took in fact ten millions of
and our exports every year, not only for her own
Napoleon. consumption, but for the illicit trade which she
1801-1815. managed to carry on with the Continent. To
close such an outlet as this was to play into
Napoleon's hands. And yet the first result of
Canning's policy was to close it. In the long
strife between France and England, America had
already borne much from both combatants, but
above all from Britain. Not only had the English
Government exercised its right of search, but it
asserted a right of seizing English seamen found
in American vessels; and as there were few means
of discriminating between English seamen and
American, the sailor of Maine or Massachusetts
was often impressed to serve in the British fleet.
Galled however as was America by outrages such
as these, she was hindered from resenting them by
her strong disinclination to war, as well as by the
profit which she drew from the maintenance of her
neutral position; and she believed in the words of
Jefferson, that "it will ever be in our power to
keep so even a stand between France and England,
as to inspire a wish in neither to throw us into the
scale of his adversary." But the Orders in
Council and the Milan Decree forced her into
action, and she at once answered them by an
embargo of trade with Europe.

Such a step was a menace of further action, for

it was plain that America could not long remain in utter isolation, and that if she left it she must join one combatant or the other. But she had as yet shown no military power outside her own bounds, either by land or sea; and England looked with scorn on the threats of a state which possessed neither army nor fleet. "America," Lord Sidmouth wrote at this time, "is a bugbear: there is no terror in her threats!" Canning indeed saw in the embargo only a carrying out of his policy by the very machinery of the American Government. The commerce of America ceased to exist. Her seamen were driven to seek employment under the British flag; and Britain again absorbed the carrying-trade of the world. But what he really looked forward to was something far beyond this. He saw that the embargo was but a temporary expedient: and he believed that its failure would force the United States into union with England in her war with France. Nothing shows the world-wide nature of the struggle more than such a policy as this; but for a while it seemed justified by its results. After a year's trial America found it impossible to maintain the embargo: and at the opening of 1809 she exchanged it for an Act of Non-Intercourse with France and England alone. But this Act was as ineffective as the embargo. The American Government was utterly without means of enforcing it on its land frontier; and it had small

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CHAP. V. means of enforcing it at sea. Throughout 1809
 England indeed vessels sailed daily for British ports. The
 and Act was thus effective against France alone, and
 Napoleon. part of Canning's end was gained. At last the
 1801-1815. very protest which it embodied was given up,
 and in May 1810 the Non-Intercourse Act was
 repealed altogether. All that America persisted
 in maintaining was an offer that if either Power
 would repeal its edicts, it would prohibit American
 commerce with the other.

Napoleon
 and Spain.

What the results of this offer were to be we shall see hereafter. But at the moment the attitude of America was one of utter submission; and the effect of the Continental system on Britain had thus been to drive it to a policy of aggression upon neutral states, which seemed to be as successful as it was aggressive. The effect of his system on Napoleon himself was precisely the same. It was to maintain this material union of Europe against Britain that he was driven to aggression after aggression in North Germany, and to demands upon Russia which threatened the league that had been formed at Tilsit. Above all, it was the hope of more effectually crushing the world-power of Britain that drove him, at the very moment when Canning was attacking America, to his worst aggression, the aggression upon Spain. Spain was already his subservient ally; but her alliance became every hour less useful. The country was ruined by misgovernment: its treasury

was empty: its fleet rotted in its harbours. To seize the whole Spanish Peninsula, to develop its resources by an active administration, to have at his command not only a regenerated Spain and Portugal, but their mighty dominions in Southern and Central America, to renew with these fresh forces the struggle with Britain for her empire of the seas, these were the designs by which Napoleon was driven to the most ruthless of his enterprises. He acted with his usual subtlety. In October 1807 France and Spain agreed to divide Portugal between them; and on the advance of their forces the reigning House of Braganza fled helplessly from Lisbon to a refuge in Brazil. But the seizure of Portugal was only a prelude to the seizure of Spain. Charles the Fourth, whom a riot in his capital drove at this moment to abdication, and his son and successor, Ferdinand the Seventh, were alike drawn to Bayonne in May 1808, and forced to resign their claims to the Spanish crown; while a French army entered Madrid, and proclaimed Joseph Buonaparte as King of Spain.

High-handed as such an act was, it was in harmony with the general system which Napoleon was pursuing elsewhere, and which had as yet stirred no national resistance. Holland had been changed into a monarchy by a simple decree of the French Emperor, and its crown bestowed on his brother Louis. For another brother, Jerome, a kingdom of Westphalia had been built up out of

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The Rising
 of Spain.

CHAP. V. the Electorates of Hesse Cassel and Hanover.
 England and Napoleon. Joseph himself had been set as king over Naples
 1801-1815. before his transfer to Spain. But the spell of submission was now suddenly broken, and the new king had hardly entered Madrid when Spain rose as one man against the stranger. Desperate as the effort of its people seemed, the news of the rising was welcomed throughout England with a burst of enthusiastic joy. "Hitherto," cried Sheridan, a leader of the Whig opposition, "Buonaparte has contended with princes without dignity, numbers without ardour, or peoples without patriotism. He has yet to learn what it is to combat a people who are animated by one spirit against him." Tory and Whig alike held that "never had so happy an opportunity existed for Britain to strike a bold stroke for the rescue of the world"; and Canning at once resolved to change the system of desultory descents on colonies and sugar islands for a vigorous warfare in the Peninsula. Supplies were sent to the Spanish insurgents with reckless profusion, and two small armies placed under the command of Sir John Moore and Sir Arthur Wellesley for service in the Peninsula. In July 1808 the surrender at Baylen of a French force which had invaded Andalusia gave the first shock to the power of Napoleon, and the blow was followed by one almost as severe. Landing at the Mondego with fifteen thousand men, Sir Arthur Wellesley drove the French army of Portugal from

the field of Vimiera, and forced it to surrender in the Convention of Cintra on the 30th of August. But the tide of success was soon roughly turned. Napoleon appeared in Spain with an army of two hundred thousand men; and Moore, who had advanced from Lisbon to Salamanca to support the Spanish armies, found them crushed on the Ebro, and was driven to fall hastily back on the coast. His force saved its honour in a battle before Corunna on the 16th of January 1809, which enabled it to embark in safety; but elsewhere all seemed lost. The whole of northern and central Spain was held by the French armies; and even Zaragoza, which had once heroically repulsed them, submitted after a second equally desperate resistance.

The landing of the wreck of Moore's army and the news of the Spanish defeats turned the temper of England from the wildest hope to the deepest despair; but Canning remained unmoved. On the day of the evacuation of Corunna he signed a treaty of alliance with the Junta which governed Spain in the absence of its king; and the English force at Lisbon, which had already prepared to leave Portugal, was reinforced with thirteen thousand fresh troops and placed under the command of Sir Arthur Wellesley. "Portugal," Wellesley wrote coolly, "may be defended against any force which the French can bring against it." At this critical moment the best of the French

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Wellesley in
 Portugal.

CHAP. V. troops with the Emperor himself were drawn from
 England the Peninsula to the Danube; for the Spanish
 and rising had roused Austria as well as England to a
 Napoleon. renewal of the struggle. When Marshal Soult
 1801-1815. therefore threatened Lisbon from the north, Wel-
 lesley marched boldly against him, drove him from
 Oporto in a disastrous retreat, and suddenly
 changing his line of operations, pushed with
 twenty thousand men by Abrantes on Madrid.
 He was joined on the march by a Spanish force of
 thirty thousand men; and a bloody action with a
 French army of equal force at Talavera in July
 1809 restored the renown of English arms. The
 losses on both sides were enormous, and the French
 fell back at the close of the struggle; but the
 fruits of the victory were lost by a sudden appear-
 ance of Soult on the English line of advance.
 Wellesley was forced to retreat hastily on Badajoz,
 and his failure was embittered by heavier disasters
 elsewhere; for Austria was driven to sue for peace
 by a decisive victory of Napoleon at Wagram,
 while a force of forty thousand English soldiers
 which had been despatched against Antwerp in
 July returned home baffled after losing half its
 numbers in the marshes of Walcheren.

The
 Perceval
 Ministry.

The failure at Walcheren brought about the fall
 of the Portland ministry. Canning attributed this
 disaster to the incompetence of Lord Castlereagh,
 heir to an Irish peerage, who after taking the chief
 part in bringing about the union between England

and Ireland had been raised by the Duke of Portland to the post of Secretary at War; and the quarrel between the two Ministers ended in a duel and in their resignation of their offices in September 1809. The Duke of Portland retired with Canning; and a new ministry was formed out of the more Tory members of the late administration under the guidance of Spencer Perceval, an industrious mediocrity of the narrowest type; while the Marquis of Wellesley, a brother of the English general in Spain, succeeded Canning as Foreign Secretary. But if Perceval and his colleagues possessed few of the higher qualities of statesmanship, they had one characteristic which in the actual position of English affairs was beyond all price. They were resolute to continue the war. In the nation at large the fit of enthusiasm had been followed by a fit of despair; and the City of London even petitioned for a withdrawal of the English forces from the Peninsula. Napoleon seemed irresistible, and now that Austria was crushed and England stood alone in opposition to him, the Emperor determined to put an end to the strife by a vigorous prosecution of the war in Spain. Andalusia, the one province which remained independent, was invaded in the opening of 1810, and with the exception of Cadiz reduced to submission; while Marshal Massena with a fine army of eighty thousand men marched upon Lisbon. Even Perceval abandoned all hope of

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CHAP. V. preserving a hold on the Peninsula in face of these
 England and new efforts, and threw on Wellesley, who had been
 and raised to the peerage as Lord Wellington after
 Napoleon. Talavera, the responsibility of resolving to remain
 1801-1815. there.

Torres
 Vedras.

But the cool judgement and firm temper which distinguished Wellington enabled him to face a responsibility from which weaker men would have shrunk. "I conceive," he answered, "that the honour and interest of our country require that we should hold our ground here as long as possible; and, please God, I will maintain it as long as I can." By the addition of Portuguese troops who had been trained under British officers, his army was now raised to fifty thousand men; and though his inferiority in force compelled him to look on while Massena reduced the frontier fortresses of Ciudad Rodrigo and Almeida, he inflicted on him a heavy check at the heights of Busaco, and finally fell back in October 1810 on three lines of defence which he had secretly constructed at Torres Vedras, along a chain of mountain heights crowned with redoubts and bristling with cannon. The position was impregnable: and able and stubborn as Massena was he found himself forced after a month's fruitless efforts to fall back in a masterly retreat; but so terrible were the privations of the French army in passing again through the wasted country that it was only with forty thousand men that he reached

Ciudad Rodrigo in the spring of 1811. Reinforced by fresh troops, Massena turned fiercely to the relief of Almeida, which Wellington had besieged. Two days' bloody and obstinate fighting however, in May 1811, failed to drive the English army from its position at Fuentes d'Onore, and the Marshal fell back on Salamanca and relinquished his effort to drive Wellington from Portugal. But great as was the effect of Torres Vedras in restoring the spirit of the English people, and in reviving throughout Europe the hope of resistance to the tyranny of Napoleon, its immediate result was little save the deliverance of Portugal. If Massena had failed, his colleagues had succeeded in their enterprises; the French were now masters of all Spain save Cadiz and the eastern provinces, and even the east coast was reduced in 1811 by the vigour of General Suchet.

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While England thus failed to rescue Spain from the aggression of Napoleon, she was suddenly brought face to face with the result of her own aggression in America. The repeal of the Non-Intercourse Act in 1810 had in effect been a triumph for Britain: but the triumph forced Napoleon's hand. As yet all he had done by his attack on neutral rights had been to drive the United States practically to join England against him. To revenge himself by war with them would only play England's game yet more; and with characteristic rapidity Napoleon passed from

The Quarrel
 with
 America.

CHAP. V. hostility to friendship. He seized on the offer
 England with which America had closed her efforts against
 and the two combatants, and after promising to revoke
 Napoleon. his Berlin and Milan Decrees he called on America
 1801-1815. to redeem her pledge. In February 1811, there-
 fore, the United States announced that all inter-
 course with Great Britain and her dependencies
 was at an end. The effect of this step was seen in
 a reduction of English exports during this year by
 a third of their whole amount. It was in vain
 that Britain pleaded that the Emperor's promises
 remained unfulfilled, that neither of the decrees
 was withdrawn, that Napoleon had failed to
 return the American merchandise seized under
 them, and that the enforcement of non-intercourse
 with England was thus an unjust act, and an act
 of hostility. The pressure of the American policy,
 as well as news of the warlike temper which had
 at last grown up in the United States, made sub-
 mission inevitable; for the industrial state of
 England was now so critical that to expose it to
 fresh shocks was to court the very ruin which
 Napoleon had planned.

State of
 England.

During the earlier years of the war indeed the
 increase of wealth had been enormous. England
 was sole mistress of the seas. The war gave her
 possession of the colonies of Spain, of Holland,
 and of France; and if her trade was checked for
 a time by the Berlin Decree, the efforts of Napoleon
 were soon rendered fruitless by the smuggling

system which sprang up along the southern coasts and the coast of North Germany. English exports indeed had nearly doubled since the opening of the century. Manufactures were profiting by the discoveries of Watt and Arkwright; and the consumption of raw cotton in the mills of Lancashire rose during the same period from fifty to a hundred million of pounds. The vast accumulation of capital, as well as the vast increase of the population at this time, told upon the land, and forced agriculture into a feverish and unhealthy prosperity. Wheat rose to famine prices, and the value of land rose in proportion with the price of wheat. Inclosures went on with prodigious rapidity; the income of every landowner was doubled, while the farmers were able to introduce improvements into the processes of agriculture which changed the whole face of the country. But if the increase of wealth was enormous, its distribution was partial. During the fifteen years which preceded Waterloo, the number of the population rose from ten to thirteen millions, and this rapid increase kept down the rate of wages, which would naturally have advanced in a corresponding degree with the increase in the national wealth. Even manufactures, though destined in the long run to benefit the labouring classes, seemed at first rather to depress them; for one of the earliest results of the introduction of machinery was the ruin of a number of small

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trades which were carried on at home and the pauperization of families who relied on them for support. In the winter of 1811 the terrible pressure of this transition from handicraft to machinery was seen in the Luddite, or machine-breaking, riots which broke out over the northern and midland counties; and which were only suppressed by military force. While labour was thus thrown out of its older grooves, and the rate of wages kept down at an artificially low figure by the rapid increase of population, the rise in the price of wheat, which brought wealth to the landowner and the farmer, brought famine and death to the poor, for England was cut off by the war from the vast corn-fields of the Continent or of America, which nowadays redress from their abundance the results of a bad harvest. Scarcity was followed by a terrible pauperization of the labouring classes. The amount of the poor-rate rose fifty per cent; and with the increase of poverty followed its inevitable result, the increase of crime.

Political
 Progress.

The natural relation of trade and commerce to the general wealth of the people at large was thus disturbed by the peculiar circumstances of the time. The war enriched the landowner, the farmer, the merchant, the manufacturer; but it impoverished the poor. It is indeed from these fatal years that we must date that war of classes, that social severance between employers and

employed, which still forms the main difficulty of English politics. But it is from these too that we must date the renewal of that progressive movement in politics which had been suspended since the opening of the war. The publication of the *Edinburgh Review* in 1802 by a knot of young lawyers at Edinburgh marked a revival of the policy of constitutional and administrative progress which had been reluctantly abandoned by William Pitt. Jeremy Bentham gave a new vigour to political speculation by his advocacy of the doctrine of Utility, and his definition of "the greatest happiness of the greatest number" as the aim of political action. In 1809 Sir Francis Burdett revived the question of Parliamentary Reform. Only fifteen members supported his motion; and a reference to the House of Commons in a pamphlet which he subsequently published, as "a part of our fellow-subjects collected together by means which it is not necessary to describe," was met by his committal to the Tower, where he remained till the prorogation of the Parliament. A far greater effect was produced by the perseverance with which Canning pressed year by year the question of Catholic Emancipation. So long as Perceval lived both efforts at Reform were equally vain; but the advancing strength of a more liberal sentiment in the nation was felt by the policy of "moderate concession" which was adopted by his successors. Catholic Emancipation

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became an open question in the Cabinet itself, and was adopted in 1812 by a triumphant majority in the House of Commons, though it was still rejected by the Lords.

With social and political troubles thus awaking anew to life about them, even Tory statesmen were not willing to face the terrible consequences of a ruin of English industry such as might follow from the junction of America with Napoleon. They were in fact preparing to withdraw the Orders in Council, when their plans were arrested by the dissolution of the Perceval ministry. Its position had from the first been a weak one. A return of the king's madness made it necessary in the beginning of 1811 to confer the Regency on the Prince of Wales; and the Whig sympathies of the Prince threatened for a while the Cabinet with dismissal. Though this difficulty was surmounted their hold of power remained insecure, and the insecurity of the ministry told on the conduct of the war; for the apparent inactivity of Wellington during 1811 was really due to the hesitation and timidity of the Cabinet at home. But in May 1812 the assassination of Perceval by a madman named Bellingham brought about the dissolution of his ministry; and fresh efforts were made by the Regent to install the Whigs in office. Mutual distrust however again foiled his attempts; and the old ministry returned to office under the leadership of Lord Liverpool, a man of no great abilities,

but temperate, well informed, and endowed with a remarkable skill in holding discordant colleagues together. The most important of these colleagues was Lord Castlereagh, who became Secretary for Foreign Affairs. Time has long ago rendered justice to the political ability of Castlereagh, disguised as it was to men of his own day by a curious infelicity of expression; and the instinctive good sense of Englishmen never showed itself more remarkably than in their preference at this crisis of his cool judgement, his high courage, his discernment, and his will to the more showy brilliancy of Canning. His first work indeed as a minister was to meet the danger in which Canning had involved the country by his Orders in Council. On the 23rd of June, only twelve days after the ministry had been formed, these Orders were repealed. But, quick as was Castlereagh's action, events had moved even more quickly. At the opening of the year America, in despair of redress, had resolved on war; Congress had voted an increase of both army and navy; and laid in April an embargo on all vessels in American harbours. Actual hostilities might still have been averted by the repeal of the Orders, on which the English Cabinet was resolved; but in the confusion which followed the murder of Perceval, and the strife of parties for office through the month that followed, the opportunity was lost. When the news of the repeal reached America, it came six weeks too late.

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CHAP. V. On the 18th of June an Act of Congress had
 England and Napoleon. declared America at war with Great Britain.
 1801-1815. Had Napoleon been able to reap the fruits of
 Napoleon and Russia. the strife which his policy had thus forced on the
 two English peoples, it is hard to say how Britain
 could have coped with him. Cut off from her
 markets alike in east and west, her industries
 checked and disorganized, a financial crisis added
 to her social embarrassment, it may be doubted
 whether she must not have bowed in the end
 before the pressure of the Continental System.
 But if that system had thrust her into aggression
 and ruin, it was as inevitably thrusting the same
 aggression and ruin on her rival. The moment
 when America entered into the great struggle was
 a critical moment in the history of mankind. Six
 days after President Madison issued his declaration
 of war, Napoleon crossed the Niemen on his march
 to Moscow. Successful as his policy had been in
 stirring up war between England and America, it
 had been no less successful in breaking the alliance
 which he had made with the Czar at Tilsit and in
 forcing on a contest with Russia. On the one
 hand, Napoleon was irritated by the refusal of
 Russia to enforce strictly the suspension of all
 trade with England, though such a suspension
 would have ruined the Russian landowners. On
 the other, Alexander saw with growing anxiety
 the advance of the French Empire which sprang
 from Napoleon's resolve to enforce his system by a

seizure of the northern coasts. In 1811 Holland, the Hanseatic towns, part of Westphalia, and the Duchy of Oldenburg were successively annexed, and the Duchy of Mecklenburg threatened with seizure. A peremptory demand on the part of France for the entire cessation of intercourse with England brought the quarrel to a head; and preparations were made on both sides for a gigantic struggle.

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Even before it opened, this new enterprise gave fresh vigour to Napoleon's foes. The best of the French soldiers were drawn from Spain to the frontier of Poland; and Wellington, whose army had been raised to a force of forty thousand Englishmen and twenty thousand Portuguese, profited by the withdrawal to throw off his system of defence and to assume an attitude of attack. Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz were taken by storm during the spring of 1812; and at the close of June, three days before Napoleon crossed the Niemen, in his march on Moscow, Wellington crossed the Agueda in a march on Salamanca. After a series of masterly movements on both sides, Marmont with the French army of the North attacked the English on the hills in the neighbourhood of that town on the twenty-second of July. While he was marching round the right of the English position his left wing remained isolated; and with a sudden exclamation of "Marmont is lost!" Wellington flung on it the

Salamanca.

CHAP. V. bulk of his force, crushed it, and drove the whole
 England army from the field. The loss on either side was
 and nearly equal, but failure had demoralized the
 Napoleon. French army; and its retreat forced Joseph to
 1801-1815. leave Madrid, and Soult to evacuate Andalusia
 and to concentrate the southern army on the
 eastern coast. While Napoleon was still pushing
 slowly over the vast plains of Poland, Wellington
 made his entry into Madrid in August, and began
 the siege of Burgos. The town however held out
 gallantly for a month, till the advance of the two
 French armies, now concentrated in the north and
 south of Spain, forced Wellington, in October, to a
 hasty retreat on the Portuguese frontier.

Ruin of
 Napoleon.

If Wellington had shaken the rule of the
 French in Spain in this campaign, his ultimate
 failure showed how firm a military hold they still
 possessed there. But the disappointment was
 forgotten in the news which followed it. At the
 moment when the English troops fell back from
 Burgos began the retreat of the Grand Army from
 Moscow. Victorious in a battle at Borodino,
 Napoleon had entered the older capital of Russia
 in triumph, and waited impatiently to receive
 proposals of peace from the Czar. But a fire
 kindled by its own inhabitants reduced the city to
 ashes; Alexander still remained silent; and the
 gathering cold bent even the stubborn will of
 Napoleon to own the need of retreat. The French
 were forced to fall back amidst the horrors of a

Russian winter ; and of the four hundred thousand combatants who formed the Grand Army at its first outset, only a few thousands recrossed the Niemen in December. In spite of the gigantic efforts which Napoleon made to repair his losses, the spell which he had cast over Europe was broken. Prussia rose against him as the Russians crossed the Niemen in the spring of 1813 ; and the forces which held it were at once thrown back on the Elbe. In this emergency the military genius of the French Emperor rose to its height. With a fresh army of two hundred thousand men whom he had gathered at Mainz he marched on the allied armies of Russia and Prussia in May, cleared Saxony by a victory over them at Lutzen, and threw them back on the Oder by a fresh victory at Bautzen. Disheartened by defeat, and by the neutral attitude which Austria still preserved, the two powers consented in June to an armistice, and negotiated for peace. But Austria, though unwilling to utterly ruin France to the profit of her great rival in the East, was as resolute as either of the allies to wrest from Napoleon his supremacy over Europe ; and at the moment when it became clear that Napoleon was only bent on playing with her proposals, she was stirred to action by news that his army was at last driven from Spain. Wellington had left Portugal in May with an army which had now risen to ninety thousand men ; and overtaking

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CHAP. V. the French forces in retreat at Vitoria on the
 England and Napoleon. twenty-first of June he inflicted on them a
 1801-1815. defeat which drove them in utter rout across the
 Pyrenees. Madrid was at once evacuated; and
 Clausel fell back from Zaragoza into France.
 The victory not only freed Spain from its invaders;
 it restored the spirit of the Allies. The close of
 the armistice was followed by a union of Austria
 with the forces of Prussia and the Czar; and in
 October a final overthrow of Napoleon at Leipzig
 forced the French army to fall back in rout across
 the Rhine.

His
 Abdication.

The war now hurried to its close. Though
 held at bay for a while by the sieges of San
 Sebastian and Pampeluna, as well as by an obsti-
 nate defence of the Pyrenees, Wellington succeeded
 in the very month of the triumph at Leipzig in
 winning a victory on the Bidassoa, which enabled
 him to enter France. He was soon followed by
 the Allies. On the last day of 1813 their forces
 crossed the Rhine; and a third of France passed,
 without opposition, into their hands. For two
 months more Napoleon maintained a wonderful
 struggle with a handful of raw conscripts against
 their overwhelming numbers; while in the south,
 Soult, forced from his entrenched camp near
 Bayonne and defeated at Orthez, fell back before
 Wellington on Toulouse. Here their two armies
 met in April in a stubborn and indecisive engage-
 ment. But though neither leader knew it, the

war was even then at an end. The struggle of Napoleon himself had ended at the close of March with the surrender of Paris; and the submission of the capital was at once followed by the abdication of the Emperor and the return of the Bourbons.

England's triumph over its enemy was dashed by the more doubtful fortunes of the struggle across the Atlantic. The declaration of war by America seemed an act of sheer madness; for its navy consisted of a few frigates and sloops; its army was a mass of half-drilled and half-armed recruits; while the States themselves were divided on the question of the war, and Connecticut with Massachusetts refused to send either money or men. Three attempts to penetrate into Canada during the summer and autumn were repulsed with heavy loss. But these failures were more than redeemed by unexpected successes at sea, where in two successive engagements between English and American frigates, the former were forced to strike their flag. The effect of these victories was out of all proportion to their real importance; for they were the first heavy blows which had been dealt at England's supremacy over the seas. In 1813 America followed up its naval triumphs by more vigorous efforts on land. Its forces cleared Lake Ontario, captured Toronto, destroyed the British flotilla on Lake Erie, and made themselves masters of Upper Canada. An attack on Lower Canada, however, was success-

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 American
 War.

CHAP. V. fully beaten back; and a fresh advance of the
 England and British and Canadian forces in the heart of the
 and Napoleon. winter again recovered the Upper Province. The
 1801-1815. reverse gave fresh strength to the party in the
 United States which had throughout been opposed
 to the war, and whose opposition to it had been
 embittered by the terrible distress brought about
 by the blockade and the ruin of American commerce.
 Cries of secession began to be heard, and Massa-
 chusetts took the bold step of appointing delegates
 to confer with delegates from the other New
 England States "on the subject of their grievances
 and common concerns."

Peace with
 America.

In 1814, however, the war was renewed with
 more vigour than ever; and Upper Canada was
 again invaded. But the American army, after
 inflicting a severe defeat on the British forces in
 the battle of Chippewa in July, was itself defeated
 a few weeks after in an equally stubborn engage-
 ment, and thrown back on its own frontier;
 while the fall of Napoleon enabled the English
 Government to devote its whole strength to the
 struggle with an enemy which it had ceased to
 despise. General Ross, with a force of four
 thousand men, appeared in the Potomac, captured
 Washington, and before evacuating the city burnt
 its public buildings to the ground. Few more
 shameful acts are recorded in our history; and it
 was the more shameful in that it was done under
 strict orders from the Government at home. But

the raid upon Washington was intended simply to strike terror into the American people; and the real stress of the war was thrown on two expeditions whose business was to penetrate into the States from the north and from the south. Both proved utter failures. A force of nine thousand Peninsular veterans which marched in September to the attack of Plattsburg on Lake Champlain was forced to fall back by the defeat of the English flotilla which accompanied it. A second force under General Pakenham appeared in December at the mouth of the Mississippi and attacked New Orleans, but was repulsed by General Jackson with the loss of half its numbers. Peace, however, had already been concluded. The close of the French war, if it left untouched the grounds of the struggle, made the United States sensible of the danger of pushing it further; Britain herself was anxious for peace; and the warring claims, both of England and America, were set aside in silence in the treaty of 1814.

The close of the war with the United States freed England's hands at a moment when the reappearance of Napoleon at Paris called her to a new and final struggle with France. By treaty with the Allied Powers Napoleon had been suffered to retain a fragment of his former empire—the island of Elba off the coast of Tuscany; and from Elba he looked on at the quarrels which sprang up between his conquerors as soon as they gathered

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Return of
 Napoleon.

CHAP. V. at Vienna to complete the settlement of Europe.
 England and Napoleon. The most formidable of these quarrels arose from
 1801-1815. a claim of Prussia to annex Saxony and that of
 Russia to annex Poland; but their union for this
 purpose was met by a counter-league of England
 and Austria with their old enemy, France, whose
 ambassador, Talleyrand, laboured vigorously to
 bring the question to an issue by force of arms.
 At the moment, however, when a war between
 the two leagues seemed close at hand, Napoleon
 landed on the coast near Cannes, and, followed
 only by a thousand of his guards, marched over the
 mountains of Dauphiné upon Grenoble and Lyons.
 He counted, and counted justly, on the indiffer-
 ence of the country to its new Bourbon rulers,
 on the longing of the army for a fresh struggle
 which should restore its glory, and above all on the
 spell of his name over soldiers whom he had so often
 led to victory. In twenty days from his landing
 he reached the Tuileries unopposed, while Lewis
 the Eighteenth fled helplessly to Ghent. But what-
 ever hopes he had drawn from the divisions of the
 Allied Powers were at once dispelled by their
 resolute action on the news of his descent upon
 France. Their strife was hushed and their old
 union restored by the consciousness of a common
 danger. An engagement to supply a million of
 men for the purposes of the war, and a recall of
 their armies to the Rhine, answered Napoleon's
 efforts to open negotiations with the Powers.

England furnished subsidies to the amount of eleven millions, and hastened to place an army on the frontier of the Netherlands. The best troops of the force which had been employed in the Peninsula however were still across the Atlantic; and of the eighty thousand men who gathered round Wellington only about half were Englishmen, the rest mainly raw levies from Belgium and Hanover. The Duke's plan was to unite with the one hundred and fifty thousand Prussians under Marshal Blücher who were advancing on the Lower Rhine, and to enter France by Mons and Namur while the forces of Austria and Russia closed in upon Paris by way of Belfort and Elsass. But Napoleon had thrown aside all thought of a merely defensive warfare. By amazing efforts he had raised an army of two hundred and fifty thousand men in the few months since his arrival in Paris; and in the opening of June 1815 one hundred and twenty thousand Frenchmen were concentrated on the Sambre at Charleroi, while Wellington's troops still lay in cantonments on the line of the Scheldt from Ath to Nivelles, and Blücher's on that of the Meuse from Nivelles to Liége. Both the allied armies hastened to unite at Quatre Bras; but their junction there was already impossible. Blücher with eighty thousand men was himself attacked by Napoleon at Ligny, and after a desperate contest driven back with terrible loss upon Wavre. On

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CHAP. V. the same day Ney with twenty thousand men,
 England and appeared before Quatre Bras, where as yet only ten
 Napoleon. thousand English and the same force of Belgian
 1801-1815. troops had been able to assemble. The Belgians
 broke before the charges of the French horse;
 and only the dogged resistance of the English
 infantry gave time for Wellington to bring up
 corps after corps, till at the close of the day Ney
 saw himself heavily outnumbered, and withdrew
 baffled from the field.

Waterloo. About five thousand men had fallen on either
 side in this fierce engagement: but, heavy as was
 Wellington's loss, the firmness of the English army
 had already done much to foil Napoleon's effort at
 breaking through the line of the Allies. Blücher's
 retreat however left the English flank uncovered;
 and on the following day, while the Prussians
 were falling back on Wavre, Wellington, with
 nearly seventy thousand men—for his army was
 now well in hand— withdrew in good order,
 followed by the mass of the French forces under
 the Emperor himself. Napoleon had detached
 thirty thousand men under Grouchy to hang upon
 the rear of the beaten Prussians, while with a
 force of eighty thousand he resolved to bring
 Wellington to battle. On the morning of the 18th
 of June the two armies faced one another on the
 field of Waterloo in front of the Forest of Soignies,
 on the high road to Brussels. Napoleon's one

fear had been that of a continued retreat. "I have them!" he cried, as he saw the English line drawn up on a low rise of ground which stretched across the high-road from the château of Hougomont on its right to the farm and straggling village of La Haye Sainte on its left. He had some grounds for his confidence of success. On either side the forces numbered between seventy and eighty thousand men: but the French were superior in guns and cavalry, and a large part of Wellington's force consisted of Belgian levies who broke and fled at the outset of the fight. A fierce attack upon Hougomont opened the battle at eleven; but it was not till midday that the corps of D'Erlon advanced upon the centre near La Haye Sainte, which from that time bore the main brunt of the struggle. Never has greater courage, whether of attack or endurance, been shown on any field than was shown by both combatants at Waterloo. The columns of D'Erlon, repulsed by the English foot, were hurled back in disorder by a charge of the Scots Greys; but the victorious horsemen were crushed in their turn by the French cuirassiers, and the mass of the French cavalry, twelve thousand strong, flung itself in charge after charge on the English front, carrying the English guns and sweeping with desperate bravery round the unbroken squares whose fire thinned their ranks. With almost equal bravery the French columns of the centre again advanced, wrested at

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CHAP. V. last the farm of La Haye Sainte from their
 England and opponents, and pushed on vigorously though in
 Napoleon. vain under Ney against the troops in its rear.

1801-1815. But meanwhile every hour was telling against Napoleon. To win the battle he must crush the English army before Blücher joined it; and the English army was still uncrushed. Terrible as was his loss, and many of his regiments were reduced to a mere handful of men, Wellington stubbornly held his ground while the Prussians, advancing from Wavre through deep and miry forest roads, were slowly gathering to his support, disregarding the attack on their rear by which Grouchy strove to hold them back from the field. At half-past four their advanced guard deployed at last from the woods; but the main body was far behind, and Napoleon was still able to hold his ground against them till their increasing masses forced him to stake all on a desperate effort against the English front. The Imperial Guard—his only reserve, and which had as yet taken no part in the battle—was drawn up at seven in two huge columns of attack. The first, with Ney himself at its head, swept all before it as it mounted the rise beside La Haye Sainte, on which the thin English line still held its ground, and all but touched the English front when its mass, torn by the terrible fire of musketry with which it was received, gave way before a charge. The second, three thousand strong, advanced with

the same courage over the slope near Hougomont, only to be repulsed and shattered in its turn. At the moment when these masses fell slowly and doggedly back down the fatal rise, the Prussians pushed forward on Napoleon's right, their guns swept the road to Charleroi, and Wellington seized the moment for a general advance. From that hour all was lost. Only the Guard stood firm in the wreck of the French army; and though darkness and exhaustion checked the English in their pursuit of the broken troops as they hurried from the field, the Prussian horse continued the chase through the night. Only forty thousand Frenchmen with some thirty guns recrossed the Sambre while Napoleon himself fled hurriedly to Paris. His second abdication was followed by a triumphant entry of the English and Prussian armies into the French capital; and the long war ended with his exile to St. Helena, and the return of Lewis the Eighteenth to the throne of the Bourbons.

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