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From the English Review
National Affairs for the month of February.
FRANCE

THE present period is a period of singular anxiety and suspense. Reflection on past, is lost in conjecture and anticipation of future scenes. Every where we behold preparations for war, and negotiations for peace. France, faint from the loss of blood, and apparently without the means of restoring her strength and reviving her spirits, yet assumes the attitude and language of a conqueror, and dictates the terms of an insulting peace with a firm voice, and an imposing countenance. She boasts, or pretends to boast, of the possession of conquests that shall bound her dominion only by the Rhine, the Alps and the Ocean. The courts of Vienna and London, indignant at such arrogant and dangerous claims, prepare to push the war with the utmost vigour. The French send armies, to the number of three hundred thousand, to the Rhine; the Emperor under the necessity of making war on a similar scale, opposes above two hundred thousand regular forces, and a kind of militia, consisting of the armed peasantry of the provinces nearest to the scene of action. Never since the irruption of the Franks into Gaul, did the Rhine witness such numerous hosts; never was his stream threatened with so deep a tincture of blood. * It would seem that there is a sort of revulsion in the progress of society: a gradual return to that state in which our barbarous ancestors were all of them armed. The armies and the expences of the contending parties have been regularly increased, for the last two hundred years, in an arithmetical progression.

After all, it is not impossible but the present truce may, as truces almost always, do terminate in peace. The unheard of slaughter that must follow an appeal to arms; between armed nations of men, in a contest exasperated and rendered more obstinate by the fruitlessness of negotiation, is surely enough to make the stoutest heart tremble, and the most callous, even among the ambitious rulers of nations, to feel. We are, therefore, not without hopes that the armistice will be prolonged, that the spirits of the belligerent powers will gradually be calmed, and that though regiment may be added to regiment, by way of counters, for the purpose of displaying resources and strength, peace will ultimately follow, without further bloodshed, increased military preparation, and protracted negotiation.

There are many questions to be considered in calculating the probabilities of war and peace; but they may all of them be reduced to these three:

First, how far the contending parties have, on either side, attained their original objects in going to war.

Secondly, how far those objects, in the course of the war, have been changed.

Thirdly, whatever their objects may still be, how far the farther prosecution of the war offers a reasonable hope of their attainment.

Which party was the aggressor in the present war, it is now useless to enquire, and it would be difficult to determine. The French tyger grinned, the English lion growled: both dated forth their claws into action. The rulers of France had, doubtless, for their first wish, their principal object, the establishment of the revolution. The practicability of this they doubted, without effecting a change in the system of Europe: they acquired the free navigation of the Scheldt, in violation of the treaty of Munster, and they entertained thoughts, which they were at no great pains to conceal, of forming the ten provinces of the Austrian Netherlands into an independent republic; and, in the natural progression of pride, of democratizing all neighbouring nations; though this project was formally disavowed, afterwards, and perhaps, for the sake of peace, would have been abandoned.

The allies wished to maintain the established system of Europe, to protect the Stadtholder and the Seven United Provinces, to present an iron barrier against the contagion of innovation; and they too, in the progress of pride, and ambition, meditated the dismemberment of France, and individually their own aggrandizement.

But in these objects, on either side, there has been, in the course of the war, a considerable change. Neither has the internal administration of France been such as to invite her neighbours to follow her example, nor have the arms of the allies been so successful as to justify any hopes of conquest, † or of

subduing the power, and the inconsiderable will of liberty—even liberty run mad—by force of arms. The spirit of ambition, one would imagine, would now be pretty much abated on both sides. But, whatever their object may still be, how far does the farther prosecution of the war offer a reasonable hope of their attainment? The great hopes of the grand mover of the alliance, the British government, are founded, avowedly, on the depreciation of the French assignats, or paper currency; but the resources of a country are nothing else than its physical resources, viz. its population, means of subsistence, capital, and the industry, genius, and valour of the inhabitants. Money, in fact, is only a mark or sign of the value of labour. Productions of art, and reproductions of nature, may be carried on without intermediate signs of wealth. It is possible for a great nation, with an immense and fertile country, to go on without them; and if it be possible, the French nation will make the attempt. It is vain, therefore, to suppose that the resources of France will not survive the existence of their assignats. On the other hand, the resources of the confederates are great, particularly of Great Britain, whose commerce is extended far beyond its utmost extent in any former period, and is still increasing, stimulating and flourishing at the same time an increase of manufactures, and also, though in an inferior degree, an advancement in agriculture. It is to be presumed, that both France and England will take the advice of the apostle Paul, "Look not every man on his own things, but also on the things of others." If they do this with due reflection and candour, they will be disposed to meet each other half way, in the road of peace; unless, indeed they reconcile themselves to the idea of waging perpetual war against each other, as was formerly the case between the Christians and the Turks—but this is not to be supposed, and therefore it may be concluded, that France will give up her conquests for peace, and England also hers, with those from Holland, and these all to be made hereafter in the West Indies, into the bargain.

But ought peace to be made with France on the supposition that she insists still on retaining her territorial conquests, although she should consent to grant an equivalent to the Emperor on the right side of the Rhine, and to Great Britain in commercial and maritime aggrandizement? On this important question the opinions of men are divided, though, to use the phraseology of the House of Commons, the Noes (and in our judgment with reason) seem to have it. There is one consideration (tending at least to a temporary pacification) that will naturally occur to a political and quick people, not very much restrained by treaties; namely, that, although they should consent to restitution of the Netherlands, the barrier being destroyed by the improvident selfishness of Joseph II. they might embrace an opportunity of taking possession of them afterwards. All these motives for peace on the part of France, must be seconded by the present aspect of the great powers of Europe.

From SPAIN,
indeed, they have nothing to fear: but as little, perhaps, to hope. There is an apparent imbecility and indecision in the Spanish court. The nation is in some danger it is said of internal dissention and contest.—In ITALY,

according to the latest accounts, the Kings of Sardinia and Naples have determined to adhere to the confederacy.—THE EMPEROR makes the most vigorous preparation for war.—Most of the principal states and princes of Germany have agreed to furnish their quotas for carrying on the war; and as to the KING OF PRUSSIA, although he be more disposed, by hook and by crook to catch money, rather than to give it away, having drawn all that he can from France as well as from England, he is now at liberty to follow his interest as well as inclination to restore the Stadtholder.

From the TURKS
the French have but little to expect at present; and
THE EMPRESS OF RUSSIA
becomes more and more in earnest in her profession of good will to the allies, in proportion as she finds that they stand in need of her assistance. With the co-operation of the Russian fleet, we shall be able to cope with that of the French and Dutch in the

these grounds, and also, more particularly, on that of the general principles of war in the present age.—To the want of such generalization it is that we are to ascribe our late public failures and disasters. This is the language of conviction, not of party-spirit; which we totally disclaim.—It is on the basis of impartiality alone that we hope to establish this journal.—The pro and con is to the best of our ability given on every subject.

North seas, even though they should have the advantage of being favoured by
SWEDEN and DENMARK;
which powers, however, will probably adhere to their present system of neutrality.

From the SALEM GAZETTE of May 17.

SUMMARY.

No appearance of peace in Europe. The Elector of Saxony's troops were ready to march, and we may expect to hear by the next communications from the Rhine, the disposition of both armies.—Our information by France, assures us of great military preparations, and of strong fortifications which the French continue to raise. The command of the army and departments are not yet known. The internal enemies are more in system than at any former period, and have been joined by many Emigrants. These unhappy men, not having experienced abroad the attention they hoped, have now their last resort. They have not at present the least prospect of success. The fleets of the Dutch and French, as well as of Spain, are often mentioned, but no good accounts are given. The fleet from Toulon was to have made a junction with the Dutch fleet in the Mediterranean; but so various are the reports of their situation, numbers and strength, that we must leave the subject till some interesting facts explain their intentions, and discover their force.—Much has been said of a Spanish fleet. However, if nothing is done, we shall not be much disappointed. It is said, that the English have remonstrated against their naval preparations; and it is also said that a war might be expected. There are no unequivocal signs of Spanish courage for war, which has yet been betrayed. There are reports of some disquiet from the Indians of South-America. The strange silence observed in regard to this country, when there is so much activity in the north, induces report to interrupt it by some vague assertions, which apply to Mexico or Peru, with the same precision as the ancient tales of the great island in the Atlantic, which some moderns have ingeniously imagined to be America. Here is the theatre for some great events in the next generation. The policy of Spain cannot long hold such immense territory in servitude, and exclude it from the intercourse of all nations.—A few years will give the world a true history of the present state of Mexico; which is very imperfectly known. Settlements continue westward, and we have explored the country, which is its northern boundary. The surrender of St. Domingo, and Mississippi may be preparatory to greater events.—Spain may be induced to continue her efforts, without injury to herself or to mankind. Our accounts leave little to apprehend from an immediate war between Turkey and Russia; though military preparations are unquestionably made by both these powers. The Prussians and French are busy in negotiations, of which the object is secret. The Prince of Orange is to have his residence at Berlin, the capital of Prussia. The West-Indies attract and demand notice. From Jamaica we hear, that the Maroons have surrendered, and the island will be restored to quiet. They continue to receive no more foreign grain or flour, we are told, at the Havannah in Cuba. In Hispaniola, the parties are ready for action. The different accounts which have been given of events in that island, interest us in the geography of it. A Philosophical Society in the French part of that island report, "that the town of Port-de-Paix is 10 French leagues from the Cape town, westward. Port-de-Paix is four leagues from St. Louis du Nord; 11 from Gros Morne; 12 from Jean Rabel; 19 from the Mole; and 14 from Port a Piment. The road to the Mole passes east and west, through the Bas Moulisque. The coffee of Haut Moulisque is called the best in the West-Indies, and the nearest to the true Moka in the grain, smell and colour. Guadalupe is declared to be in a state of defence, and the Musatto troops are said to be excellent. They do not expect to be molested, and discover no fears from any attempt of the enemy. British troops have reinforced their islands of Grenada and St. Vincent, and report several successful actions. It is said that they have pushed their successes so far, as nearly to recover those islands. From Surinam, we hear that they are in quiet under the new Dutch government, and that provisions are cheap.

At Home.—The bill making appropriations for the British treaty, has passed. The opposition from the payment of debts, which from Mr. Goodhue's account do not amount to the annual income of Virginia, in which the debts were contracted, is now merely local. The surrender of the Western Posts is now daily expected. All our accounts from that quarter confirm our belief of serious preparations for that purpose. And the reports from the frontier Indians

* —Et multo spumantem sanguine Rhenum. Lucan.

† The folly and madness of such an attempt was predicted at the outset of the war by Mr. Fox and other gentlemen, on the general grounds of history and human nature; and by general Macleod, on