

THE MINERVA.

PUBLISHED (WEEKLY) BY WILLIAM BOYLAN.

RALEIGH, (N. C.) MONDAY, JANUARY 5, 1807.

[No. 560.]

Vol. 11.]

Foreign.

PRUSSIAN MANIFESTO.

LONDON, October 21.

We this day lay before the public a translation of the King of Prussia's Manifesto. This important document was issued at the head quarters at Erfurt, on the 9th inst. and was published in the *Hamburg Correspondent* of the 15th and 17th inst.

MANIFESTO.

As his Majesty the KING OF PRUSSIA has taken up arms for the defence of his people, he thinks it necessary to lay before them, and all Europe, the circumstances which have imposed this duty on his Majesty.

The politics of France have been the scourge of humanity during the last fifteen years. Those men who, in rapid succession, have been at the head of affairs in that country, have only sought the means of their dominion in war, and the guarantee of their existence in the wretchedness of the people, may be viewed without astonishment. But the introduction of a regular government, to which the same necessity could not be imputed, gave new life to the hopes of the friends of peace. Napoleon, invested with the supreme power, victorious, surrounded by weaker states, friendly disposed governments, or conquered and exhausted rivals, had in his power to perform a better part. For the interests of France, nothing more remained for him to do; for her happiness, every thing was in his power.

It is painful to be compelled to say, that French politics still remained the same. An insatiable ambition was still the ruling passion of France.—She made use of arms and of treaties with the same view. The peace of Amiens was scarcely concluded, before the signal for the first acts of violence followed. Holland and Switzerland, two independent states, were compelled to accept a constitution, which converted them into French provinces. The renewal of war was the consequence.

Peace, however, still continued upon the continent. The German Empire had purchased it by incalculable sacrifices. In the midst of this peace, nevertheless, the French troops invaded the Electorate of Hanover; a country which has no concern in the war between France and England, while the ports of Germany were shut against the British flag; and the better to effect her object, France took possession of Cuxhaven, and the territory of a free state, which was still more a stranger to the war than Hanover.

In the midst of this peace also, the same troops, a few months after, violated the German territory in such a manner as to wound the honor of the nation still deeper. The Germans have never avenged the death of the Duke D'Enghien; but the remembrance of that event will never be extinguished among them.

The treaty of Lunéville guaranteed the independence of the Italian Republic. In spite of the most positive assurances, did Napoleon place the Iron Crown of Italy upon his own head. Genoa was incorporated with France. Lucca was veiled in the same fate. Only a few months before had the Emperor, on a solemn occasion—an occasion which imposed very important duties upon him—declared before his people and before all Europe, that he wished not to extend the limits of his territory. Besides, France was bound, by a treaty with Russia, to relinquish her claims in possession of independent Italy. Instead of fulfilling this obligation, she made her- self masters of every object which could be desirable towards that in-

dependent state. Portugal led to maintain her neutrality, but was compelled to depart by the deceitful security of a few months.

The Porte had not forgotten the invasion of Egypt, and Egypt was the only power remaining in Europe which had not been subjected to the arbitrary proceedings of France.

But to these acts of violence, a system of abuse and injury remained still to be added. A Journal, which proclaimed itself the voice of Government, was chosen as a chronicle of the attacks incessantly made upon every crowned head.

Prussia could be no stranger to any of these general acts of oppression. Many of them were nearly connected with her substantial interests; especially as the wisdom of that system which considers the states of Europe as members of the same family, calls upon each of them for the defence of all; and that the unbounded aggrandisement of one state exposed the rest to danger, was sufficiently manifest to experience.

Still it is most essentially necessary to represent in what manner the conduct of France was calculated to operate in its immediate relation to Prussia.

It were superfluous to enumerate all the good offices rendered to Napoleon by Prussia. Prussia was the first Power that acknowledged him. No promises, no menaces had been able to shake the king's neutrality. Every thing that the duty of a good neighbor could prescribe was most amply afforded during a period of six years. Prussia esteemed a valiant nation, which a so had learned, on its part, to respect Prussia both in war and peace; and she did justice to the genius of its Chief. But the remembrance of these times is no longer retained by Napoleon.

Prussia had permitted the territory of Hanover to be invaded. In this she had countenanced an act of injustice; therefore was it her first view to remedy it. She offered herself for it instead of England, under the condition that the latter should cede it. It must, however, at least be recollected, that thus a boundary was prescribed to France, which she should not pass. Napoleon solemnly pledged himself not to compromise the neutrality of the Northern States; to exercise no violence towards any of them; and, in particular, not to increase the number of troops in the Electorate of Hanover.

Scarcely had he agreed to these stipulations, than he broke them. Every one is acquainted with the violent manner in which Sir George Rumbold was seized; every one knows that the Hanse Towns were laid under contribution, under the appellation of loans, not by any means for their interest, but exactly in the same manner as if France had been at war with them. For the first of these injuries, his Majesty contented himself with accepting an inadequate satisfaction. Of the second he took no cognizance, being prevented by the apprehensions and representations on the part of the Hanse Towns. His Majesty, on his part, did not scruple to make any sacrifice, as the preservation of peace was the dearest wish of his heart.

The patience and forbearance of every other Court were exhausted sooner than that of his Majesty. War again broke out on the Continent—the situation of the King with respect to his duty, was more difficult than ever. In order to prevent France from augmenting her troops in Hanover, he had promised to suffer no attack to be made on that territory. The Russians and the Swedes were preparing for an attack upon the French. From this period, the whole burden of the contract between France and Prussia, weighed upon the latter only, without producing her the least advantage; and by a singular concatenation of circumstances, it seemed that Prussia, who only wished to remain impartial and neutral, could no longer pursue her former system, except to the prejudice of the Allied Powers. Every advantage which resulted from this situation of affairs was on the side of France; and the King was daily threatened with a collision, not less formidable to him, than decisively favorable to the plans of Napoleon.

Who could have thought that the very moment when the King had given to the French government the strongest proof of his determination, and a singular example of the faithful fulfilment of engagements into which he had once entered, should be chosen by Napoleon to do the King the most sensible injury? Who does not remember the violation of the territory of Anspach, which took

place on the 3d October in the last year, notwithstanding the remonstrance of the provincial administration and of his Majesty's Minister?

This contest between that moderation which pardons every thing—that integrity which remains true to its engagements to the last on the one part; and the abuse of power, the insolence inspired by deceitful fortune, and the habit of only reckoning on the other, continued several years. The King declared to the French government that he considered all his connections with it as dissolved. He placed his armies on a footing suitable to circumstances. He was now fully convinced, that no pledge of security remained for the neighbors of France, but a peace established upon firm principles, and guaranteed by all the Powers in common.

His Majesty offered the Allies to be the mediator in negotiations for such a peace, and to support them with all his force. It is sufficient to know the conditions then proposed, to be convinced of the moderation which, at all times, has governed the politics of his Majesty in their whole extent. Prussia, at this moment, listened not to the voice of revenge; she looked over the events of the late war, however violent they might have been, since they had been sanctioned by existing treaties. She required nothing but the punctual fulfilment of those treaties; but this she required without limitation. Count Haugwitz repaired to Vienna, where the French Emperor then was. Scarcely had this Minister been there a few days, when the whole face of affairs was changed; the misfortunes experienced by the Court of Vienna had compelled it to sign an armistice, which was immediately followed by a peace. The Emperor of Russia sacrificed his magnanimous views to the wish of his Ally, and his troops returned home. Prussia stood now alone on the field of contest. His Majesty was obliged to limit his policy by his powers; and instead, as had been his wish, of embracing the interest of all Europe, make his own security and that of his neighbors, his first object.

The French Emperor proposed to Count Haugwitz a treaty in which was stipulated, on the one side a mutual guarantee of possessions, the inviolability of the Turkish territory, and the results of the peace of Presburgh; and, on the other, the taking possession of Hanover by Prussia, in return for the cession of three provinces.

The first part of this Treaty promised, at least for the future, an acknowledged, guaranteed, and if Napoleon had so pleased, a firm, political Constitution. The results of the peace of Presburgh were a general misfortune for Europe, but Prussia sacrificed herself alone when she accepted them; and to place a limit to the incessant usurpations of France, should the treaty be considered by the Court of St. Cloud as anything more than words, appeared an advantage: the king therefore, ratified this article unconditionally.

The second half of the Treaty of Vienna related to an object, the importance of which had been manifested by serious experience. Prussia could not rely on security for a moment, so long as Hanover remained involved in a war, in which that country had, in fact, no concern, at whatever price it might be purchased, Prussia was resolved that the French should not return thither. She had her choice to obtain this end either by a treaty or a war. The cession of three provinces, which had been faithful and happy for a long series of years, was a sacrifice not to be made for the plan of vain ambition; but these provinces, in case of a war, would have been the first sufferers; all the calamities of that war would have pressed upon the Monarchy; while the acquisition of Hanover, could it have been made under less unhappy circumstances, would have been productive of the most valuable advantages to Prussia. The King, therefore, conceived, that he reconciled his wishes with his principles, when he accepted the proposed exchange, only under the condition, that the fulfilment of the same should be deferred till the general peace, and the consent of his Majesty the King of G. Britain should be obtained.

All the advantages of this treaty were for France. On the one side, she received guarantees, which put the seal on her conquests; on the other, she gave what she did not possess, what might be again conquered by the chances of an uncertain war; while in the cessions of Prussia she found the means of enriching her Allies.

But between a policy which will do every thing in its power, and an integrity which regards its duties, and especially its promises, the contest is ever unequal. The King approached the moment when he was convinced of this by experience: this moment was the most painful of his reign.

It was the affair of France to reject the modifications under which the King had confirmed the treaty, if she did not approve them. But she avoided doing this, for the whole Prussian army was still under arms. She continued to be lavish of assurances of friendship; she fulfilled the treaty as far as it suited her; but when his Majesty wished to reap the only advantage which he had proposed to himself from the late negotiations, and which was nearest to his heart, she suddenly altered her language. The modifications, added to the treaty of Vienna, were now rejected at Paris. Endeavors were made to force Prussia into the most injurious measures; and when Count Haugwitz, who was at Paris, remonstrated against this, the unconditional fulfilment of the treaty was haughtily insisted on, as were the immediate cession of the three provinces, and the recal of the patent by which the occupation of Hanover was declared provisional. Prussia was required to resign a part of the advantages stipulated, and to shut the ports against the British flag in the same manner as the French had returned into the Electorate.

The King, at length was perfectly convinced of the true character of the friendship of the Emperor of France—a soporific draught for a power which still feels its own strength; an instrument of degradation, and finally of extinction, to every power which no longer possesses strength.

In the mean time, Napoleon was in possession of every advantage. The Prussian army had returned; his own, after some movements of no consequence, at which deceived Germany prematurely rejoiced, on some frivolous pretences, established itself on this side of the Rhine. The first conflict might produce misfortunes. War, which is not, under all circumstances, the greatest of evils, might become such under those then existing. The King determined to continue the part he had hitherto acted for some time longer.—Willing to preserve his force, now more than ever necessary to Europe, and at least to secure the tranquility of the North, he confirmed the new treaty.—Confidence, however, was now utterly lost. Prussia was convinced that, on the first opportunity to weaken her without danger, she might expect an attack from her pretended ally; convinced there is a degree of ambition which nothing can satisfy—which proceeds, without intermission, from usurpation to usurpation, sometimes without a plan, but ever intent on destruction; careless of the choice of means, and employing alike arms, and the pen, violence, and guile. But even with this conviction, so great is the unfortunate superiority obtained by such policy, over those who wish only to be just, the King fulfilled all conditions of the treaty with the punctuality of a faithful Ally. It is known what the consequences were with respect to the connections of his Majesty with England. France gained nothing by this; but she triumphed in secret at the thought of having disunited two Courts the union of which might have been dangerous to her; and what, in the view of France, gave the principal value to her alliance with the King was that this alliance isolated his Majesty, since it produced an opinion, that Prussia was a participator in the cause of so many misfortunes.

But not content with this, we shall soon see in what manner the politics of France, assured that she had now no enemy to fear, believing that she had annihilated Austria, forming a judgment of Russia with equal ignorance and

82147