

OUR TABLE.

ALISON'S HISTORY OF EUROPE DURING THE FRENCH REVOLUTION—TENTH VOLUME.

THE tenth and last volume of this magnificent work, which is now before us, brings the history of the Revolution, with its attendant glories and horrors to a close; and, highly as we previously esteemed the talents of its author, we have felt our admiration heightened from a perusal of his splendid description of the concluding scenes in the mighty drama, which had the whole of Europe for its theatre, and, among its actors, all the princes and potentates of the civilized world. Maintaining his character as a truth-seeking and impartial historian, the author has "extenuated nothing, nor set down aught in malice." To the transcendent military genius of Napoleon he has rendered the most ample justice, but he has not attempted to conceal the littlenesses which cast so dark a shadow upon the dazzling character of the warrior-Emperor.

Neither has he,—though obviously a warm admirer of the Hero of Waterloo, the rival and conqueror of Napoleon—failed to indicate the various faults which, as a leader of armies, were committed by him in the prosecution of the war. He has distinctly shewn the rare occasions on which the favorable circumstances thrown in his way were left unimproved. He has done so, candidly and fairly, as one who, knowing he wrote for posterity, as well as for his own time, was determined that, such as he was, the great chieftain would be given to the world for its admiration and its gratitude. We mistake the character of Wellington, if he will not feel more highly gratified with the discriminating and well-earned praise which has been thus rendered him than he would have been with any less qualified expression of the historian's admiration. He has, however, given evidence of his full appreciation of the character of the great Captain, whose forbearance in the hour of conquest won for his banner the prayers, if not the swords of France—the anxious hopes of hundreds of thousands of mothers, who wept for their sons, torn from them in the hour of approaching manhood, to fill up the chasms which famine, pestilence, the elements, and the sword, were daily making in the Imperial cohorts. Not more for his military genius than for his peaceful virtues does the Deliverer of Spain claim our admiration and our thanks. It was in the use he made of conquest that Wellington stood so immeasurably above Napoleon. The latter made victory but the beginning of the miseries of the people whose armies he had scattered. The former, when his armed opponents were subdued, spread over the peaceful occupants of the territories of his enemy, the all-powerful ægis of his name, and preserved to all—peasant and prince alike—the blessing of an unplundered home. Well may the Empire exult in her unconquered Chieftain, and in the glorious hosts whose invincible resolution won from the war-trained legions of France the trophies which it had taken a quarter of a century to acquire, under one of the most successful leaders the world has ever seen. The Empire is indeed proud of them; and she will hereafter be proud also of the historian, who, stepping over the boundaries set even by national pride, has given the hero, as he was, to the gaze of his own and after generations.

The book itself is one which for a long time to come, will not be generally circulated, owing to its voluminous character. We presume, therefore, that to many of our readers whatever it contains will still be new, and as the following passage sets in a clear light the author's opinion of the rival heroes—Wellington and Napoleon—we give it a place in our pages, merely stating that through the whole book the same clear perception, and eloquent, nervous style, are apparent:—

Napoleon and Wellington were not merely individual characters: they were the types of the powers which they respectively headed in the contest. Napoleon had more genius, Wellington more judgment: the former combated with greater energy, the latter with greater perseverance. Rapid in design, instant in execution, the strokes of the French hero fell like the burning thunderbolt; cautious in council, yet firm in action, the resources of the British champion multiplied, like the vigour of vegetation, after the withering stroke had fallen. No campaign of Wellington's equals in genius and activity, those of Napoleon in Italy and in France; none of Napoleon's approaches in foresight and wisdom that of Wellington's at Torres Vedras. The vehemence of the French Emperor would have exhausted in a single campaign the whole resources which during the war were at the disposal of the English General; the caution of Wellington would have alienated in the very beginning the troops which overflowed with the passions of the Revolution. Ardour and onset were alike imposed on the former by his situation, and suggested by his disposition; foresight and perseverance were equally dictated to the latter by his necessities, and in