

was inevitable. Paul drew near to Bonaparte,¹⁵⁶ and the latter was pleased beyond measure at an alliance which brought the Scandinavian and Russian navies into line against Great Britain, and thus opened a prospect to him of attacking her at once with some chance of success.¹⁵⁷ On the faith of this change in the maritime situation Bonaparte dropped the negotiation opened through Perregaux in December and suddenly flung himself into a naval campaign of far-reaching extent.¹⁵⁸ While Great Britain was engaged with her new enemies in the Baltic, Bonaparte hoped to reassert himself in the Mediterranean, whither his fleet at this time escaped from Brest.¹⁵⁹ He proposed a descent upon Ireland, and he planned an attack on the British colonies in the Indies and on the Portuguese in Brazil. In short he felt already able to open the contest with Great Britain which previously he had intended to begin only after years of preparation.

§ 4. Pitt's attitude towards peace. His resignation, February, 1801. Addington's overtures at Paris. Bonaparte's evasive answer.

While France thus reversed her policy, that of Great Britain had of late been steadily moving towards peace. At the close of the negotiation of a naval truce in October, it seemed unlikely that Austria could long resist Bonaparte, and Pitt, who anticipated the early submission of his ally, was disposed to open a separate negotiation with France, as soon as the latter

¹⁵⁶ Letter from Emperor Paul to Bonaparte, 18-30 Dec., 1800, Tratschevski, *Russia and France*, I, 27, (Paper No. 11.)

¹⁵⁷ Letter from Bonaparte to his brother Joseph, French plenipotentiary at Lunéville, 21 Jan., 1801, *Corr. Nap.*, VI, 5315: "Hier est arrivé de Russie un courrier . . . ; il m'a apporté une lettre extrêmement amicale de la propre main de l'Empereur . . . La Russie est dans des dispositions très-hostiles contre l'Angleterre. Il vous est facile de sentir l'intérêt que nous avons à ne pas brusquer, car la paix avec l'Empereur [i.e., German] n'est rien en comparaison d'une alliance qui maîtrisera l'Angleterre et nous conservera l'Égypte."

¹⁵⁸ *Corr. Nap.*, VI, 5327, 27 Jan., 1801.

¹⁵⁹ The fleet escaped on the 23rd of January through a violent storm which drove the British blockaders temporarily from the coast. See the letter from Thomas Grenville to the Marquis of Buckingham, 5 Feb., 1801, Buckingham, *Memoirs of Court and Cabinets of George III*, III, 146; also *Corr. Nap.*, VII, 5336, 4 Feb., 1801.