

FROM THE ENQUIRE.

THE RAINBOW.—NO. IV.

FRENCH REVOLUTION;
AND
EMPERORSHIP OF BONAPARTE.

THE intelligence that Bonaparte had founded his imperial throne, on the ruins of republican France, has excited very opposite sensations, among the political sects of different civilized nations; of joy & triumph with the advocates of despotism; of indignation & regret, among the friends of liberty, if not unpleasant sensations of doubt and despair, with respect to the general practicability of mild and economical political institutions. The first may be supposed to have felt that kind of troubled pleasure, if pleasure it can be called, which Milton describes the arch-angel to have enjoyed, when he seduced the mother of mankind, or that still more horrid sentiment of malicious satisfaction, which the same poet attributes to Death, when he was made acquainted with the numberless victims, which the success of her infernal father would furnish her devouring jaws: they "grin horrible, a ghastly smile." They are much better pleased that the French revolution has commenced, progressed and terminated as it appears to have done than if such a revolution had never taken place, and the ancient despotism had remained unshaken. They consider the experiment and its failure as the last link in the long chain of proofs, which tend to establish unalterably and incontrovertibly, this great and important political axiom—THE INSECURITY AND INSTABILITY OF REPUBLICAN INSTITUTIONS. They declare that we have now before our eyes the fairest experiment the grandest effort, and the ablest conducted attempt towards the establishment of a representative democracy, in a highly enlightened nation, that has ever been made: And that its failure is a confirmation of the universal testimony of all antiquity, and the experience of modern times, that mankind are so radically and irremediably prone to vice and corruption, as to render them unfit, and in fact, incapable, of governing themselves, but require the challenging hand of a master to secure their happiness. They contend, whatever doubts may have been heretofore entertained, with respect to the probability of a gradual emancipation of the human race, from civil and religious tyranny, in proportion as they become enlightened, on the subject of their political and social rights, that now such doubts must be changed into certainties of their impracticability; what was once prophecy, is now history; what was once conjecture, is now experience; what was once theory, is now practice. The example of antiquity is no longer necessary, say they, to produce; they are willing to test the force of the argument on the French experiment: external violence had no agency in the destruction of French liberty; like Rome of old she lost her liberty at the period when she had triumphed over all her enemies; but the French revolution was a monster, generated in vice and depravity, which, for lack of other victims, has at length devoured its own abortive offspring. The destruction of this monster and its offspring produces the return of social order, tranquility and happiness, which can only be secured by monarchy. Emperor Napoleon has awakened the dreaming philosopher and rent the veil from the eyes of the visionary speculator. With better success than Canute has addressed the rising flood of liberty and emancipation—"so far shall thou go—and no farther!" Such is an abstract of what I imagine to be the feelings and opinions of the advocates of despotic power.

Far different are those entertained by the friends of liberty. The freedom of another hemisphere seemed to dawn, and gleam upon his soul, like the all-cheering luminary of day, but the vice of a man ever shadowed the scene; his faculties have fled from before him, as the unalloyed shades of deceptive twilight; the long night of despotism succeeds. He looks back with regret to the beautiful visions which he indulged, at the period when he could hail a French, a Batavian, an Helvetian, a Ligurian, a Cisalpine a Roman, and a Partynopean Republic, as inhabiting, like America, "the modest mansion" of representative democracy. In the bitterness of his soul he curses the bloody tyrant who has directed the milder energies of his mind to the destruction of those fair fabrics. Bonaparte might have ranked with the Scipios and Catos of antiquity; he is now allied with the despots of modern Europe; he is venerated name would have gone down the stream of time, till time shall be no more, and unenvied laurels have encircled his immortal brow; it will now descend, with accelerating grace, to the latest posterity, and infamy, eternal, everlasting, will be inseparably connected with his name. But the friends of liberty dissent at the usurpation of Bonaparte, and lamenting the

struction of the freedom of France, altho' he does honor to the generosity and ardor of his republican feelings, yet falls into the error of slaves and tyrants, when he believes that the Organic Senatus Consultum is the grave of French liberty. Two, his feelings and actions are perfectly dissimilar, yet he seems to believe, with them, that it is a fate, which American freedom will one day experience, when age has ripened it for the repose of despotism, and time for the sleep of death. But these opinions and feelings if I may judge from my own experience, will, in a great measure subside; and our contempt for the worn-out common-place, ordinary direction, which Bonaparte's ambition has taken, will in some degree, be diminished, upon cooler and more mature reflection. We shall be led to enquire whether the elevation of Bonaparte is really so permanently inauspicious to liberty, and disastrous to France, as the honest indignation of our first impressions would persuade us to believe. In this enquiry, two prominent points seem to present themselves for consideration: First; Has the French revolution actually ended? Second; If it has ended, what will France in particular, and the general cause of liberty and of mankind, lose or gain by it?

The most ancient and general division of the different kinds of governments, is into monarchical, aristocratical, and democratical. But this division does not appear to discriminate with sufficient precision, between the most usual systems of rule established among men. I speak in general terms; I do not descend to the particular and numberless modifications and mixtures, of which they are all susceptible. I shall adopt therefore, as a first and general division, one that appears liable to fewer objections, viz: Despotism—limited Monarchy—and, Representative Democracy. It cannot be denied by the most enthusiastic philanthropist, that there are many nations, whose moral and political condition will not admit of any other species of government than the first—that is, absolute and unqualified despotism. Such are most of the nations of Asia and Africa, and many in Europe. Neither will it be denied, I presume that there are other nations, among whom there has been such a diffusion of knowledge, particularly as it respects their rights and liberties, as to admit of a milder government—limited monarchy. The most enlightened nations of Europe (other circumstances concurring) are in a situation to enjoy this kind of government. For instance Great Britain; which actually does enjoy it; and perhaps several other nations of Europe are equally qualified. But it is denied by many, (not enlightened philosophers, indeed,) that any nation is now, or will ever be capable of governing itself, permanently, by a representative democracy. It is in vain to tell them that experience, as upon other fully grown plants, is the surest test of truth, and to tell them, which, by the bye, they cannot avoid seeing, unless wilfully they will, our own happy representative democracy, now "in the full tide of successful experiment." They will answer as has been answered three thousand years ago, and for aught I know, will be answered three thousand years hence by a prediction—that such a state of things will not last always. Now as the period for verifying this prediction, like the mission of the Jewish Messiah, is always approaching but never arrives, the argument must stop here; for who will attempt to disprove a prediction, which allows eternity for its accomplishment? Yet notwithstanding this denial of the practicability and permanence of representative democracies, I shall not resist the evidence at present before me, that I actually reside under such a government. After making these distinctions, I proceed to observe that the seventeen states of North America, called the United States, enjoy the best of all governments, a representative democracy; one or two in Europe, the next best, a limited monarchy; and, that the rest of mankind, who live under any regular government, are subjected to the will of all—despotism. It seems to be acknowledged by most of those, whose opinions are entitled to any respect, that a representative democracy ensures a greater portion of happiness to a larger number of individuals than the best constituted limited monarchy. But from the doubts which continue to be entertained, of the practicability and permanence of such governments—from the anarchy incident to ancient republics, and the more recent example of France—many very well meaning and intelligent men, the friends of human happiness, believe that a limited monarchy is the best safeguard against the miseries of despotism, as well as the disorders of republicanism, which generally terminate in tyranny. This opinion, however erroneous, is entertained by a very respectable portion of civilized society. A majority perhaps, counting numbers, are in favour of a representative democracy. Some few abandoned of God and man, with cool deliberate villainy, advocate the cause of despotism. Crowds follow through venality or timidity. This class, therefore, is numerous, but base. It is thus that parties seem to be divided in every civilized nation of the earth. At the commencement of the French revolution, it is believed, that a great majority of the thinking part of the nation were in favour of limited monarchy. The advocates of despotism were those only who are immediately intruded in its continuance—the king, the nobility, and the clergy. Even many of these too,

virtuous and great men, joined either the mild monarchists, or the rigid republicans. So that many nobles and ecclesiastics, as well as philosophers and factious zealots were in favour from the beginning, of establishing a representative democracy, on the ruins of the old monarchy. But, as just mentioned, limited monarchy appears to have been the will of the nation. It was therefore established by the constituent Assembly of 1789, 1791 and 1792. Happy had this been the last, as it was the first era of the French revolution. Two causes produced the destruction of this constitution, and the shocking scenes of violence, anarchy and bloodshed which ensued. The insincerity and flight of the king; and the insulting manifestoes, and actual invasion of France by the combined powers. It was evident that Louis XVI would not be faithful to the constitution, nor exercise the powers with which it had invested him, for the defence of the nation. Under the pressure of existing circumstances it therefore became necessary to depose the king and elect another, or, to abolish the office and alter the constitution. Many enlightened friends of liberty were for the first measure; but their adversaries prevailed. This change was premature; it was a kind of government for which the French were evidently unfit. It is never politic to establish the simplest forms of government upon the ruins of the most tyrannical. It requires a generation or two to clear away the rubbish of prejudice and vicious habits. Some middle course is best; for, as it is observed by an elegant historian, "among the many ills originating from, or inherent in slavery, it renders its victims long unfit for the enjoyment of the very blessings they have panted after." This state of things therefore could not be permanent. Accordingly a government was organized by the convention, upon the more complex principle of checks and balances, with a splendid and energetic executive. But the new born French citizen had not as yet arrived to a sufficient maturity of age, and stability of principle, to walk without the leading strings and corrective arm of a much stronger authority than was conferred upon, or imposed by the executive directory, and the two councils of ancients and of five hundred. The government was eminently defective; and all the conquests achieved by the unexampled enthusiasm, which the national convention, and their committees of public safety, infused into the republican soldiery. Perhaps this is no weak argument in favor of a numerous executive, in opposition to the received opinion, that to ensure secrecy and dispatch, it is necessary that the executive, especially in times of warfare, should be composed of a single individual, or, at least a small number. Dissentions and factions in the cabinet and councils, and bribery and corruption among the ministers and generals, produced repeated disasters and continued defeats among the national troops. France was at this time engaged in a destructive war with almost all Europe, and a part of Asia and Africa. The government was derided by the generals, who in their turn lost the confidence of their armies; and the coalition of despots seemed once more about to subjugate the republic, or deprive her of her fairest provinces. More energetic and united councils or a change in the government was called for. The first seemed unattainable; the second was contemplated, under the auspices of Moreau; and by him rejected. At this critical period Bonaparte arrived from Egypt, and usurped the government of France from the feeble hands of the Directory, almost without a struggle. We have thus seen the French attempt to mould down an absolute despotism into a limited monarchy; we have seen them foiled in the attempt by the perfidy of the man who they had permitted to remain their chief executive hereditary magistrate, and by the atrocious policy of the surrounding kings; we have seen the disorders which ensued, upon the dissolution of this government among a people "made mad by oppression, and drunk with the acquisition of new born powers;" we have seen their disorders imperfectly corrected, by experiments hastily begun, in the bosom of tempests; and lastly, we have seen these tempests lulled at the irresistible mandate of a military adventurer! This usurpation must be permitted by the French nation, from one, or the other of these causes; first, an actual inability to resist the military force at the disposal of the usurper; or, second, a desire to re-establish the ancient despotism; or, third, and last, a national languor, a kind of tedium, a wish to repose, after the gigantic struggles of the revolutionary contest. The first supposition cannot be admitted. However indisposed the French nation may, at present, be to go into such an extreme, they certainly are not unable, instantaneously to crush the power of Bonaparte. The throne of Louis XVI. himself the successor of sixty-eight kings, was supported by the veneration of fourteen centuries; by the most numerous, opulent, and enthusiastic nobility in Europe; and by large bodies of devoted mercenaries and loyal troops: yet when the nation willed it, Louis tumbled from his height of power. Bonaparte is an upstart foreigner, whose reign has just commenced, the founder of his own dynasty; unsupported by, or allied to any respectable class of ancient nobility; and although in point of military force he exceeds any of the former monarchs of France, yet if the nation

willed it, Napoleon would have a similar fate to that of Louis; or a man who more resembles him, Robespierre. It may therefore be concluded, that the present order of things is not permitted in France from any inability in the nation, to resist the power of Bonaparte.

Does it then proceed, in the second place, from their desire to re-establish despotism? This desire did not manifest itself at the formation of the first constitution; for it was professedly instituted, to limit and restrain that despotism. Nor was it at the decapitation of Louis XVI; for then the monarchy was changed into a republic. If such then was ever the latent wish of the nation, it would have exhibited itself at some period of defeat, disaster, or weakness of the republican government; but the national spirit never seemed to be roused so high, as when the republic was in danger. When the duke of Brunwick invaded France, and during the war of La Vendee, when the French royalists had actually defeated the republican generals in many pitched battles, and conquered or occupied many departments, upon the supposition that the nation had any hankering for its first love of despotism, the dormant desire would have been awakened into action and the Bourbons restored. But the republican spirit was never more ardent than at these periods. This wish can only be supposed to have manifested itself, at the present epoch when Bonaparte has assumed the imperial purple. This event, however appears to have been effected more by internal apathy, the consequence of wearisome struggles, than any corollary acquiescence of the French nation. The jealousy and animosity of the neighbouring nations, the dread of internal commotions, with a sense, under such circumstances, of the necessity of a strong, military government,—these causes have elevated Bonaparte; and when these causes cease to exist, royalty, in France, will make its quiet exit, along with them.—Opinions, feelings and passions operate the same upon thirty millions of individuals, as they do upon one; and according to every law, by which opinions, feelings or passions are associated, together a returning fondness for despotism would have been connected with a renewed idolatry towards the Capets. Experience, in aid of theory confirms this truth. When the death of Oliver Cromwell and the imbecility of his son Richard awakened the royalists of England to a sense of their strength, the re-establishment of kingly government produced the re-establishment of the Stuarts.

(To be continued.)

Latest Foreign Intelligence.

Further selections from London papers received at the office of the American, by the Java.

LONDON, October 19—26.

The principal favorite of Elsi Bey (say the French papers) is an English woman, whom he took with him from this country, and who influences all his actions and rules his seraglio; she determines on his military as well as political conduct she is his mistress, and he her slave.

The price of dollars has fallen 1/4 each, in consequence of the detention of the Spanish frigates.

Preparations are making under the direction of Government for erecting a depot in the neighbourhood of Shrewsbury, 20,000 stand of arms.

Lord Sheffield, as president of the Board of Agriculture, is endeavouring, by letters circular through the several counties, to obtain a correct return of the deficiencies of the wheat crops, that the Board, if called upon, may make an accurate report there of to Parliament in the ensuing session.

The Sussex hop-growers report that the hop-grounds have never been known more productive. The growth in general is estimated at two hundred weight per hill, which is double the fair average crop. They are generally of excellent quality, and the season for getting in was very favourable.

Bonaparte, with a view to conciliate Russia, has offered to the King of Sardinia the state of Sienna in Italy, and an annual revenue of 500,000 francs, as an indemnity for his losses in Piedmont; but his Majesty, it is added, has rejected the proposition.

The French are busily employed in strengthening the fortifications of Fort St. George, Nieuburgh, and other places in Hanover, which it is supposed will shortly become the theatre of war.

The Monitor contains an account by Linois of the damage done to our trade by his visit to Bencoolen, and various captures since his arrival in the Indian seas, which he estimates at 800,000.

30,000 fresh troops are on their march to reinforce the French armies in Italy. 600 foreigners of distinction are said to have visited Mentz, to pay their obeisance to Bonaparte.

Repeated shocks of an earthquake were lately felt at St. Malo, Concar, &c. resembling the explosion of a magazine of powder.

The Young Roscius brought 900l. last week, by his performances, to the Liverpool theatre. A third of that sum was his share.

On Saturday a considerable number of letters reached town from Lisbon via Deal. One dated the 28th ult. says, that the cabinet of Madrid, while it was resolved to preserve peace, if possible with England, was no less decided in

its preparations for war. At Lisbon, the general opinion was, that the existing differences would be amicably adjusted.

Last week arrived at Portsmouth, the Spy, capt. Clark, from the South Seas, laden with several tons of gold and silver, belonging to Mr. Hurry of Gosport, being the produce of a cargo of British manufactures, with which this ship was dispatched about a year since, and with which she has been trading very successfully with the inhabitants of South America. The bullion was landed on Monday afternoon, and deposited in the Gosport Bank, from whence it was conveyed on Tuesday morning in three waggons, to the Bank of England under a strong guard. It was contained in upwards of 100 large and small casks, weighing about ten tons, and its value is estimated at about £100,000. The accession of so much specie into the country, at a time when it is so much wanted, is very fortunate; and we hope it will assist the circulation of the new dollars, of which part of the cargo, to the amount of £47,000, consists.

Admiralty Office, October 20.

Copy of a letter from captain major J. Henniker, of his Majesty's ship the Albacore, to William Marsden, esq. dated the 17th inst.

SIR, I beg leave to transmit to you, for the information of your Majesty's commission, of the admiralty, a copy of my letter to rear admiral sir James Saumarez, Bart. of this date.

I find it my duty to acquaint you, that yesterday, the 16th, in proceeding from G. A. bay, in pursuance of your orders, at the distance of three miles I had an opportunity of discovering five Spanish frigates on shore on the 9th ult. by his Majesty's ship under my command, and ascertained that they were all still there, swamped, disabled, with a heavy sea and tremendous surf breaking violently over them.

I have the honor to be, &c.

M. J. HENNIKER.

DETENTION OF SPANISH SHIPS.

Admiralty Office, October 23.

Copy of a letter from the honorable William Cornwallis, admiral of the White, to William Marsden, esq. dated on board the Ville de Paris, in Torbay, the 24th Oct. 1804.

I have the honor to enclose, for the information of the lords commissioners of the admiralty, copies of the several communications transmitted to me from captain Moore, of the Indefatigable, giving an account of his proceedings in the execution of the service he was sent upon, in which he has in company with the Medusa, Lively, and Amphion, succeeded in detaining the Spanish frigates in the bay.

Admiral Moore communicated to me the arrival of the Lively, a Spanish frigate, on the 17th, with the Fama.

I have the honor to be, &c.

W. CORNWALLIS.

From the LONDON GAZETTE.

Admiralty Office, October 23.

Copy of a letter from captain Moore, to Admiral Cornwallis, dated Indefatigable at sea, October 6.

SIR—I have the honor to acquaint you, that I have executed the service you did me the honor to charge me with.

On the morning of the 29th September, the Indefatigable got off Cadiz; on the 30th we fell in with the Medusa; captain Gore having informed me that the Amphion was in the Straits' month, and that the Triumph was off Gibraltar, and that sir Robert Barlow meant to go into Cadiz for the trade there on his way to England, I thought fit to send the Medusa to apprise sir Robert Barlow of the nature of my order that he might then judge whether or not he should go into Cadiz, and I directed captain Gore to rejoin me with the Amphion as soon as possible off Cape St. Mary. On the 2d instant, I was joined by the Lively, and on the 3d, by the Medusa and Amphion; the latter having communicated what I thought necessary to sir Robert Barlow.

Yesterday morning, Cape St. Mary bearing N. E. nine leagues, the Medusa made the signal for four full W by S. I made the signal for a general chase; at eight A. M. discovered them to be four large Spanish frigates which formed the line of battle ahead on our approach, and continued to steer in for Cadiz, the van ship carrying a broad pendant, and the ship next to her a rear-admiral's flag; captain Gore being the headmost ship, placed the Medusa on the weather beam a similar position alongside of the rear-admiral; the Amphion and Lively each taking an opponent in the same manner as they came up; after having made them shorten sail without effect, I fired a shot across the rear-admiral's fore-foot, on which he shortened sail; and I sent lieutenant Alcott, of the Indefatigable, to inform him that my orders were to detain his Squadron; that it was my earnest wish to execute them without bloodshed; but that his determination must be made instantly; after waiting some time, I made a signal for the boat, and fired a shot ahead of the admiral. As soon as the officer returned with an unsatisfactory answer, I fired another shot ahead of the admiral, and bore down close upon his weather-bow; at this moment the admiral's second stern fired into the Amphion; the admiral fired into the Indefatigable; and I made the signal for close battle, which was instantly commenced with all the alacrity and vigor of English sailors. In less than ten minutes la Mercedes, the admiral's second stern, blew up along side the Amphion, with a tremendous explosion. Captain Sutton having, with great judgment, and much to my satisfaction, placed himself to leeward of that ship, the escape of the Spanish admiral's ship was rendered almost impossible; in less than half an hour the