SPEECH

OF

ROBERT G. HARPER, ESQ.

AT

THE CELEBRATION

OF THE

RUSSIAN VICTORIES,

AT GEORGETOWN, COLUMBIA.

ON THE

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SPEECH

OF ROBERT GOODLOE HARPER, ESQ.

MR. HARPER, BEING CALLED ON FOR A TOAST, ROSE AND ADDRESSED THE CHAIR AS FOLLOWS:

IN obedience, Mr. President, to the call which you have done me the honor to make upon me, I rise to propose to you the health of "*Alexander the Deliverer*."

But opened and warmed as our hearts must be for the reception of this sentiment, by all that surrounds us, and all that we have seen, we can hardly feel it as we ought, unless we recall more distinctly to our view, those peculiar features of the deliverance which Alexander has been made the chief instrument of a merciful providence in effecting, whereby it is characterized as the greatest and most interesting event in the history of mankind.

The consequences which must have flowed from the subjugation or the submission of Russia, the magnitude of the force with which she was assailed, and the extent of her victory over it, compose the most striking of these features. Without considering the subject in each of these points of view, it is impossible fully to appreciate the deliverance which we are assembled to celebrate, or the claims of him by whom it was achieved, to our admiration and gratitude.

The situation of the world when the attack on Russia commenced, and the character and views of him by whom it was made, will disclose to us the consequences which must have been produced, by her overthrow or submission.

She then formed the last barrier of continental Europe.—Austria had been crippled and overawed; Prussia totally subdued; the German confederacy dissolved; the German governments enslaved; and the whole physical and moral force of that numerous intelligent and warlike people, which

long formed the counterpoise of France, and maintained the balance of power in Europe, had been placed under the controul of the universal enemy. The Italians, a people possessing little national character or reputation, because they had never possessed a national government, but active robust and acute, abounding in wealth, at all times remarkable for genius, patient and obedient, and by no means deficient in courage, were reduced under his absolute dominion. Denmark was submissive to his will. Sweden, though reluctant, was compelled to acquiesce in his designs. That part of Poland which had formerly belonged to Prussia, was in fact though not in form a part of his Empire, and brought him into contact with the frontiers of Russia. The Turks were not indeed his allies, but their policy was wavering, their future course uncertain, and the war in which they were engaged with Russia produced all the effect of direct co-operation.

Thus of all the nations of continental Europe, Russia Spain and Portugal alone remained exempt from his power. More than three fourths of Spain were occupied by his armies; and although the Spaniards made a constant and a brave resistance, their efforts were yet so much enfeebled by the divisions among their chiefs, the treachery of some, the incapacity of many, and the inexperience of all; by the imbecility of their government, its want of authority, and its frequent changes; that little hope remained of their maintaining the ground that was left to them, much less of their expelling the enemy from their country, and none of their making such a diversion against him, in his own territories or elsewhere, as could materially affect his operations in other quarters.

The English, under the conduct of their justly celebrated commander, a commander who though he did not conquer the French, shewed that they might be conquered, and by what means; who in the military art, like Bacon in science, taught mankind what might be done, and how it might be done; the English under such a commander, and with the aid of the Portuguese themselves, might hope to exclude the common enemy from Portugal; but this was all that they could hope; and of that hope they must be deprived, whenever he should be left free to turn his undivided force against them there.

England and Russia therefore stood alone. The utmost efforts of England, aiding the Spaniards and Portuguese,

and aided by them, were barely sufficient to exclude the enemy from Portugal, and keep him at bay in Spain. She could spare nothing for the direct assistance of Russia, except the co-operation of a fleet in the Baltic, and even that aid, not very effectual in itself, would be likely to become wholly ineffectual in the season of severest trial, by reason of the ice.

Such was the situation of Europe at the moment of attack; and the war which at the same moment was declared by the United States against England, was so timed, whatever might have been the intention of its authors, as to have the effect of direct and not inconsiderable co-operation with France.* It threw this country into the scale of the universal enemy. It made common cause between us and him, in his attack on the only remaining power on the continent of Europe; a power too with which we were in amity. By producing an additional pressure on the commerce of England, and rendering a considerable part of her force necessary here, it tended to diminish in no considerable degree her efforts in the north of Europe, as well as in the south; and that diminution was in the same degree a loss to Russia. It was the act of a man who seeing another about to be set upon by a robber and assassin, chooses that moment to attack, under the pretext of some trivial dispute, a person going to the aid of the intended victim. It was worse. It was aiding, by these indirect but efficacious means, the most efficacious in our power, in the destruction of this victim, while we professed to be his friends, and when by his fall the hand of the murderer would be rendered irresistably strong, for our own destruction.

With this state of the world at the time of attack, let us combine in our minds the character and views of the assailant.

Utterly regardless of the calamities of other countries or his own; a stranger to justice pity and remorse; deaf alike to the voice of nature, and the cries of misery; gloomy vindictive and implacable; perfidious and cruel from nature and policy; impetuous in his passions, immovable in his purposes, and fertile in his means; equally subtle and bold; despising pleasure and incapable of repose, this singular being seems inaccessible to every feeling but lust of power, and susceptible of no gratification except that of tramp-

* This war of the United States against Britain was declared June 18th, 1812. That of France against Russia, July 3d, 1812.

ling on the necks of others. Driven forward by a restless furious and insatiable ambition, he proclaims his plan of universal dominion, which he scarcely deigns to cover with the flimsy veil of "durable peace and the freedom of the seas." And he ostentatiously displays, in his conduct and language, on every occasion, a contempt and scorn for those who are cheated by these shallow and hypocritical pretences into the furtherance of his designs, which is equalled only by his rage and ruthless vengeance against all who oppose them.

It is easy to see what must have been the consequence, of the triumph of such a man over Russia. Irritated by her opposition, and afraid of her future struggles, he would have been impelled by his passions and his policy to trample her in the dust, and make her drink the last dregs of the cup of humiliation and misery. Enormous contributions, to reward his followers, to defray the immense expenses of the invasion, and to gratify his own vanity by the ostentatious celebration of his triumph: universal pillage, to glut those who could not be satisfied by regular reward: would have swept away the substance of his miserable victims. Military execution would have followed, to enforce payment. Large armies would have been quartered on the country, under this pretext, but for the real purpose of keeping down the spirit of resistance. Cities and districts would have been laid waste, under pretence of resistance but in truth as an example to strike terror; and the country thus impoverished would have been dismembered, to prevent the possibility of its future rise.

He would then have discovered that his German allies, especially Austria, had been luke-warm in the cause, inefficient in their means, and tardy in their movements. Under this pretext they and their wretched subjects would have been made to suffer every species of contumely and oppression, which his resentment for the past, his apprehensions for the future, his own wants, or the rapacity of his followers, might have dictated. The iron yoke would have been fixt more firmly on their necks, and they would have been made to feel, to the utmost excess of anguish, its galling weight.

Having thus riveted the chains on Russia Austria and Germany, he would have turned with redoubled might, and tenfold fury, on the unhappy Spaniards and Portuguese. His force being now undivided would have been altogether irresistible. The British armies in the Peninsula must speedily have yielded to the storm. They must have abandoned the coun-

try entirely, or at least have been confined to the island of Cadiz, and the lines of Torres Vedras; and the miserable people of Spain and Portugal would have paid, by sufferings at the idea of which humanity shudders and sickens, for that gallant and persevering defence of their liberty, which entitles them to the admiration and sympathy of mankind.

The whole continent of Europe being then brought under the yoke, all its means, maritime and military, would have been turned against England. Being then the last mound standing opposed to the torrent, she would have been assailed with a force hitherto unexampled, and a fury proportioned to the long continuance of her resistance, and the importance of the victory. It is hardly possible that she could long have withstood such an attack; an attack combining, as it would have combined, all the means of Europe and the United States. I say of the United States; because it is impossible to doubt that we should have embarked in the enterprise. Already engaged in the war, we should immediately have been told, that to invade England was the best method of obtaining a speedy and honorable peace.—This suggestion would have been supported by secret and open threats of vengeance, from a power then too great to be resisted, and to which, when far less formidable, our government has for twelve years tamely submitted. Threats, if needful, would have been reinforced by promises, by hopes, by expectations, addressed to public and individual cupidity. Some would have been alarmed by fears for their own safety. Others would have been debauched by the prospect of preferment, power, or even less honorable rewards; and a decent pretext would have been afforded, by the offer of some part of the spoil, as the price of our assistance. The importance of this promised boon would have been sedulously magnified. The whole tribe of professional venal patriots, unfortunately too numerous every where, would have called clamorously for the measure. And at length a popular current would have been created, by which the nation would have been swept headlong, into the pit prepared for its destruction.

Then would our ships of war have joined the maritime confederacy of Europe, against Great-Britain. Our merchant ships would have been converted into transports, to convey the invading armies. Our sailors must have manned the fleets of France. We should soon have heard of a

maritime conscription on our sea coast, to encrease the number; and probably of a military conscription all over the country, to raise troops for invading the British West-Indies.

To such an attack, I repeat again, Britain must at length have yielded. Shut out from all intercourse with Europe and the United States; surrounded on every side with enemies; seeing almost the whole world in arms against her; there is great reason to apprehend that the constancy and courage of her people would fail: that discouragement and then despondency would take place in the public mind. Her government, being popular in its essence, though monarchical in its form, must participate in the public feelings, and finally yield to the general impulse. Should the nation and government preserve their courage, still it would be almost impossible to prevent an invasion, from some of the numerous hostile points around her. Ireland would be threatened in the south, from the ports of Spain and Portugal, and in the north, from those of Denmark and the Elbe. The whole coast of England and Scotland would be threatened, from the ports in the bay of Biscay, the Channel, and the North Sea. By a combination and vigorous employment of all the maritime means of Italy, Spain, Portugal, France, Holland, Denmark, Sweden, Russia, and the North of Germany, added to those of the United States, and perhaps of the whole Turkish empire, numerous and powerful fleets would soon be equipped; and it would be impossible for England, notwithstanding her great maritime superiority, sufficiently to guard so many points. 'Ere long would a numerous army be landed in her territory. A lodgment once made it would be reinforced with less and less difficulty, till at length she would find an overwhelming force in her bosom. The conflict would, no doubt, be long desperate and bloody; but its issue, with such a vast inequality of force, could not be ultimately doubtful. In its progress it would produce the most horrible miseries, and its termination would seal the fate of the civilized world.

England once subdued, or forced to submit, would be marked out for peculiar vengeance. She must be broken down, crippled, and rendered incapable of future effort. Her people must drain the cup of bitterness to the dregs. Her government must be destroyed, her national spirit broken and subdued, and all the splendid monuments of genius and

industry, of arts and sciences, of refinement and taste, and of general happiness, which she has reared, must be levelled in the dust. These evils and sufferings the vengeance no less than the policy of the conqueror would require. He would consider them as a necessary atonement, for the long obstacles raised by her in the way of his power; and a necessary precaution against similar efforts in future. *Delenda est Carthago*, was a maxim of Roman, *Delenda est Britannia* is a maxim of French policy.

Britain subdued, France becomes omniponent. With the icy arms of death she embraces both hemispheres. The deadly shade of her dominion spreads over the land and the sea. Nothing remains for the rest of the world, but tame and slavish submission. Further resistance would be ineffectual, or effectual only for the destruction of its authors.—All would soon shrink from so hopeless so desperate an attempt, and the dark and cold night of universal despotism, would once more settle over the human race.

Such Mr. President, as it appears to me, must have been the consequences, the direct and almost inevitable consequences, of the subjugation or submission of Russia. They would have flowed equally, though not so speedily, from her submission as from her subjugation; if indeed, which may well be doubted, she had been permitted to submit, after the attack on her was made.

To effect this subjugation, means the most formidable were provided, that ever had been brought into action by human power. Five years had been spent in diligent, vigorous and skilful preparation. Numerous fortresses had been erected on her frontier, or in her neighbourhood. Vast magazines were provided. Immense stores of warlike implements and munitions were accumulated. An army more numerous than had ever been embodied since the days of Xerxes, was marshalled on her borders.

If we believe the accounts published by the invader himself, this army amounted to six hundred thousand men: a number which exceeds the whole military force of the Roman Empire, in the days of Vespasian, Trajan or Severus, the most flourishing periods of the Roman military power. But if we make full allowance and deduction for the systematic exaggeration of French military statements, which makes indeed a part, and no unimportant part of their political system, still we cannot, from the most authentic sour-

ces of information, rate the army at less than four hundred thousand effective men.*

But in estimating the efficient force of an army, the number of men is by no means the only, or even the most important consideration. Infinitely more depends on its organization, discipline and equipment; on the abilities of its generals, the skill of its ordnance, commissary and quarter masters departments, the knowledge of its inferior officers, and the military habits of its various members. These it is that distinguish an army from a multitude, one army from another, the army of Hannibal, Cæsar or Frederick, from the army of Xerxes. And in these no army probably ever excelled that, which crossed the Niemen, in July 1812, for the invasion of Russia. It contained no doubt many new soldiers; but even they were seasoned conscripts, who had passed the ordeal of the training camps, and of a march of many hundred miles. The greater part were veterans, inured to a military life by many campaigns, and most perfectly disciplined. All the officers, from a marshal to the lowest subaltern, and the whole corps of non-commissioned officers, who constitute the sinews and muscles of an army, had been formed by long and various service; almost like Hannibal, brought up in camps, and carefully selected for their merit alone. Mixt in with such a mass, the new recruits speedily acquire the knowledge and habits proper for their station. In point of subordination, skill in their duty, and dexterity and precision in their exercises and manœuvres, they become veterans in a few months; while in all their movements and operations, they retain the vigor activity and ardor of youth.

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* According to the official statement of Bonaparte his army on the Russian frontier consisted, as early as April 1812, of 939 battalions of infantry and light infantry, 357 squadrons of cavalry, and 520 companies of artillery. A French battalion, when full contains 600 men, a squadron 200, and a company 100. Consequently this force consisted of 558,000 infantry, 71,400 cavalry, and 52,000 artillery; making a total of 681,400 men, besides officers. If we deduct 281,400, more than two fifths, for incomplete battalions squadrons and companies, and for exaggeration, 400,000 will still remain; and is undoubtedly the greatest effective and well-organized army that was ever assembled.

Nor is this all. The French armies derive vast advantages from the manner in which they are raised and recruited. Armies formed by voluntary enlistment, are likely to consist of the most worthless part of the population; of the vicious, the idle, the dissolute and the indigent; for that part is always the most ready to enlist. Frequently also they enter at an age too advanced, for acquiring readily new habits, and learning with facility the various duties of a soldier. But the conscription brings the flower of the youth into the ranks of the army. Being taken from a higher class of society, they are more likely to feel military pride, a sense of honor, and the hope of promotion. Being younger, they are more susceptible of instruction, more pure in their minds, more vigorous and alert in their bodies, more ardent in their tempers, imbibe more readily the "*esprit du corps*," which is the soul of an army, and like soft clay in the hands of the potter, are more easily moulded into any form, which they may be required to take. Being engaged for life, they look to nothing but the army, confine all their hopes and prospects to rising in the service, and all their efforts to the acquirement of those talents which may lead to promotion. The conscription is a most detestable engine of tyranny, altogether intolerable to a free people; but there can be no doubt, that it is by far the most effectual mode which has hitherto been invented, of rendering the faculties of a nation subservient to the purposes of war.

But there was another circumstance attending the French army, which contributed more perhaps than all the others to render it formidable. It was accustomed to victory. It had the utmost confidence in its commander, its officers, and itself. It had completely triumphed over Prussia, in one campaign. It had frequently beaten, and at length humbled Austria. Its conflicts with Russia had been always bloody, and sometimes doubtful, but it had always come off finally victorious. It regarded its chief as invincible, and looked upon the fields of Austerlitz and Friedland, as the sure presages of future victories, and ultimate triumph.

The splendid rewards too which awaited the officers, from the spoils of Russia yet untouched, the booty which Moscow, and so many other rich cities were to afford to the soldiers; the honors and distinctions to which this last and final victory would entitle all classes, added the utmost degree of excitement, to the ardor inspired by so many other

concurring causes: while the hope of repose, when the final conquest of the world should be achieved, on the plains of the Dwina, the Nieper and the Wolga, stimulated to present exertion, those who might have grown weary and languid, through former and long continued labors.

Such was the army. thus numerous, and thus abounding with all the physical and moral elements of force, which aided by Austria, backed, supplied and recruited by France, Germany, Italy, Denmark and part of Poland, and led by the most daring and fortunate commander of modern times, burst like an overwhelming torrent on Russia, and swept on in its destructive course, to the heart of her empire. Can France ever form a better army, one more powerful, or more favored by circumstances? Such was the army which Russia beat, drove out, and exterminated.

Nor let it be imagined, as her humbled invader to save his wounded pride proclaims, and his partizans and sycophants are desirous of believing, and of making others believe, that her triumph was produced by premature frost, or the rigor of her climate. A rapid glance over the events of the campaign will suffice to shew, that she is indebted under Providence to herself alone, to her regular and permanent means of defence, for this glorious victory, to the vigor and constancy of her government, the superior abilities of her commanders, the valor of her armies, and the patriotism of her people.

The preparations for invasion had extended along the Russian frontier, from Grodno to Memel, a distance of nearly two hundred miles. It was uncertain on what point of this long line the attack would be made. The Russians were therefore compelled to stretch their armies along its whole extent; without which it would have been impossible to prevent their being turned, attacked in flank, and cut off from their supplies and reinforcements, on one side or the other. The invader having completed his preparations, rapidly concentrated his army, and crossed the Russian frontier at Kowno, near the centre of the line. His first great effort was to separate the two grand divisions of the Russian army from each other, so as to fall upon each in succession with his whole force, and thus crush them by piece-meal.—This system of tactics he had often found successful, but now it completely failed. Notwithstanding the extraordinary and boasted celerity of his movements, the Russians re-

tiring before him, conducted their operations with such skill, as always to keep up their communication, frequently to chastise the temerity of his columns, and finally to effect a junction of their army untouched, at Vitapsk on the Dwina. There a strong division was detached to the northward under Wittgenstein, to guard the road to Riga and St. Petersburg, and threaten the line of French communications; while the main body continued its retreat on Smolensko. It was still pursued by the French, who were however obliged to leave a part of their forces on the Dwina, to keep open the communication in their rear, threatened by Wittgenstein. At Smolensko a further concentration of the Russian armies took place; but being not yet prepared for the stand which they meditated, they continued their retreat in the direction of Moscow. They were warmly pressed by the French, who, however, were never able to bring them to action, or obtain any advantage over them.—At length, near the village of Borodino, about sixty miles from Moscow, they were joined by their commander in chief, the veteran Koutousoff, with additional reinforcements. He thought the moment arrived for turning on the foe. Having collected his force he waited for the attack, which was not long delayed; and on the 7th of September was fought the memorable battle of Borodino, the most obstinate and sanguinary recorded in history. In this shock of two mighty empires, where one struggled for universal dominion, and the other for national independence, science discipline and courage displayed all their powers; every resource of the military art was tried and exhausted, and the hitherto triumphant progress of the invader was at length arrested. He was repulsed and beaten, though not discomfited. But he there received his death wound. Fifty thousand combatants, which according to the most authentic accounts were killed or wounded on each side, attested the desperate nature of the conflict, and afforded the French an awful lesson of what they were to expect, in their future progress. They claimed the victory, according to their constant custom; but their own bulletin, dated three days after the battle, and fifteen miles in the rear of the ground where it was fought; gave the lie to their arrogant pretensions, and disclosed the true situation of the affairs. Never did it happen that Bonaparte defeated his enemy, and suffered three days to elapse without following up the blow—

Never did he retire fifteen miles into the rear of a victorious field.

It was then that the superior genius of Koutousoff conceived that profound plan of future operations, which in its development and execution has produced such wonderful results. He might then have driven out the invader, who must have yielded in his crippled state to a vigorous attack, which the Russian general, who had powerful reinforcements at hand, might speedily have been in a situation to make. But he saw that if the French were then driven back, they would retreat with their army almost entire, would soon unite with their reinforcements in the rear, would winter in Poland with plentiful magazines, would draw new and numerous forces from the countries behind them, and would be in a condition to renew the war early in the spring, with increased vigor and more powerful means. If, on the other hand, by retiring before them, he could draw them further into the empire, and detain them there, time would be afforded for bringing into their rear, the forces which were collecting in the north and the south; and for increasing his own army, while theirs would be wasted and weakened by continual marches, and partial engagements. They would also be thrown into the winter for their retreat, when compelled to commence it; and thus their complete destruction might be effected. The known rashness, arrogance and presumption of their leader afforded the hope, that they might be drawn into this fatal snare.

Koutousoff instantly resolved on his plan. He fell back towards Moscow with his main army, and held up the possession of that city as a lure to the foe. He redoubled his efforts for reinforcing Wittgenstein in the north, and for hastening the march of Tchitchagoff from the south. He ordered them to form a junction as soon as possible, on the road from Wilna to Smolensko, by which the French had advanced and must retreat. He formed a strong corps under Winzingerode, to the north of Moscow. He drew together reinforcements from all quarters to his own army.—Having thus set and baited the trap, he retreated to Moscow; and when the enemy approached that city, he abandoned and burned it. This he did to deprive them of the numerous advantages which they must have derived from the possession of Moscow; to strike terror into the hearts of the invaders, by shewing them the sort of resistance

which they had to expect; and to teach the Russians the sacrifices which they were expected to make in defence of their country. Having taken this decisive step he retired to the east, leaving the enemy quietly to enter the smoking ruins, of the ancient Russian capital.

On a man of sense this awful lesson would have had its effect. He would have perceived his attempt to be desperate, and would have retired while it was yet time. But that obstinate pride, that presumptuous arrogance in the character of the French chief, which had formed the basis of Koutousoff's plan, now insured its success. They prevented the invader from listening to this warning voice, or perceiving the dangers which were gathering round him.—Too blind to see his error, or too proud to acknowledge it and to retrace his steps; bouyed up with the vain and delusive hope, that the Russian government would submit, now that their capital was in his possession; he spent five weeks at Moscow, which ought to have been employed in his retreat. In the meantime Koutousoff was silently wheeling on his right flank, and Winzingerode forming on his left.—Tchitchagoff advanced with a rapid and steady course into his rear; and the gallant Wittgenstein, being strongly reinforced, had attacked defeated and dispersed the corps left on the Dwina by the invader, to keep open his communications, bring up his supplies, and facilitate if necesssary his retreat. This blow was decisive. The strong points of this line of communications were formed by Polotsk and Vitapsk, where large magazines had been collected. These fell into the hands of the Russians.

Wittgenstein then had possession of one road of retreat, that from Smolensko to Wilna, by the way of the Dwina.—Tchitchagoff, having disposed of the Austrians, was rapidly approaching the other, which leads from Smolensko to Grodno, or Wilna, by the way of Minsk. Koutousoff with the main army was advancing from Kalouga to Borodino, into the rear of the French, on one side, and Winzingerode with a strong corps from Twer on the other.

It was then that on the 18th of October the invader, with rage and anguish in his heart, too late resolved on his retreat. Having tried in vain his usual arts of perfidious negociation, and seeing the obstructions which had been formed in his road back, he made a desperate attack on the army of Koutousoff, in hopes, apparently, of opening his way into

the southwestern provinces of Russia. This produced the battle of Malo-jazoslof, in which after a most obstinate and bloody conflict, after that town had been eleven times taken and retaken in one day, he was repulsed with immense loss, beaten, and driven back on Moscow. He then commenced his retreat, or rather flight, by the way of Smolensko; where he arrived on the 10th of November, with an army fatigued, defeated, disheartened, and diminished one third.

And let it be remembered that according to his own account, the cold did not set in till three days before he reached Smolensko. Up to that moment, up to the 7th of November, the weather, say his bulletins, was as fine as in the middle provinces of France. And yet in that part of his retreat which took place during this fine season, the force of his army was entirely broken. His troops were beaten and scattered on all sides. Whole corps were made prisoners. The roads were every where strewed with their cannon and their baggage, their dead and their dying. In fine, this pretended retreat was already, before the frost and snow commenced, the most disastrous flight recorded in history. It was not therefore the premature winter, nor the severity of the climate, but the skill and prowess of his enemies, by which he was destroyed. He no doubt suffered severely from the cold the ice and the snow; but it was the force of his enemies that compelled him to be exposed to them. Had he been able to make head against his pursuers, or even to make a slow and orderly retreat, he might have found quarters to shelter him from the ice and snow; to which, moreover, his pursuers were as much exposed as himself.* Af-

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* The following extracts from the French bulletins will shew, how much truth there is in this impudent pretence, that Bonaparte's losses were produced solely by the rigours of the Russian climate; the most impudent perhaps of all his impostures, and yet the most greedily swallowed by his votaries.

Extracts from the French bulletins.

1. From the 25th, dated October 20th, 1812, at Noilskoe, ten leagues (30 miles) S. W. from Moscow.—"The weather is still very fine; as warm as in France at the same season of the year. *But on the first of November we shall have some cold weather.*—Every thing indicates that we must begin to think of winter quarters."

2. From the 26th, dated at Borowsk, about 70 miles W. by S.

ter halting two days at Smolensko, and he could stay no longer, for one day more would have brought Koutousoff into his front, he resumed his flight, by the road to Minsk; for he was shut out by Wittgenstein from that which led through Vitapsk and Polotsk to Wilna. The active Wittgenstein, informed of this movement, put himself in motion towards the Minsk road, driving the remnant of Victor's corps before him. Tchitchagoff approached it on the other side.—He reached Minsk before the French, and seized the bridge of the Berizina, which lies between that city and Smolensko. The French were thus driven from the main road, and compelled to ascend the Berizina in quest of a passage. Here they encountered the army of Wittgenstein; and were compelled to fight the battle of the 28th of November, in order to open to themselves a road to Wilna. This object they ef-

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from Moscow, on the 25th of October, 1812.—"The Emperor intends to set out on the 24th for the Dwina, and there take a position, which will bring him 80 leagues nearer to Petersburg."—(This bulletin appears to have been prepared before the day of its date. He had on that day commenced his flight, and proceeded about 70 miles.)

3. From the 27th, dated October 27th, at Vereia, on the road to Smolensko.—"The weather is *excellent*, and the roads *good*."

4. From the 28th, dated November 11th, 1812, 7 squadrons at Smolensko.—"The imperial head-quarters were on the 9th, at Smolensko. The weather proved very fine till the 6th, but on the 7th the winter commenced. The ground being covered with snow, the roads became very slippery, and difficult for horses of draft. We have lost a number by cold and fatigue, caused by *extra service*."

Thus we find, that the winter, so far from being premature, kept off six or seven days longer than the French expected.—They expected it on the 1st of November, and it did not come till the 7th; only two days before their arrival at Smolensko.

As Bonaparte knew that the winter would set in about the 1st of November, why did he not sooner retire; so as to reach the Dwina, his destined winter quarters, before its commencement? The answer is, that he intended to winter in Moscow, and did not resolve to retreat, till he found it impossible to stay. When he reached Smolensko, the winter having set in, why did he not stay and winter there, in comfortable quarters, and in the vicinity of a beautiful country? The answer is, that he could not. He was already beaten and overpowered by the Russians, and compelled to fly for his life.

fected, with the loss of all their cannon, baggage and cavalry, all their ammunition wagons and provisions, and a great portion of their remaining troops. The miserable remnant fled to Wilna, which a small part of them reached on the 8th of December, and entered the town with the Russians at their heels; or as Tchitchagoff expressed it in one of his despatches, on their shoulders. Unable to halt there, even long enough to take a hasty meal, or to fire their magazines, they fled in small and broken bands towards Kowno, where their destruction was completed in the passage of the Niemen.

During the flight from the Berizina to Wilna, these miserable fugitives had been deserted by their chief. Regardless of their sufferings and dangers, attentive only to his own safety he had abandoned like a vile coward his companions in arms, had left them to their fate, and by a flight of unheard of rapidity had escaped in disguise through countries where he was as universally as justly detested. Before he fled from his army he had been obliged to form a body guard of officers around his person apparently to protect him against the just vengeance of his soldiers.

On the 10th of December, the Russian head quarters were established in Wilna, within a few days of five months after the French army had left it, on their advance in to Russia. Within that short time this immense army had been so completely destroyed, that according to the most certain and accurate accounts which have been made public, not more than thirty thousand, out of four hundred thousand at the least, repassed the Russian frontier. This scattered remnant flying in detached portions, was every where pursued and pressed by the victorious Russians; who between the tenth of December and the tenth of March advanced from Wilna to Hamburg, a distance of more than eight hundred miles, bearing every where before them the glad tidings of emancipation and protection. They have since occupied without resistance, the whole country between their own frontiers and the Elbe, except two or three fortified places, which they left in a state of siege. They have passed that river at several points above and below Magdebourg, a strong post, where the enemy is attempting to make a stand; and where it seems to be the object of their movements, to turn him and cut him off.

The rapidity and extent of this progress, unexampled in the history of European war, sufficiently prove how com-

plete was the destruction of the invading army. But they prove more. They prove, that in order to form that army the invader had collected his whole force, except what was necessary for maintaining himself in Spain.—Exhausted by the mighty effort, he was left after its failure incapable of resistance. New armies must be formed, and they are formed slowly. It is not merely to recruit and increase armies already organized. The very elements are to be created anew. That numerous establishment of subaltern and non-commissioned officers, formed by long service; that multitude of old soldiers, the best instructors of the new recruits, the leaven which is to leaven the whole lump; have been swept away in this memorable campaign. Numbers may be assembled, although from the exhausted state of the country, drained by former conscriptions, even this operation must be slow and difficult; but when assembled they will not be an army. Years must elapse before they can be rendered equal to their predecessors, who fled, fell, and were annihilated before the victorious Russians.

But the annihilation of the invading army, the subsequent progress of the Russians, and the difficulty which the French chief must experience in forming new armies, are not sufficient of themselves to shew the extent of the Russian victory. It has broken the spell by which the world was bound. It has erected a barrier which cannot be passed, or even attempted; a standard around which those desirous of making resistance may hereafter flock. The heart no longer sinks with the belief that every effort must be fruitless, or fruitful only of destruction to its authors. The French armies are no longer preceded by a conviction that they are irresistable. They no longer possess that conviction themselves. That confidence of success which almost always ensures it, is no longer their habitual feeling. That confidence in the superior talents and fortune of their leader, which contributed more than their numbers, discipline and skill to render him invincible, no longer exists. That terror of his name which appalled the hearts of his enemies, and unnerved their arms, has been dissipated by the Russian sword. His star has yielded to the star of Koutousoff. His laurels have been transferred to the brow of his veteran conqueror. Surpassed in skill by his adversary, caught in the toils of the Russian chief, beaten, disgraced, compelled to repass the Russian frontier as a fugitive in disguise, and to seek his own

personal safety by the shameful abandonment of his followers, in the hour of their danger and distress, it has been proved that his disasters and downfall are the fruits of his own rashness incapacity and want of foresight,that his former successes must be ascribed to a lucky temerity, aided by systematic perfidy on his part, and corruption or imbecility in the governments or commanders opposed to him: and that to be resisted with success it is only necessary, that the means of resistance which every where exist, should be employed with firmness and ability.

It is in this point of view that his defeat assumes the highest importance to mankind. It is not merely for the ground which he has lost that we ought to rejoice, but for the well founded hope that he will never be able to regain it. The ways of providence are indeed past finding out. For the purposes of its wisdom it may permit these hopes to be disappointed. It may permit this man still to exist as the scourge of the world. For that purpose it may permit him to regain his power and ascendency. While he lives and reigns he will not cease to be formidable. With such means and dispositions for mischief, he must always be an object of dread. But though we cannot feel perfect confidence, it is yet permitted to us to indulge the strongest hope, and in that hope it is no less our duty than our inclination to rejoice.

Thus far we rejoice, as philanthrophists and citizens of the world, for the deliverance of others. But we have abundant reason, as citizens of the United States, and as patriots, to rejoice for ourselves. The Russian victories afford us the best if not the only hope of peace; the best if not the only chance of escape, from the toils of French alliance, and the consequent horrors of French domination. The war in which we are engaged has made us, and was intended to make us the allies of France. The pretext for its commencement was the British orders in council. The pretext for its continuance is the British claim of a right to impress their own seamen, on board of our merchant ships. But the real object of both its commencement and continuance, is to wrest Upper Canada from Britain, and in conjunction with France to destroy her maritime power. To many of the authors and supporters of this war it has no doubt appeared, that Canada is an acquisition of sufficient importance, in a national point of view, to justify a war. Some of them no

doubt, desire this conquest from motives much less intitled to indulgence. Many also, we are bound in candour to suppose, have brought themselves to believe, that our greatest danger, and that of the world, arises from the maritime power of England, that its overthrow would conduce not only to our safety and prosperity, but to the general good of mankind; and that our true policy therefore lay in assisting France, to the utmost extent of our means, in accomplishing this great object. There are others who have been artfully drawn on by their associates, step by step, into a series of bullying declarations and measures, which has been carried so far as to leave them no alternative, in their honest judgment, between national dishonour and war. This class probably embraces many of the most respectable of the party. There may possibly be some also, among that portion of the war party which possesses the capacity and privilege of thinking, who honestly believe that we began to fight against the orders in council, and are now fighting against the practice of impressment. The number of those, however, it should seem, must be small. The great mass of those who think themselves, and assist in impelling the unthinking multitude, is no doubt composed of the three first classes, of those who believe that Canada is an acquisition worth the war, those who consider it as our true policy to aid France in reducing and destroying the maritime power of England, and those who have been persuaded to threaten and bluster till they thought it their duty to fight. Of these three classes the second is probably the most numerous, the first being for the most part confined to the western states, and the third to the southern. How far party spirit, prejudice, passion and some secret leaven of selfish and sinister motives have contributed to the existence or increase of these deplorable errors, it is not material to enquire or possible to ascertain: They have, no doubt, contributed much. Neither can we ever know to what extent the honest advocates of war have been reinforced by those who, far from partaking of their errors or being the dupes of those flimsy pretexts on which the war is publickly supported, act solely from a desire to promote, in various ways, their own power, fortune or consequence; who make the popular delusions a stepping ladder, and noisy patriotism a cloak, for their own ambition or avarice. That this class is very numerous, and contains a great portion of the most active intelligent and efficient ad-

vocates of the war, cannot be doubted. As little can it be questioned that another class exists, less numerous it is to be hoped, and certainly less conspicuous, though by much the most clamorous, which consists of the trading patriots of the land, a tribe always and every where venal, who in all countries are regularly retained and paid by France, and stand always ready to promote her views, whatever they may be, in any manner and by any means which her prime agents may direct. Such wretches, we may hope, abound less in this country than in any other; but we have the best reasons for believing that they do exist, and there is much ground to fear that they are more numerous than has been generally apprehended.

Such being the objects and motives of the war—objects and motives which require the subjugation of Britain, and that of Russia as a necessary previous step, it is clear from the time of making it, as well as from the artifices by which congress and the nation were cheated into it, that it was made in coincidence with the attack of France on Russia, and in the hope and confident expectation of her success: nor will it be terminated until that hope is extinguished, or its authors and supporters are deprived of their power. The success of France would add so much to the means of prolonging this power, as to render the hope of their overthrow feeble and distant. If it come at all, it might come too late. The popular delusions by which they are supported might be dispelled, by the presence of those direful calamities, to which our present course directly and rapidly conducts us: but before they could be thus dispelled, the fetters with which we have bound ourselves might be riveted, by the hands of a foreign master; we might fall into the gulf before the blindness, produced by our passions and prejudices, would permit us to perceive it. Our hope, therefore, the sheet anchor of our safety, is in the final triumph of Russia, of which her victories already achieved have laid the groundwork, and afford a happy, almost a sure, presage. Shall we not then rejoice in these victories, with a joy great in proportion to the deliverance of which they are the foretaste and forerunners? Shall we not express with delightful enthusiasm, our admiration and gratitude towards him, to whose magnanimity, constancy and power we, our children, and our children's children, in common with so many other nations, are to be indebted for this greatest of blessings? His victories

are not for himself alone, nor for his own nation—they are achieved in the cause of humanity and of civil society; even in the cause of France herself, that estimable and unfortunate nation, which is made to suffer unheard of misery in the attempts of her tyrant to rivet chains on the rest of the world, and whose deliverance from the iron yoke under which she writhes and bleeds and groans, can be expected from no other quarter. The triumphal car of other conquerors has passed over the necks of prostrate nations. As the triumphal car of Alexander advances, prostrate nations rise up and hail him as their deliverer. His glory is the sun in the east, which inspires and warms—not like the glory of other conquerors, a baleful star, which scorches and withers. Those hands from which his powerful arm has stricken off the shackles, are every where lifted up to invoke blessings on his name. Hope dawns again on the nations. Those whom the light has not yet reached, behold it afar off, and bless its approach. Those who, like us, had not yet been overwhelmed, but stood looking with awful and trembling anxiety on the impending storm, now see it dispelled, and begin again to breathe freely. To Alexander of Russia we owe it, under God, that we have this great cause of rejoicing, and the liberty to rejoice. To him we are indebted for the deliverance already accomplished, and for the hope of good things yet to come. To him we owe it, that without sinning against the dearest hopes of humanity and our country, we may indulge our national pride and exultations in the brilliant achievements of our gallant little navy, the noble remnant of Washington; and that enlightened patriotism does not compel us to grieve over our own victories, which but for those achieved by the arms of Alexander, would be but so many steps towards our own ruin. Let us then as far as depends on us, bestow on him the most glorious title that mortal man has ever received, the most glorious title that mortal man has ever deserved—Let us drink the health of

ALEXANDER THE DELIVERER.